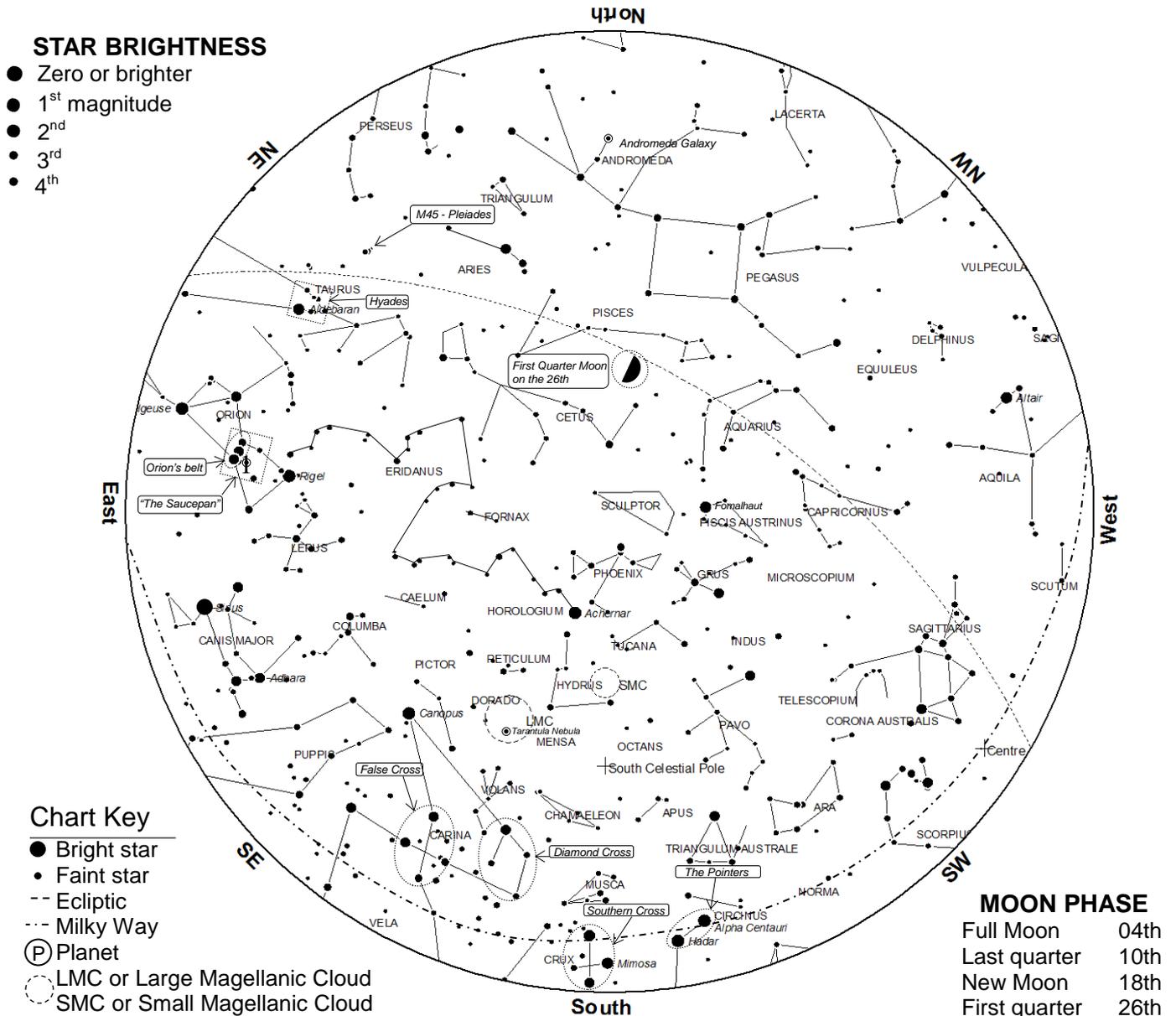


Night sky map

December 2017



THE CHART

The star chart shows the stars and constellations visible in the night sky for Sydney, Melbourne, Canberra, Hobart and Adelaide for December 2017 at about 8.30 pm (local daylight saving time) or about 7.30pm (local standard time) for Perth and Brisbane. For Darwin and similar northerly locations the chart will still apply, but some stars will be lost off the southern edge while extra stars will be visible to the north. Stars down to a brightness or magnitude limit of 4.5 are shown on the star chart. To use this star chart, rotate the chart so that the direction you are facing (north, south, east or west) is shown at the bottom. The centre of the chart represents the point directly above your head, called the zenith point, and the outer circular edge represents the horizon.

HIGHLIGHTS IN DECEMBER 2017

The summer solstice is on the 22nd, when the Sun reaches its highest point in the sky for the year, and this day has the most hours of daylight. The best time to look at the Moon with a small telescope or binoculars is a few days either side of its first quarter phase, which falls on the 26th of December. Saturn and Mercury start low in the west in Sagittarius (the Archer) but vanish in the twilight early in the month, leaving no bright evening planets. Crux (the Southern Cross) is located to the south, near the horizon, making it difficult to see at this time of year. The summer constellations of Orion (the Hunter) and Taurus (the Bull) are in the northeast. Sirius, the brightest night-time star, is low in the southeast.