

A Quick Guide to the Variable Star Plotter

Star charts can be plotted at <http://www.aavso.org/observing/charts/vsp/>. You can plot a field for any point in the sky. For instructions on how to use these charts to make an observation, consult the Manual for Visual Observing of Variable Stars.

AAVSO Variable Star Plotter

Location* Name or RA Dec
Delimited by spaces or colons; sexagesimal or decimal degrees

Title
Title to be displayed top center of chart

Comment
Comment to be displayed beneath chart.star field

Plot a chart of this scale:
Use this to quickly plot a chart with same dimensions and scale as existing AAVSO charts.

FOV*
Field of view size, expressed in arc minutes (0-900, 0-60 for DSS)

Resolution*
Print resolution of image, expressed in dots per inch (75-300)

Mag. Limit*
Limiting magnitude for stars (5-25; ignored if Use DSS image checked)

North Up Down
East Right Left

Image Use DSS image
Query Digitized Sky Survey and render image on chart

Field Photometry Do not plot a chart, just give me a table of photometry

Other Variables Do not mark additional variables in the field.
 Mark GCVS variables in the field of view
 Mark all variables in the field of view

Chart ID
The Chart ID of a previously created chart (will override all other settings) [\(what is this?\)](#)

* required

Type in either the star's name or coordinates here.

The title is a word or phrase you'd like displayed at the top of the chart. If left blank, what you placed in the *name* field will be used.

What you type in here will be printed at the bottom of the chart.

If you are familiar with the older AAVSO charts, then you can use this setting to replicate their dimensions. If you don't know what this means then feel free to ignore this feature.

This is the chart's field of view in arc minutes.

This refers to the size of the chart as seen on your computer screen. A resolution of 75 dpi is the default value for most web pages. Higher resolution will give you better quality, but larger images that may not fit on a single printed page. We suggest sticking with the default.

This is the limiting magnitude for the field. Stars fainter than this will not be plotted.

This is where you set the orientation of the field to match your telescope or binoculars.

By default, a black and white chart will be drawn with circles representing stars. If you would prefer to have a real picture of the sky instead, click this and a picture from the Digitized Sky Survey will be plotted instead. This is slower and sometimes may time out.

If you are a CCD or PEP observer, you may want access to precise photometry of the comparison stars. Check this box to plot a table of multicolor photometry instead of a star chart.

Sometimes, more than one variable star can be found within a field. If you would like these other variables shown on the chart, check these boxes. GCVS variables tend to be the more well known variables. If you check *all* you will also get many new and suspected variable stars. The field could get crowded!

Every chart is plotted with a **chart id** in the upper right hand corner. This should be reported with your variable star observation. If you would like to replot a lost chart, just type in the chart id here and the chart will be replicated using all the settings you used to plot it the first time. This can also be used to see what charts other people are using to make their own observations.

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