

Guy Ottewell explains his sky dome maps:

The sky dome map for each month shows what is above the horizon at a convenient (your local) evening time for latitude 40 degrees north. If you travel north, stars at the south edge of the map disappear; at the north edge others spend more time above the horizon.

You can see the relation between the map and sky by holding the map over your face. The central point of the map is the overhead point, or zenith. Orient the map so the direction you are facing (east, west, north or south) is at the bottom.

Stars are shown down to magnitude 5.5, so you might require a dark sky to see some of the dimmer stars shown or the Milky Way. Also, the map only shows the more conspicuous constellations.

Planets are shown on the 16th of the month in the mid-evening sky, with symbols sized for brightness like the stars. All planets are visible to the unaided eye except Neptune. Furthermore, planets in the sky after midnight and in the twilight sky near sunset or sunrise will not appear on the sky dome maps.

The moon is shown (exaggerated eight times in size) at 0 UTC on the days when it is at first quarter and full phases. This is 7 p.m EST on the previous day. It is also in its geocentric position, that is, without parallax; as seen from northern latitudes, it is slightly farther south.

Major meteor showers are indicated by bursts of lines pointing out from their radiant. But some are not shown, because their radiants are not in view at map time.

The ecliptic is drawn as a thick curve. It marks the plane in which the Earth revolves around the sun.

The celestial equator curves from the east point to the west point of each map. At declination 0, it is the only line of declination shown. Ticks along it are at the 24 hours of right ascension.