


City Stargazing

March to June
Leo

Safety

- Make sure you take an adult outside with you
- Remember to wrap up warm.



Do you ever
look up and
wonder at
the twinkling
stars?

People have always marvelled at the night sky. On a clear night, in a dark place, you can see planets, thousands of stars, and the faint wisps of light that are our galaxy the Milky Way. The light from towns and cities makes it harder to make out the stars the night sky. But that doesn't mean we can't stargaze. Let's explore some constellations in the night sky.

When and where

- Wait until a little after the Sun sets so it's dark enough to see the stars. In Summer, you'll have to wait longer for it to be dark enough.
- Pick a spot outside where you can see the most sky, away from streetlights, and without branches or other houses in the way.
- Stand there for a little while and let your eyes adjust to the dark.

Pictures in the stars

- When you look at the sky, you can make shapes and drawings with the stars (a bit like playing connect the dots)!
- Astronomers – scientists who study space – have agreed on 88 official star patterns. We call these official patterns “constellations”.



Leo, the lion constellation, is visible on dark spring evenings.

1 Look for this pattern of stars, shaped like a backwards question-mark. There are six stars, but you might not be able to see them all. The shape might be slightly sideways.



2 The question mark shape makes the head of the lion, looking to the side. If you look to the left of it, you might see some more stars that make up the lion's body.



3 If you are struggling to find Leo, it might help to use a compass. Leo is a Spring constellation, and we see it in the South half of the sky.

4 The brightest star in Leo is the one at the bottom of the question mark. It is called Regulus. It looks like one star, but it is actually four stars very close together.



5 When you look at Leo, you might not think it looks like a lion. What other shapes do you think the stars make? Some people think it looks like a rocket, or a dancing person.



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