

Codex Astronomica

Tutorial



Take a deep breath: in through the nose, out through the mouth. Imagine yourself in a field, soft grass beneath your feet and a beautiful night sky over your head. You are far from the lights of the city and the stars above you shine bright and clear.

Listen to the soft backdrop of insects chirping, feel the calm breeze brush past your face, cooling you in the warm summer air. The sky is clear tonight, and you have no trouble making out the hundreds and thousands of stars above you. You waste no time beginning to trace lines between them to create shapes and stories.



Welcome to the *Codex Astronomica* Tutorial. Through this tutorial, I hope to teach you how to play *Codex Astronomica* in an interactive format that should allow you to pick up the rules in steps without having to try to remember all of the information presented in the rulebook at once. Of course, you may certainly still keep the rulebook on hand to further define any rules that come up.

This document also serves as a demo version of *Codex Astronomica*. That means you can play through it without having to print and assemble any other pieces for the game.

Scenario 1: Lines in the Sky

You turn to your telescope and shift it into position, fiddling with the knobs until the stars come into focus. You take a moment to find a familiar sight – the constellation Calix, the chalice.



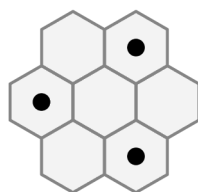
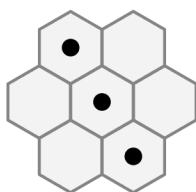
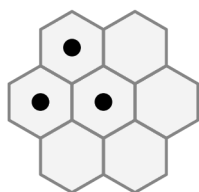
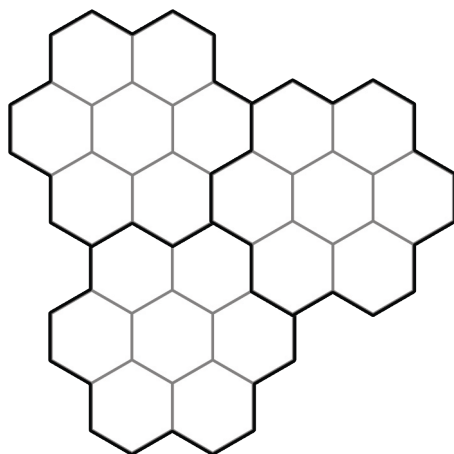
Take a moment to find *Calix* now. In the center of the facing page, you will find 3 **star cards**, each with a hex flower containing a number of dots – stars.

Below these is a **constellation** card – *Calix*, the chalice. This card shows you the placement of stars that is required to create the constellation in your night sky: hexes that have a star in them must have a star in your final night sky, while hexes that don't cannot contain a star.

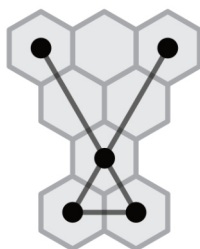
Above the star cards and constellation card is your **night sky**. Your night sky is made up of bold-bordered **tiles**, each of which contain seven **hexes**.

As you place your star cards into your night sky, ensure that each star card is placed perfectly within one of the bold-bordered tiles. Star cards can be rotated in any direction, but may not be mirrored or placed such that they cross outside of their tiles.

Constellations can also be rotated in any direction, and also may not be mirrored. However, constellations will frequently be drawn across tile borders – even small constellations such as *Calix* are simply too large to fit in a single tile.



Calix



Scenario 2: Crossing Lines

From Calix, you move your telescope onwards, scanning for other constellations. You spot a pair twinkling next to each other – Hasta the spear and Arcus the bow.

