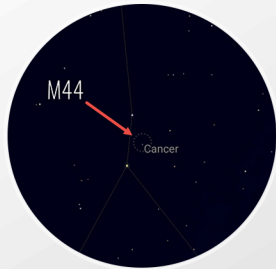


The 10 Best Things To See In The Spring Night Sky



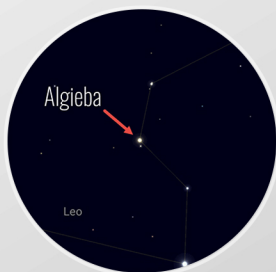
M44

M44, the Praesepe or Beehive cluster, has been known since antiquity and is visible to the naked eye under clear, dark skies. Unusually, its magnitude (3.9) is greater than almost all of the stars within the constellation that hosts it (in this case, Cancer, the Crab.)



M81 AND M82

Telescopically, you can fit both targets within the same field of view if you keep the magnification to below 50x. M81, a spiral galaxy, is the brighter and larger of the pair. You'll see it as a small oval with a bright central core.



ALGIEBA

Even with low powered binoculars you'll see a bright, golden star with a blue-white companion that appears about twice as faint. Point your telescope toward it and the bright primary star can be split in half. You'll probably need a magnification of at least 75x.



COR CAROLI

A magnification of about 30x provides a fine view, with the primary star appearing white and about three times brighter than its pale gold companion.



M65 AND M66

A low magnification of less than 60x is required to fit both targets within the same field of view. You should see two faint, misty oval patches. M66 is slightly brighter and more oval, whereas M65 may appear more elongated and spindle shaped.



LA SUPERBA

One of the reddest stars known and has been variously described as deep orange and blood red. As with so many things in astronomy, it's a subjective experience that impacts different observers in different ways. What color does it appear to you?



MIZAR AND ALCOR

A telescope and a low magnification of only 25x is all you'll need to split Mizar in two. The brighter, primary star shines with a brilliant, white light, while its companion appears about twice as faint and slightly bluish.



M3

At about 35x, you'll notice a slightly oval, misty grey patch with a bright core. This is one cluster where increasing the magnification will definitely reap rewards.



M97

Found close to Beta Ursae Majoris (Merak), it's quite faint and just beyond the reach of most binoculars. You'll probably also be out of luck if you're observing with a small telescope under suburban skies, but if you possess the skies and the equipment, you could get lucky.



COMA BERENICES

At a distance of 280 light-years, this is one of the closest star clusters. In comparison, M44, the Praesepe (or Beehive cluster) is some 577 light-years away, while the Owl Nebula is over 2,000.