

# Best Objects for Binoculars

A curated selection of 20 showpiece deep-sky objects and double stars ideal for 10x50 binoculars from northern latitudes. These targets are bright enough to stand out in handheld optics, large enough to fill the wide field of view, and span all four seasons. From glittering star clusters to glowing nebulae and nearby galaxies, each object reveals something special through modest glass.

20

Objects

18

Easy

1

Medium

1

Hard

Cyg · Tau · Per · UMa · Cnc · Gem · Sct · Aur · Her · CVn · Ser · Ori

Visibility scored for: **150mm Reflector** · Bortle 4

## 1 M45

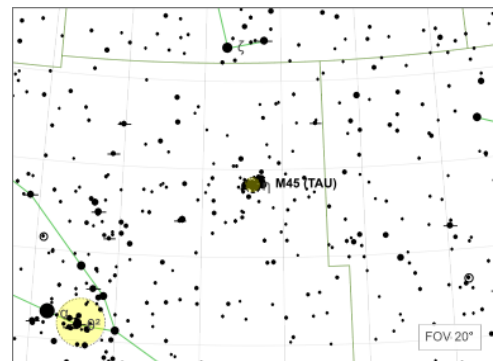
● Open Cluster · Tau · -

Easy

Position RA 03h 47m 24.0s Dec +24d 07' 0"  
 Magnitude 1.6 mag  
 Distance 445 ly  
 Visibility 9.5 / 10

### Notes

The quintessential binocular object. Six to nine brilliant blue-white stars form a tiny dipper shape in a 110' field, with dozens of fainter members filling the view. Far too large for most telescopes — binoculars show it at its best.

 Observed


## 2 Hyades C41

● Open Cluster · Tau

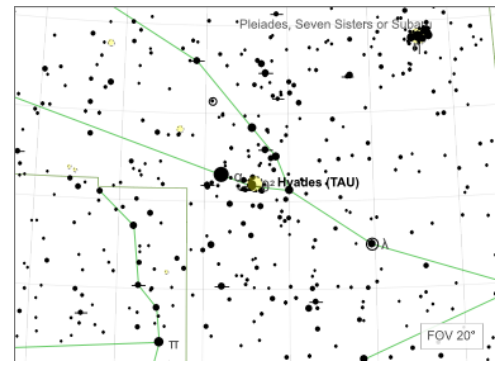
Easy

Position RA 04h 28m 0.0s Dec +16d 00' 0"  
 Magnitude 0.5 mag  
 Distance 151 ly  
 Visibility 8.5 / 10

Notes

The nearest open cluster to Earth at 150 light-years, spanning a huge 5.5 degrees. Binoculars reveal dozens of orange and white stars in a V-shaped pattern around Aldebaran, which is actually a foreground star.

Observed



### 3 Double Cluster C14

● Open Cluster · Per · NGC 869

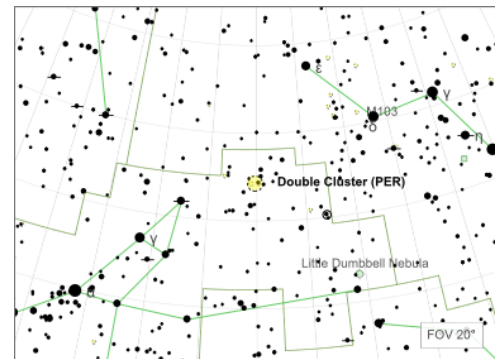
Easy

Position RA 02h 20m 42.0s Dec +57d 07' 59"  
 Magnitude 4.3 mag  
 Size 14.4'  
 Distance 7.3 kly  
 Visibility 10.0 / 10

Notes

Two rich clusters side by side, both fitting in a single binocular field. Each cluster contains hundreds of stars — look for the contrasting orange giants sprinkled among the blue-white members. Visible to the naked eye as a hazy patch.

Observed



### 4 M44

● Open Cluster · Cnc · NGC 2632

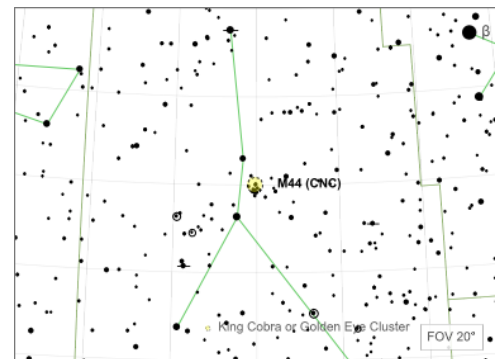
Easy

Position RA 08h 40m 24.0s Dec +19d 58' 60"  
 Magnitude 3.7 mag  
 Size 108.6'  
 Distance 610 ly  
 Visibility 9.5 / 10

Notes

A swarm of 50+ stars scattered across 1.5 degrees, perfectly framed by binoculars. Known since antiquity as 'Praesepe' (the Manger). Look for chains and arcs of stars — this is a cluster that binoculars were made for.