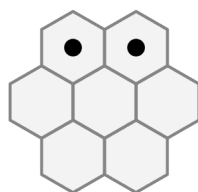
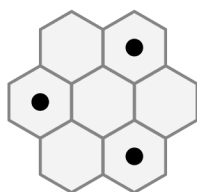
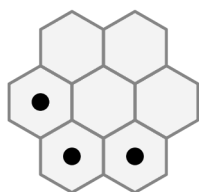
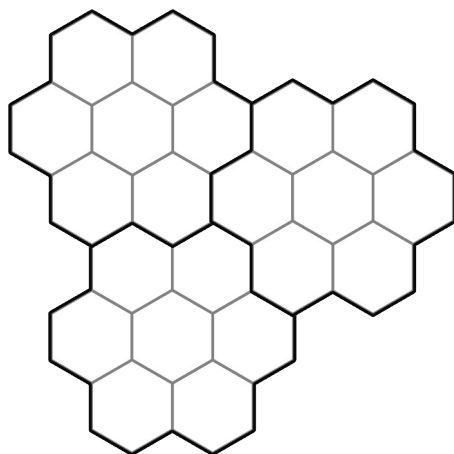


Your task in this scenario is to find two constellations using only 3 star cards. As you do, keep the following rules in mind:

Constellations may **never** share a hex. Regardless of if that hex has a star in it or not, if a hex is part of one constellation, it cannot be part of another one.

Hexes that are part of a constellation but do not contain a star **may** fall outside of your night sky. You may consider all space outside of the night sky to be empty hexes.

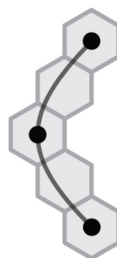
Beyond the Tutorial: In a regular game of *Codex Astronomica*, you draw random star cards from the deck in sets of 3. You must always use **all** of the drawn cards, so making careful placements is the key to scoring well.



Haŝta



Arcus



Scenario 3: Shining Bright

You turn your telescope once again, and a brightly shining cluster of stars grabs your attention. You recognize it to be the Halley Cluster, part of the constellation Ancora.



You will notice that the star cards you have access to in this scenario have a new symbol – three stars grouped together. These are **star clusters**.

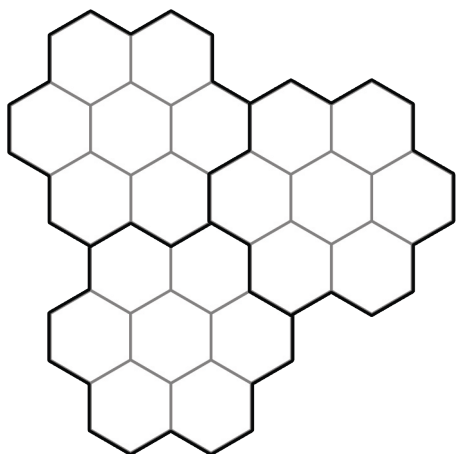
A star cluster is an especially bright group of stars. It counts as a star when used to create a constellation and then some: when a star cluster is used to form a constellation, it awards an additional 2 points.

Star clusters are rather bright and eye catching – if the cluster is not placed as part of a constellation, it will instead deduct 2 points from your final score.

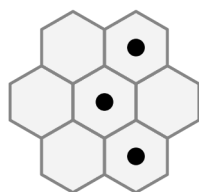
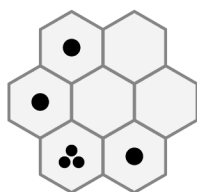
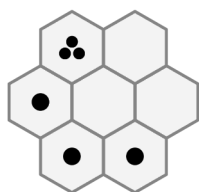
Typically however, constellations themselves are your primary source of points – at the bottom of each constellation card are two key pieces of information – its tier and its point value. The constellation of *Ancora* is worth 8 points.

Find a way to score a perfect 12 points in this scenario.

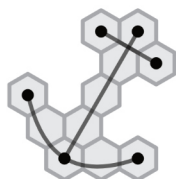
Beyond the Tutorial: The second piece of information at the bottom of a constellation card is its tier. In a standard game of *Codex Astronomica*, you draw a total of 6 constellations – three **minor** (tier 1), two **major** (tier 2) and one **zodiac** (tier 3) – to create in your night sky.



Total _____



Ancora



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Scenario 4: A Splash of Colour

Moving on from Ancora, you stop suddenly as you notice a splash of colour. Spread across the sky like a soft blue fog is a nebula that you take a moment to appreciate, providing the backdrop for Avis the bird.



