



## DO YOU HAVE A “BIRTHDAY STAR”?

**When you look into space, you look back in time.** You see stars and other objects in space as they looked when the light left them.

For example, the Sun is 8 light-minutes (93 million miles) away from Earth, which means the Sun’s light takes 8 minutes to reach Earth and we always see the Sun as it looked 8 minutes ago.

Depending on your current age, you might have a “birthday star”—a star whose light left it around the time you were born. The starlight you see is as old as you are.

IF YOU ARE...	YOUR BIRTHDAY STAR IS...	WHICH IS LOCATED...
8 minutes old	the Sun	in the daytime sky
4 years old	Alpha Centauri (not visible from North Carolina)	in the constellation Centaurus the Centaur
6 years old	Barnard’s Star (not visible to the naked eye)	in the constellation Ophiuchus the Serpent Bearer
8 years old	Wolf 359 (not visible to the naked eye)	in the constellation Leo the Lion
9 years old	Sirius (brightest star in the night sky)	in the constellation Canis Major the Big Dog
10 years old	Epsilon Eridani	in the constellation Eridanus the River
11 years old	Procyon	in the constellation Canis Minor the Little Dog
12 years old	Tau Ceti	in the constellation Cetus the Sea Monster
17 years old	Altair	part of the Summer Triangle
25 years old	Vega	part of the Summer Triangle
34 years old	Pollux	in the constellation Gemini the Twins
37 years old	Arcturus	in the constellation Boötes the Herdsman
43 years old	Capella	brightest star in the constellation Auriga
51 years old	Castor	in the constellation Gemini the Twins
65 years old	Aldebaran	eye of Taurus the Bull
79 years old	Regulus	brightest star in Leo the Lion

Not all possible birthday stars are listed. Find a more complete list at:  
<http://www.pbs.org/seeinginthedark/explore-the-sky/birthday-stars.html>