Observed



### 5 M35

● Open Cluster · Gem · NGC 2168

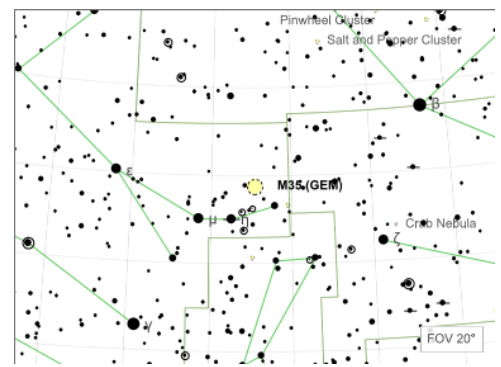
Easy

Position RA 06h 09m 6.0s Dec +24d 21' 0"  
 Magnitude 5.3 mag  
 Size 24.0'  
 Distance 2.8 kly  
 Visibility 10.0 / 10

Notes

A bright, rich cluster near the foot of Gemini, visible as a fuzzy spot to the naked eye. Binoculars resolve it into a granular glow of stars spanning half a degree. The tiny companion cluster NGC 2158 may appear as a faint smudge nearby.

Observed



## 6 M11

● Open Cluster · Sct · NGC 6705

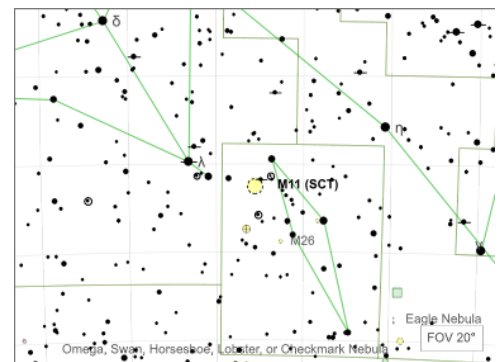
Easy

Position RA 18h 51m 6.0s Dec -6d 16' 0"  
 Magnitude 5.8 mag  
 Size 9.0'  
 Distance 6.2 kly  
 Visibility 10.0 / 10

Notes

One of the richest open clusters in the sky with nearly 3,000 members. Binoculars show a bright, compact wedge-shaped glow set against the dense Scutum Star Cloud. A prominent single star leads the 'flock' of stars.

Observed



## 7 M37

● Open Cluster · Aur · NGC 2099

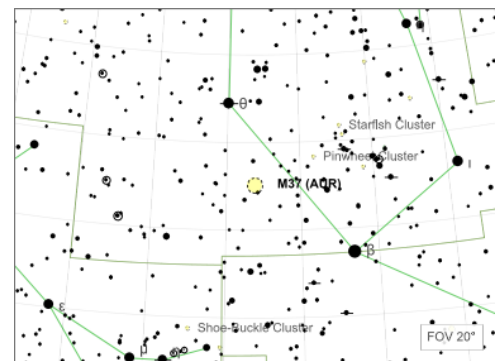
Easy

Position RA 05h 52m 18.0s Dec +32d 33' 2"  
 Magnitude 6.2 mag  
 Size 11.4'  
 Distance 4.4 kly  
 Visibility 10.0 / 10

Notes

The richest of the three Auriga clusters. Binoculars reveal a soft, grainy glow – a dense ball of faint stars. Nearby M36 and M38 are also binocular targets, all three fitting in a sweeping tour of Auriga.

Observed



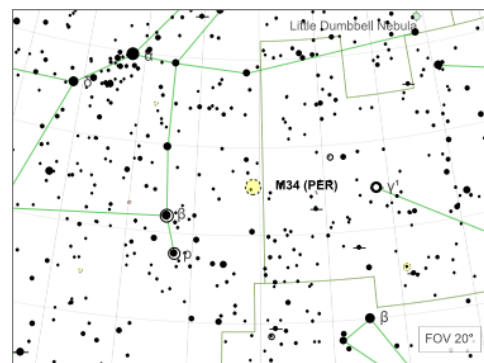
## 8 M34

● Open Cluster · Per · NGC 1039

Easy



Position RA 02h 42m 6.0s Dec +42d 46' 0"  
Magnitude 5.5 mag  
Size 22.5'  
Distance 1.5 kly  
Visibility 10.0 / 10



Notes

A loose, scattered cluster midway between Perseus and Andromeda, easily found with binoculars. About 20 stars are visible in 10x50s across a 35' field. A pleasant sight with curving chains of stars.