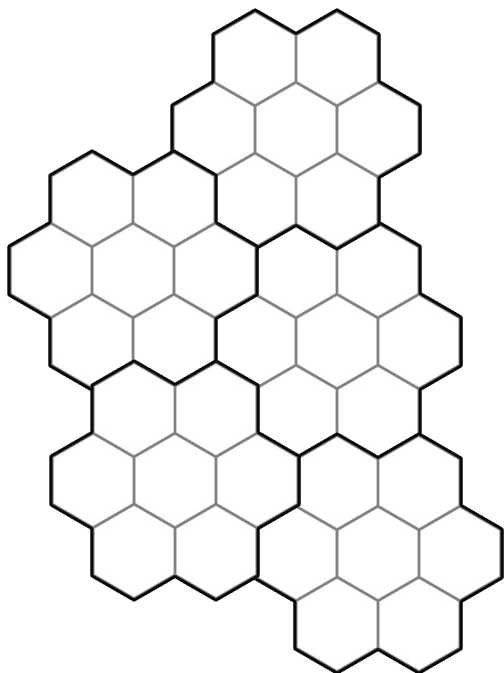
In this next scenario, your goal will be to create the largest nebula you can, while still completing the constellation *Avis*.

Nebulas are shaded hexes that connect to any similar shaded hexes they are adjacent to.

In terms of scoring, nebulas are quite simple. At the end of a game of *Codex Astronomica*, you will find the largest nebula present in your night sky. You gain 1 additional point for each hex that is part of that nebula.

Remember that nebulas never interfere with constellations, allowing you to weave a nebula through your night sky as large as you can manage.

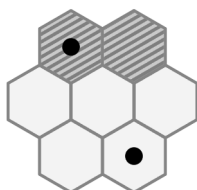
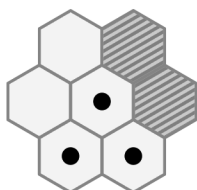
For this scenario, your goal is to complete *Avis* and score a total of at least 15 points.



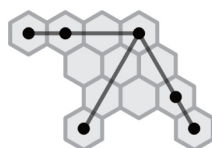
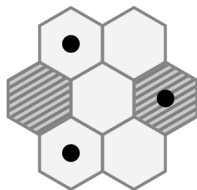
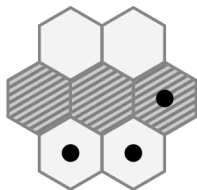
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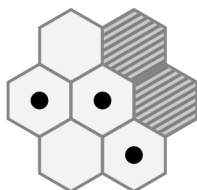
Total _____



Avis



8



Scenario 5: A Wider View

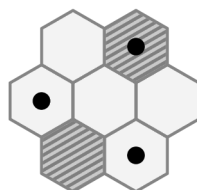
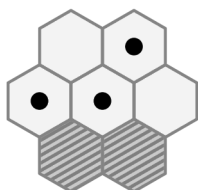
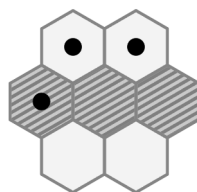
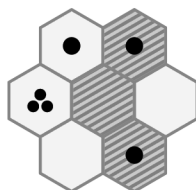
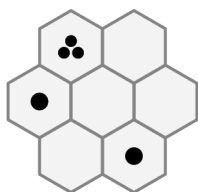
You zoom out the telescope a little to better appreciate the vastness of the night sky. You focus in on another nebula, this one spotted with multiple star clusters and constellations.

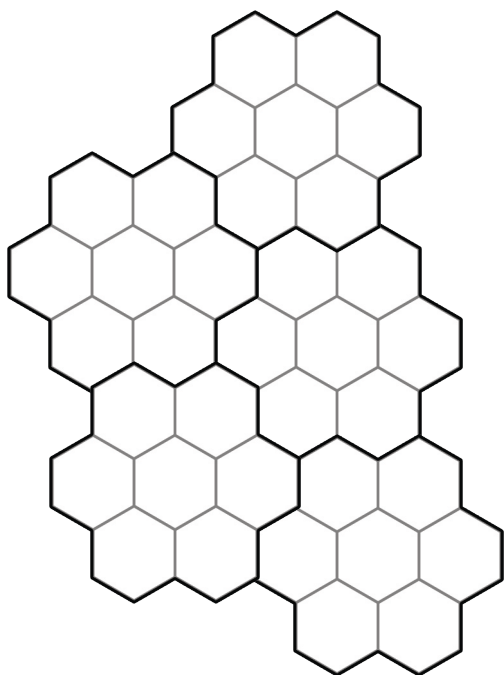


It's time to start putting these rules together. This time, there are no new rules – you have 3 constellations and 5 files. Each star card contains a star cluster and/or a nebula for you to make the most of.

