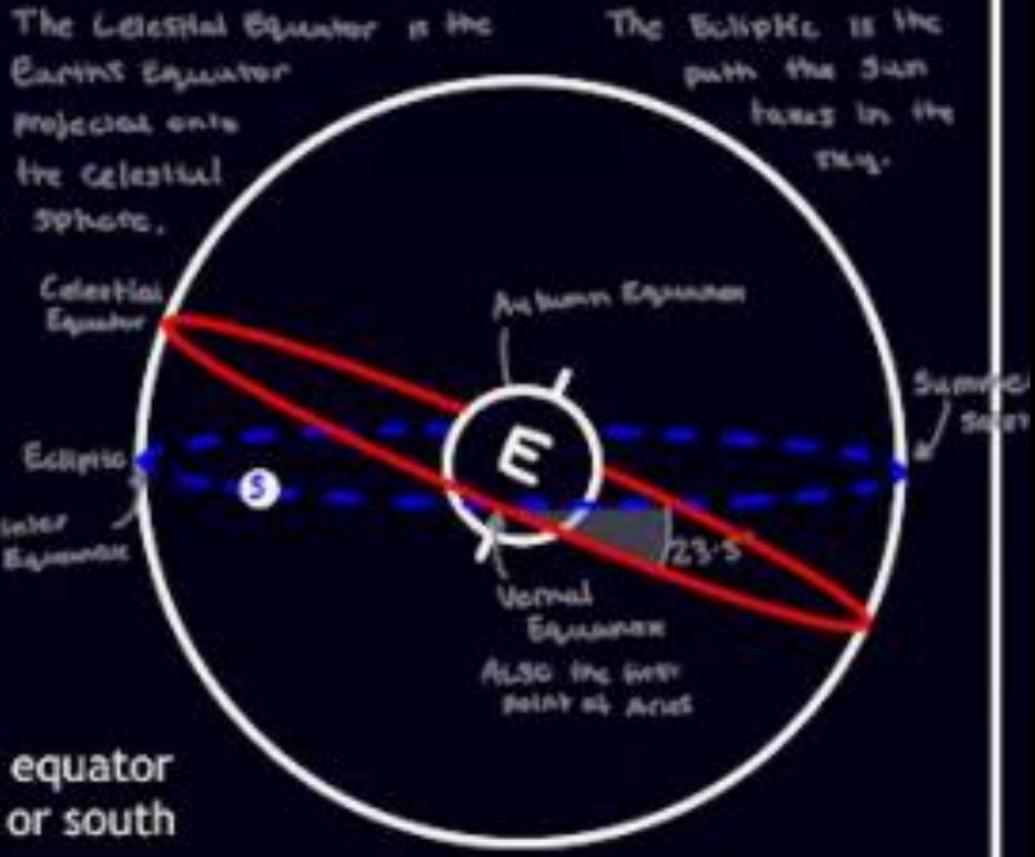


The Celestial Sphere

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The Celestial Sphere is an abstract concept we use to locate stars in the night sky, consisting of DECLINATION and RIGHT ASCENSION, similar to latitude and longitude on Earth.



DECLINATION:
 - distance from the celestial equator
 - measured in degrees north or south



CELESTIAL LONGITUDE
 - distance from the first point of Aries
 - measured in hours

CELESTIAL WOBBLE:
 Because the earth wobbles a bit, stars appear to move a little in the sky over the years. Thus, the first point of Aires no longer is in the constellation of Aries, but is in Pisces.

ZENITH: The highest point directly above the observers.
NADIR: The highest point directly below the observer.

ALTITUDE: A stars angle from the observers horizon.
AZIMUTH: A stars angle from the nearest cardinal compass point.



MERIDIAN: A great circle which runs from the poles and the observers zenith.
CULMINATION: When a celestial object passes the observers meridian, it is at the highest point in the sky it will reach: it culminates.