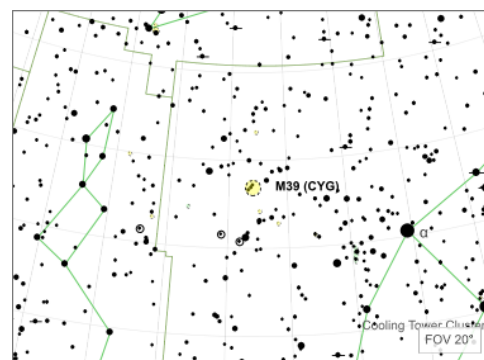
Observed

## 9 M39

● Open Cluster · Cyg · NGC 7092

Easy

Position RA 21h 31m 42.0s Dec +48d 25' 60"  
Magnitude 4.6 mag  
Size 19.5'  
Distance 800 ly  
Visibility 10.0 / 10



Notes

A large, loose triangular grouping of about 30 bright stars spanning nearly a full degree. Set in a rich Milky Way field in Cygnus. Best appreciated in binoculars — too spread out for most telescopes.

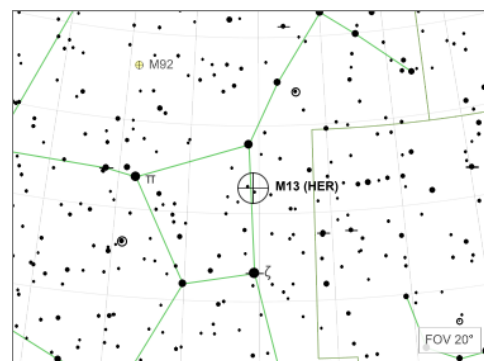
Observed

## 10 M13

● Globular Cluster · Her · NGC 6205

Easy

Position RA 16h 41m 41.2s Dec +36d 27' 36"  
Magnitude 5.8 mag  
Size 16.5'  
Distance 22.2 kly  
Visibility 9.5 / 10



Notes

The finest globular cluster in the northern sky. Binoculars show a bright, round fuzzy ball about 20' across between the keystone stars of Hercules. It won't resolve into stars, but the concentrated glow is unmistakable.

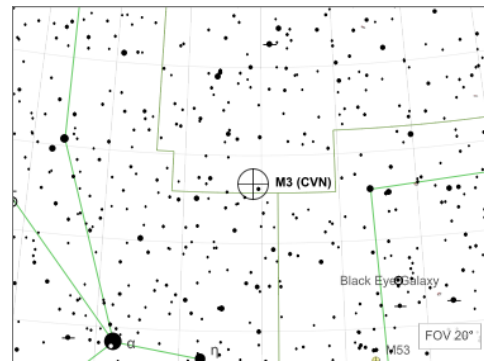
Observed

## 11 M3

● Globular Cluster · CVn · NGC 5272

Easy

Position RA 13h 42m 11.6s Dec +28d 22' 38"  
Magnitude 6.2 mag  
Size 16.2'  
Distance 33.9 kly  
Visibility 9.5 / 10



Notes

A bright globular cluster midway between Arcturus and Cor Caroli, containing half a million stars. In binoculars it appears as a small, concentrated fuzzy spot – bright enough to spot easily once you know where to look.

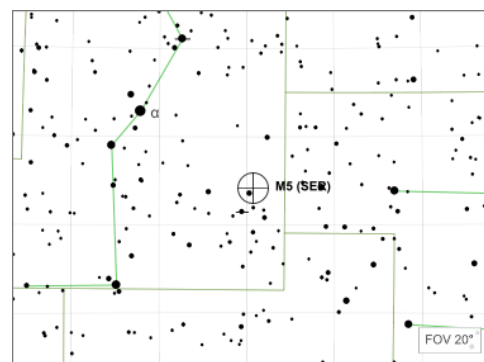
Observed

## 12 M5

● Globular Cluster · Ser · NGC 5904

Easy

Position RA 15h 18m 33.2s Dec +2d 04' 52"  
Magnitude 5.6 mag  
Size 15.0'  
Distance 24.5 kly  
Visibility 9.5 / 10



Notes

One of the oldest known globular clusters at 13 billion years. Binoculars reveal a bright, slightly oval fuzzy glow near the star 5 Serpentis. Rivals M13 in total brightness and many observers consider it the more beautiful of the two.