You do not lose points for failing to create a constellation, and you will likely find it difficult to fit all 3 into your night sky – choose wisely which will enable you to gather the most points, especially when taking into account your largest possible nebula and careful use of star clusters!

Your goal is to find a way to gather at least 20 points.





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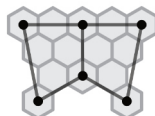
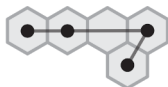
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Total _____

Clavem

Fumus

Papilio



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4

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5

8

Scenario 6: Aligning the Stars

Turning the telescope once again, you notice a star all on its own in the sky. You know it to be Atlas Prime, a guide star. You follow a line from the star across the sky, pointing toward the horizon, guiding you as it has so many others.

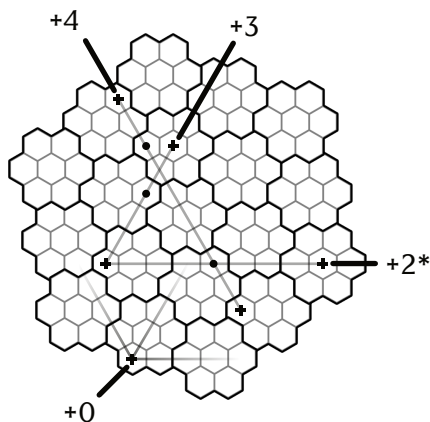


In this scenario, you will put the constellations to the side, instead turning your focus to **guide stars** shaped as a plus. Just like star clusters, guide stars can be used as stars within a constellation, but these do not confer any bonuses for having done so.

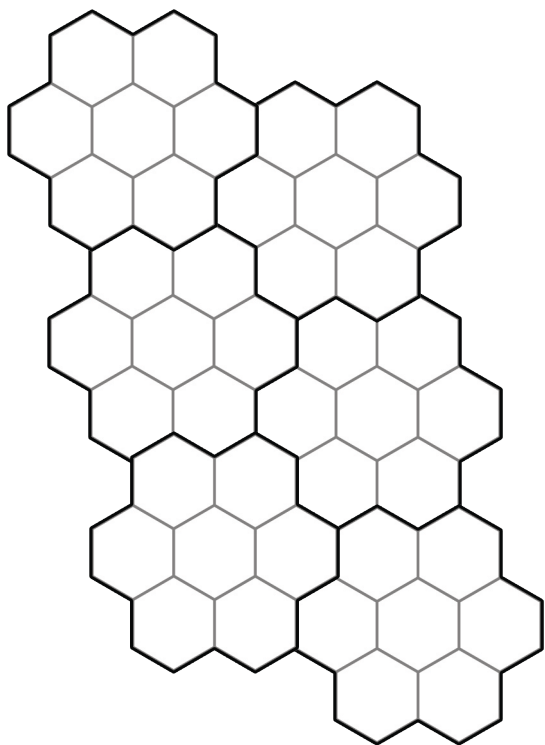
Instead, guide stars grant points through another method. Once all stars are placed into the night sky, trace three lines through the walls of each guide star's hex. If any hexes along those lines are occupied by another guide star, they form a **guide star pair**!

Each pair of guide stars scores 2 points. They score 1 additional point for each star aligned between the guide star pair. However, while each guide star may belong to **any number** of pairs, non-guide stars aligned between pairs only score **once**, even when aligned between multiple pairs.

