

CA1 4.18: Practice RA and Dec Handout

Purpose: To practice plotting stars on standard star charts

Procedure: Plot the stars whose coordinates are given below. Use a scale appropriate to standard star charts which makes all the points fit on the grid in as large a picture as possible. A familiar constellation will be formed. Name the constellation here.

Hints:

Recall that RA runs right to left unlike most graphs which run left to right. Hours and minutes decrease as you move left on the graph.

Remember there are 60 minutes (m) of right ascension in an hour (h) and 60 minutes (') of declination in a degree (°)—the two kinds of minutes have different symbols because they are not the same size! RA minutes at the celestial equator are 15 times larger than declination minutes. Keep that in mind as you set up your scales.

Negative declinations include minutes which are also negative.

-1° 56' does not mean "go down 1 degree and up 56 minutes." It means "go down 1 degree and down 56/60 of another minute."

<u>RA</u>	<u>dec</u>
5h 55 m	7° 25'
5h 25 m	6° 21'
5h 41 m	-1° 56'
5h 36 m	-1° 12'
5h 32 m	-0° 18'
5h 48 m	-9° 40'
5h 14 m	-8° 12'