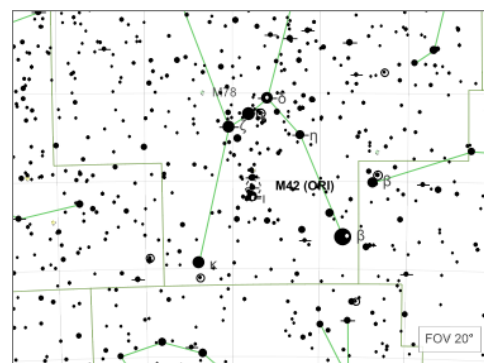
Observed

## 13 M42

● Diffuse Nebula · Ori · NGC 1976

Easy

Position RA 05h 35m 17.3s Dec -5d 23' 28"  
Magnitude 4.0 mag  
Size 90.0' × 60.0'  
Distance 1.3 kly  
Visibility 8.4 / 10



Notes

The most spectacular nebula in the sky, easily visible to the naked eye as the fuzzy middle 'star' of Orion's sword. Binoculars reveal the glowing fan of gas surrounding the Trapezium stars, spanning a full degree with averted vision.

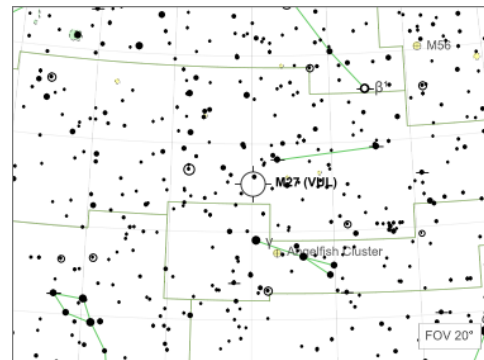
Observed

## 14 M27

● Planetary Nebula · Vul · NGC 6853

Easy

Position RA 19h 59m 36.3s Dec +22d 43' 16"  
 Magnitude 7.4 mag  
 Size 6.7'  
 Distance 1.4 kly  
 Visibility 9.4 / 10



Notes

The brightest planetary nebula in the sky. In 10x50 binoculars it appears as a small but distinct fuzzy rectangle or apple-core shape, noticeably non-stellar. A UHC or OIII filter held in front of one eyepiece makes it pop.

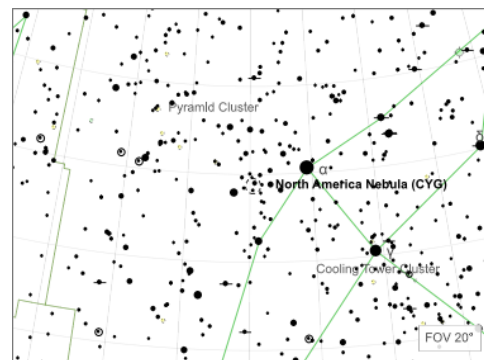
Observed

## 15 North America Nebula C20

● Diffuse Nebula · Cyg · NGC 7000

Medium

Position RA 20h 59m 0.0s Dec +44d 19' 59"  
 Magnitude 5.0 mag  
 Size 120.0' × 30.0'  
 Distance 2.2 kly  
 Visibility 7.4 / 10



Notes

A huge emission nebula near Deneb spanning 2 degrees, shaped like the continent. Too large and diffuse for telescopes — binoculars from a dark site show a distinct brightening in the Milky Way. A UHC filter enhances the view dramatically.

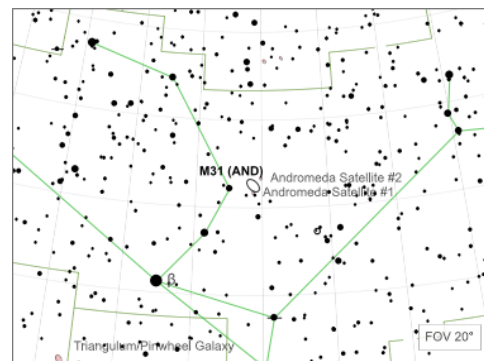
Observed

## 16 M31

● Galaxy · And · NGC 224

Easy

Position RA 00h 42m 44.3s Dec +41d 16' 9"  
 Magnitude 3.4 mag  
 Size 177.8' × 69.7'  
 Distance 2.5 Mly  
 Visibility 9.0 / 10



Notes

Our nearest large galactic neighbor at 2.5 million light-years. Binoculars reveal a long, bright oval glow spanning 3 degrees — six times the width of the full moon. Look for the compact companion galaxy M32 as a tiny bright spot nearby.

