

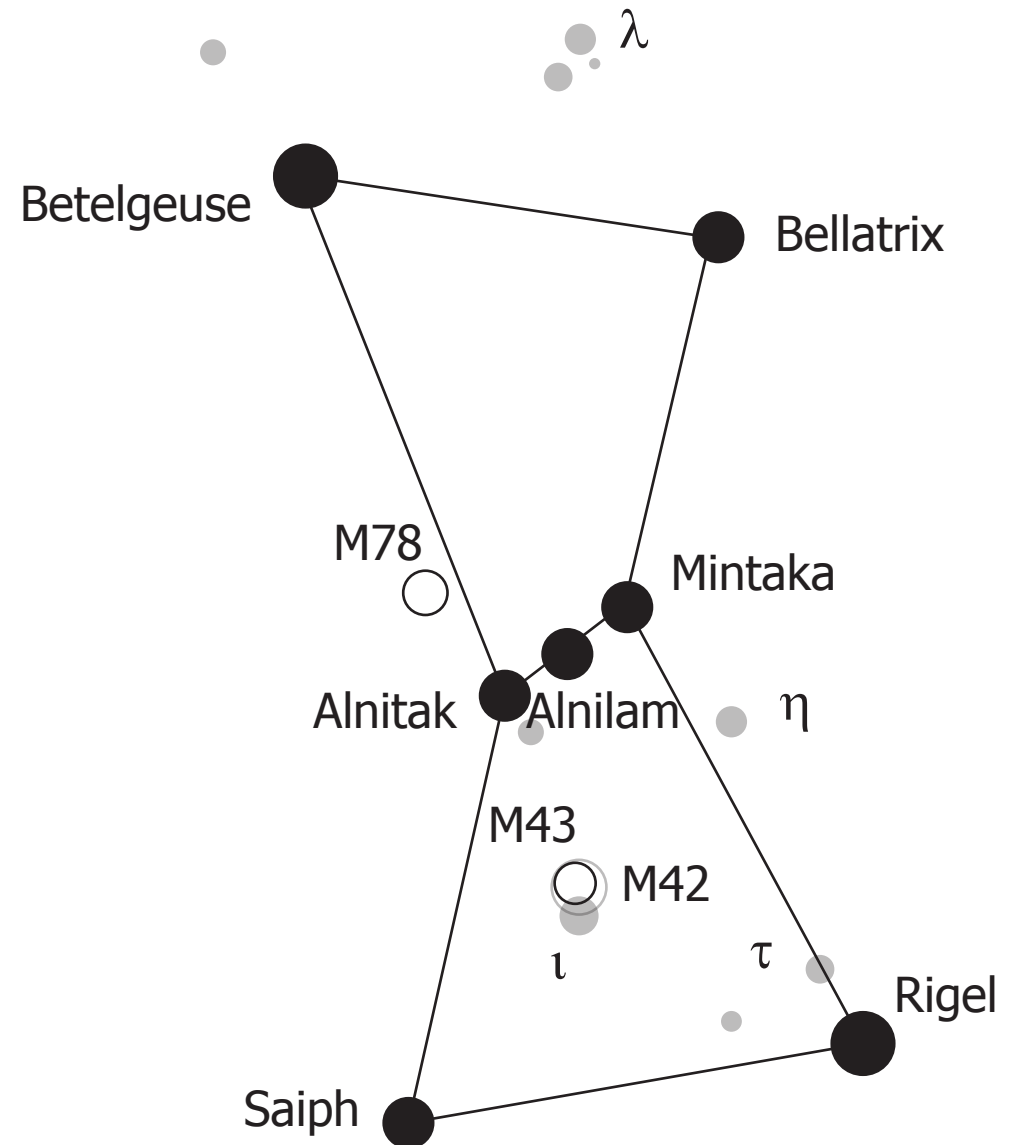


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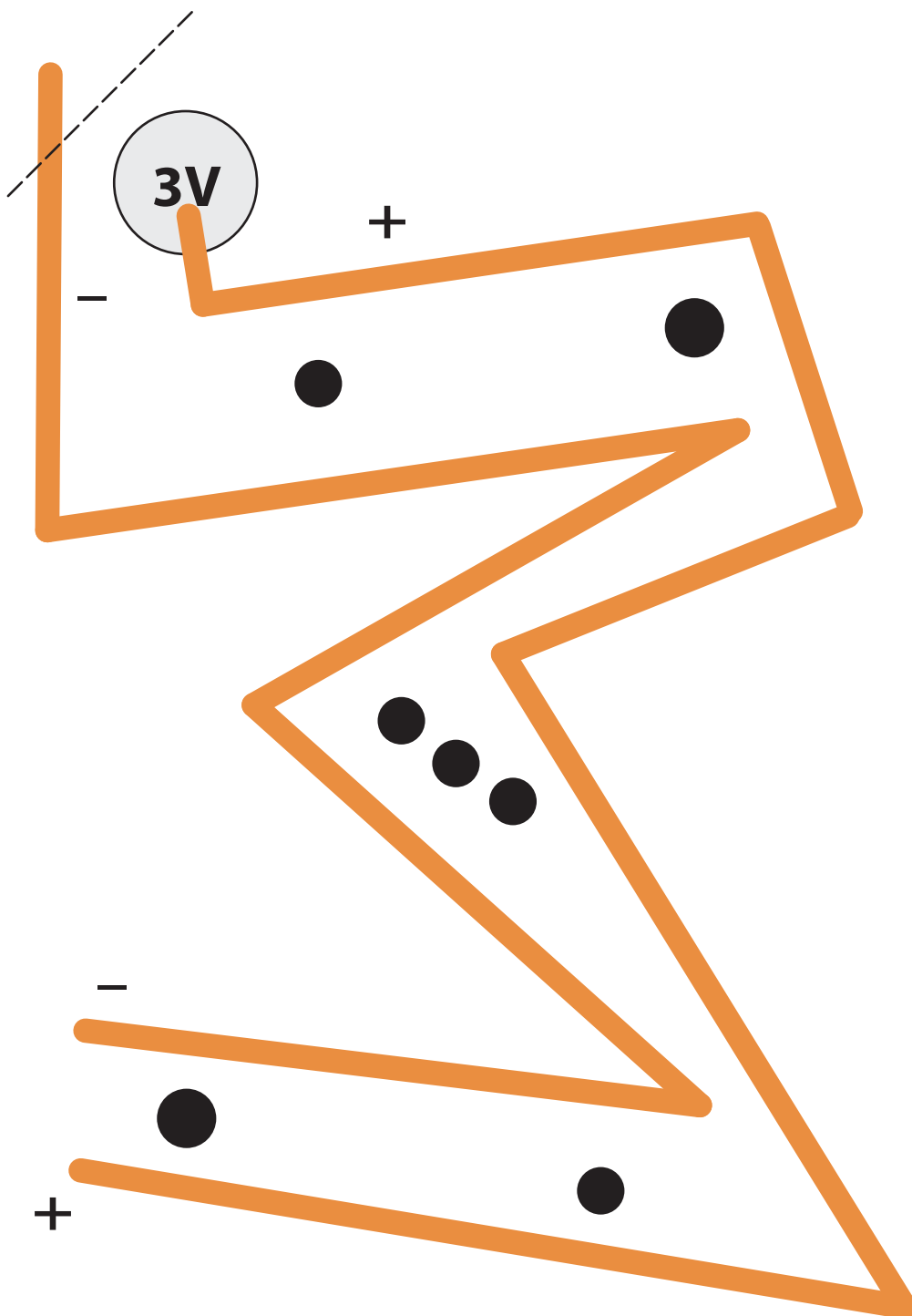


"Let's light up the constellations" by M.Sandri (INAF) - English version by G.Giobbi

Orion



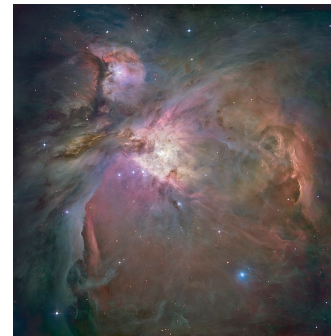
National Institute for Astrophysics (INAF)



Difficulty ★★☆☆

Orion (a.k.a. *the Hunter*) is one of the best known constellations, thanks to its bright stars and its position, near the celestial Equator, which makes it visible from most of the planet. The constellation has about 130 stars, which can be seen with the naked eye. It can be easily identified from the alignment of three stars, which form the Orion Belt, framed by a rectangle of four brighter stars.

The most important objects in the sky



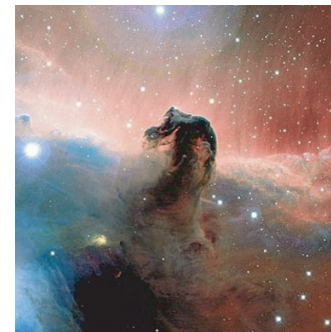
M42, the *Orion Nebula*, is one of the brightest diffuse nebulae of the night sky. It can be clearly recognized with the naked eye; it is placed south of the *Orion Belt*, at the centre of the so-called *Orion Sword*. Located at a distance of about 24 light-years, it is the star-formation region nearest to the Solar System

Credits: NASA, ESA, M. Robberto (STSI/ESA), HST OTPT



M43, the *De Mairan Nebula*, is a diffuse emission and reflection nebula, placed in the constellation of Orion. It constitutes the northern part of the large *Orion Nebula*, from which it is only apparently separated by a stretch of dark nebulosity.

Credits: NASA, ESA, M. Robberto (STSI/ESA), HST OTPT



Horsehead Nebula (also known as Barnard 33, B33) is a dark nebula in the constellation of Orion. The nebula is just underneath Alnitak, the most eastern star of the *Orion Belt*.

Credits: Jean-Charles Cuillandre (CFHT), Hawaiian Starlight, CFHT