

Constellation Discovery Series:

Gemini

Translation:

- In Latin, Gemini means the twins. However, the twins identified with the constellation depend on the culture.
- In Egyptian astrology, this constellation was identified with twin goats, while in Arabian astrology, it is said that these stars represent twin peacocks.
- A majority of the Western world tends to identify these twins as Castor and Pollux from the Greek myths.
- However, other twin pairs, identified with Gemini in the Western world, include the older and younger Horus and the mythical founders of Rome, Remus and Romulus.

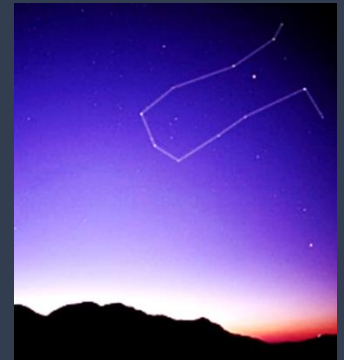
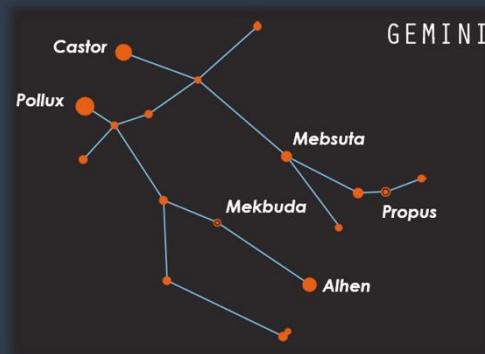
Visibility:

- It is located northeast of the constellation Orion and southeast of the constellation Taurus.
 - The best time to see it is during February or early spring.
- If you can find Orion, the bright hunter constellation, you will be able to find Gemini.
- Orion is noticeable for the three medium-bright stars that make up its belt. Look for these three stars first and then look below Orion's belt for the bright blue-white star Rigel. Now look above Orion's belt for the reddish star Betelgeuse. You can draw an imaginary line from Rigel through Betelgeuse to locate Castor and Pollux, two of the brightest stars in the Gemini constellation.
- You can also find Gemini using the Big Dipper. Draw an imaginary line diagonally through the bowl of the Big Dipper. You are going in the direction opposite of the Big Dipper handle. This line will point to Castor and Pollux.
- These two stars represent the heads of the twins, while fainter stars outline the pairs' bodies.

Additional Facts:

- Since the ecliptic crosses its boundaries, the sun, moon, and planets seem to cross through Gemini. Meaning that Gemini is included in the 12 Zodiac constellations, like Capricorn in our last video.
- In astrology, Gemini is the third sign of the Zodiac and represents those born between May 21st and June 20th.
- According to astrology, people born to Gemini are adaptable, outgoing, and intelligent.
- The best meteor display of the year — the Geminids — also appears to radiate from this part of the sky in mid-December.

Examples:



Myths:

In the Greek mythology, Castor and Pollux were half-brothers. Both the sons of a mortal woman, Leda.

Castor was the mortal brother, and the son of a king. While Pollux was the immortal brother, son of Zeus, king of the gods.

Castor and Pollux grew up together and were very close. Castor was an excellent equestrian and was proficient at fencing. He is even credited with teaching Heracles to fence, while Pollux was famed for his boxing skills.

The twins often came to the aid of sailing crews. Known as the patron saints of sailors, they had the power to rescue sailors who shipwrecked. This power was said to be given to them by the sea god Poseidon himself.

Later, when Castor was slain in battle, Pollux became inconsolable and begged Zeus to relieve him of the bonds of immortality. Zeus granted his request, and, to this day, Pollux and Castor stand reunited in the heavens, a tribute to the power of a sibling love.