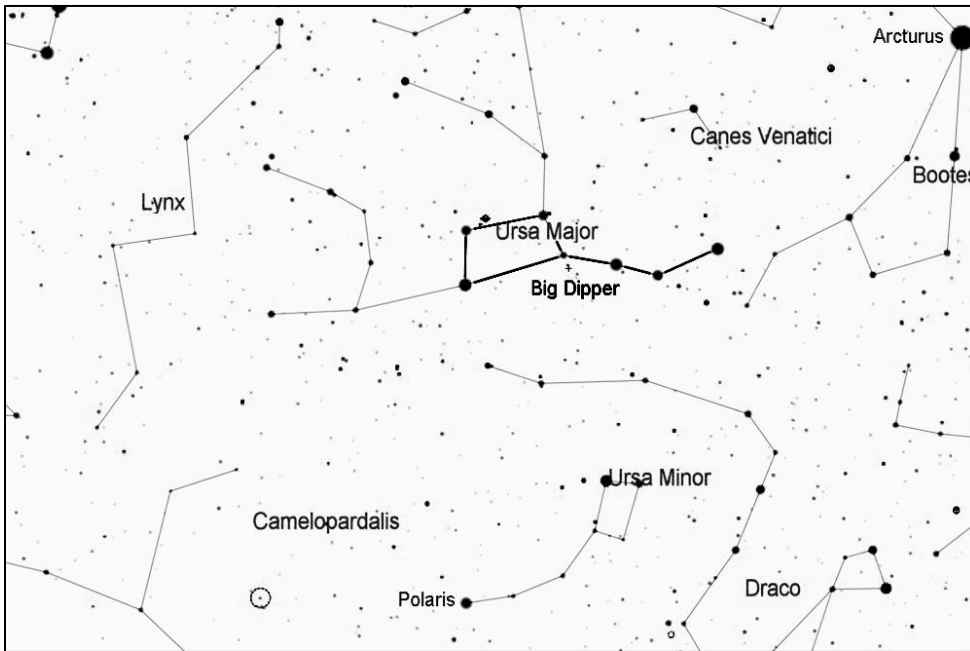


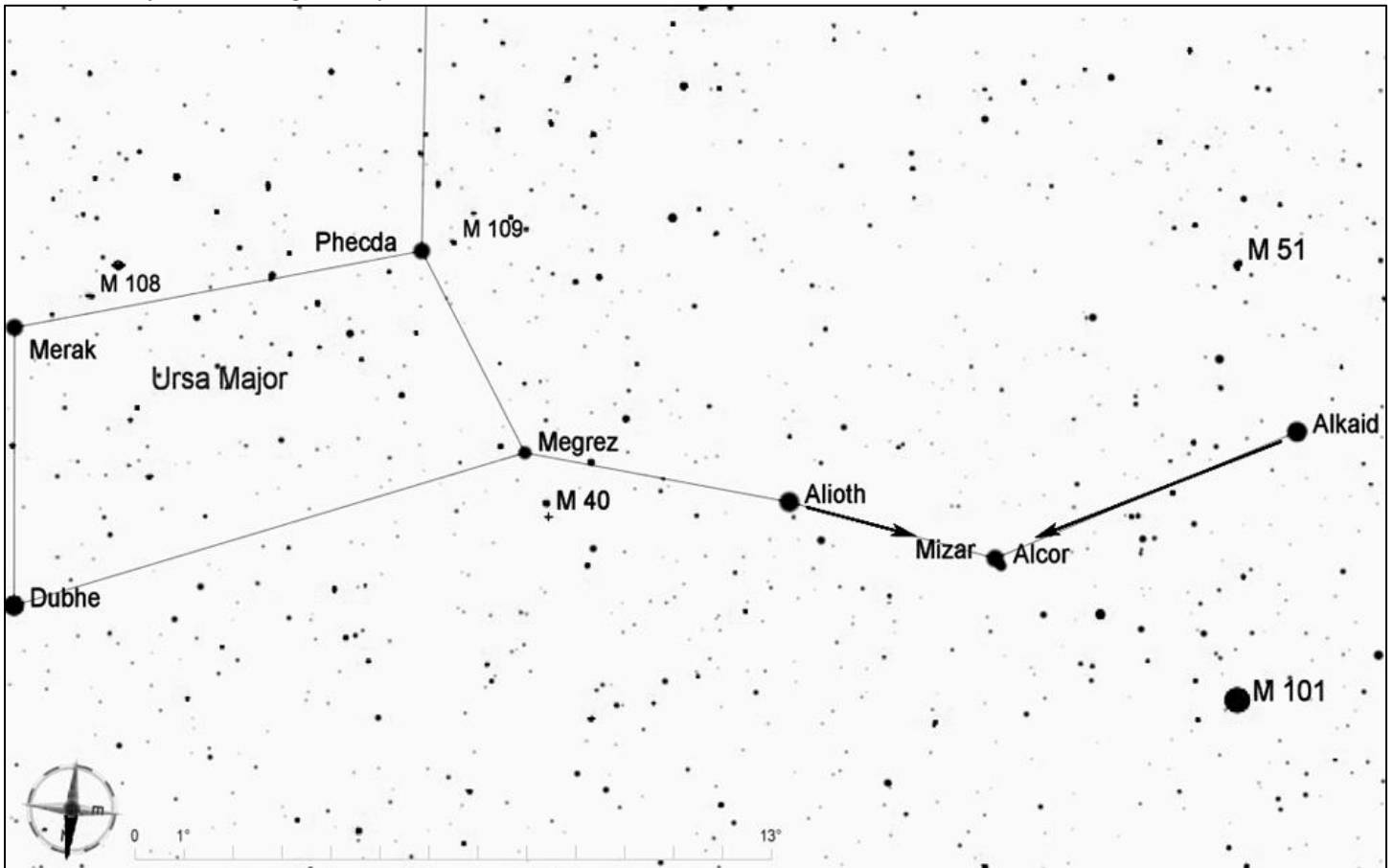
Mizar and Alcor, Double Star in Ursa Major

Mizar (magnitude 2.2) and Alcor (magnitude 4.0) may be the best-known double star in the sky, and the two stars can be seen with the naked eye. Through a telescope, Mizar is resolved as a close double star in itself; its two components are 14 arcseconds apart. These stars are about 86 light years from Earth.



Start by finding the Big Dipper, one of the most recognizable star patterns in the sky. It is part of the constellation Ursa Major, the big bear. It is shown here upside down, high in the sky above Polaris, which is where it can be found during the evenings in spring and summer. For other seasons and times of night, rotate the chart as needed to match what you see in the northern sky.

Note that north is to the bottom in this chart. Mizar is the star at the bend in the handle of the Big Dipper, the second star from the end of the handle. Alcor is just 1/5 of a degree away.



Star hop from www.skylodge.net by Jim Mazur. Star charts created with *Cartes du Ciel*.