Observed

## 17 M33

● Galaxy · Tri · NGC 598

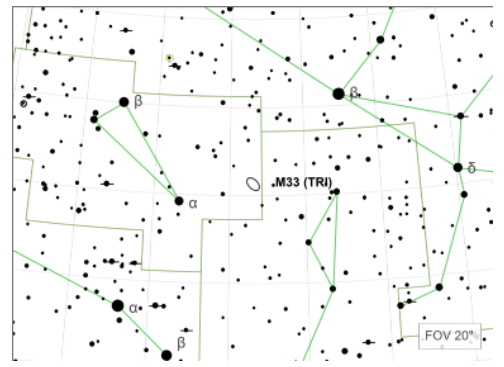
Hard

Position RA 01h 33m 50.0s Dec +30d 39' 37"  
 Magnitude 5.7 mag  
 Size 62.1' × 36.7'  
 Distance 2.7 Mly  
 Visibility 5.1 / 10

Notes

A face-on spiral galaxy with very low surface brightness. Paradoxically easier in binoculars than in a telescope because the wide field captures the entire diffuse glow. Requires dark skies – look for a large, ghostly oval patch.

Observed



18 **M81**

• Galaxy • UMa • NGC 3031

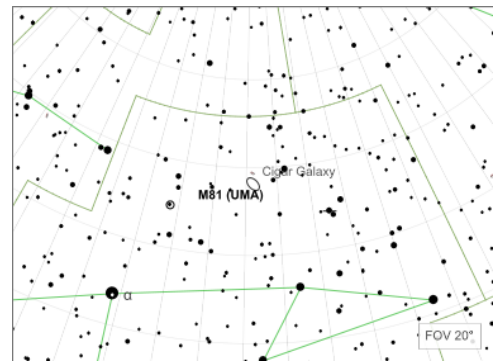
Easy

Position RA 09h 55m 33.2s Dec +69d 03' 55"  
 Magnitude 6.9 mag  
 Size 21.6' × 11.2'  
 Distance 12.0 Mly  
 Visibility 9.3 / 10

Notes

A bright spiral galaxy forming a stunning pair with the Cigar Galaxy (M82) just 38' away – both fit in a single binocular field. M81 appears as an elongated glow while M82 is a thin sliver. Best galaxy pair for binoculars.

Observed



19 **Albireo** HIP 95947; Beta1 Cyg; 6 Cyg

• Double Star • Cyg

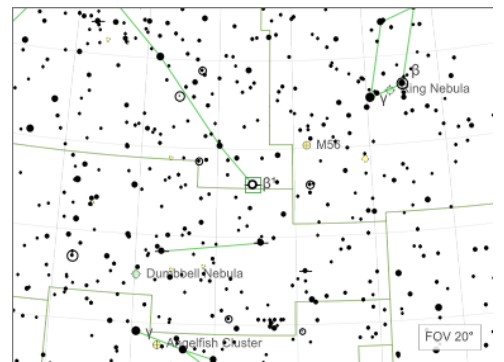
Easy

Position RA 19h 30m 43.3s Dec +27d 57' 35"  
 Magnitude 3.1 mag  
 Distance 433 ly  
 Visibility 9.5 / 10

Notes

The sky's finest color-contrast double star, marking the beak of the Swan. Binoculars easily split the wide 34" pair into a brilliant golden primary and sapphire companion. A showpiece at every star party.

Observed



20 **Mizar** HIP 65378; Zeta UMa; 79 UMa

• Double Star • UMa

Easy

Position RA 10h 55m 55.0s Dec +61d 56' 30"

Position RA 13h 23m 55.5s Dec +54d 55' 31"  
Magnitude 2.3 mag  
Distance 69 ly  
Visibility 9.5 / 10

Notes

The famous naked-eye double in the Big Dipper's handle. Binoculars clearly separate Mizar (mag 2.3) from Alcor (mag 4.0), 12 arcminutes apart. An ancient eye-test star pair and one of the first doubles discovered telescopically.

Observed