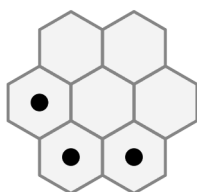
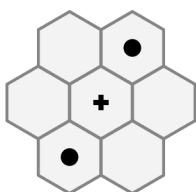
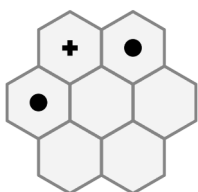
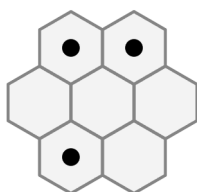
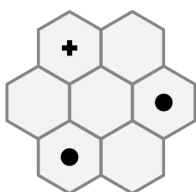
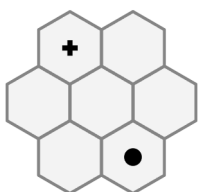
Your goal for this scenario is to score 16 points.



*The star between this pair was already counted for another guide star pair.



Total _____



Scenario 7: One Last Look

Your eyelids begin to droop as the night draws long, and yet you find it difficult to tear yourself away from the wonder the night sky fills you with. You take one long last look at the stars.

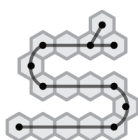


This is the final tutorial scenario for *Codex Astronomica*! It is time to put together everything you've learned and create one final night sky.

Your goal for this scenario is to score at least 25 points. Good luck!

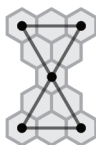
Beyond the Tutorial: A typical game of *Codex Astronomica* is played on a larger board – a total of 19 tiles. At the start of the game, you reveal just one star card – that card must be drawn onto the central tile of your night sky. After that, you reveal 3 star cards at a time for a total of 6 rounds of play.

Aspis



13

Clepsydris



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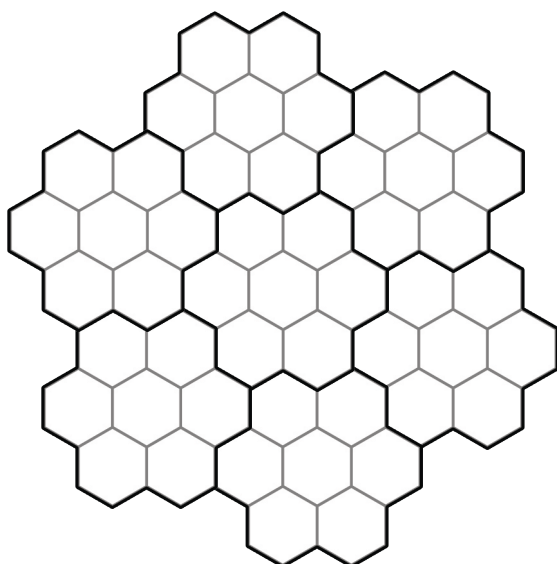
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Unguis



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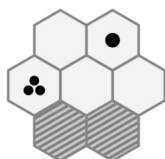
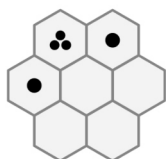
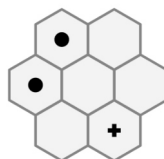
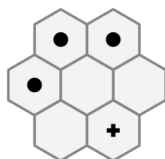
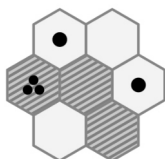
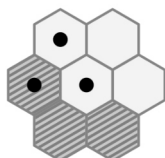
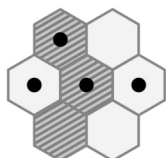
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Total _____



Thank You for Playing



You stifle a yawn and sigh. It's time to put away the telescope and return home. Yet even as you lay in bed, the stars still dance in your mind, their shapes coming alive in your imagination. You didn't catch a shooting star today; maybe that's yet to come.



Thank you for playing the *Codex Astronomica* demo/tutorial. I hope you have enjoyed the puzzle!

If you are interested in further *Codex Astronomica*, you can find all print-and-play materials at <https://www.marcinon.com/codex-astronomica.php>

There, you can download and print 30 star cards, a suite of 20 constellations, and endlessly reprintable score sheets. Additionally, you will find a number of scenarios that you can delve into with your printed cards for a more challenging puzzle experience.