

Uranometria 2000.0's Globular Cluster Database

Some 170 globular clusters, including both Milky Way and Magellanic Cloud objects; are contained in this atlas. They are shown as a continuous-line open circle with an internal cross. On the main charts globulars larger than 5' are drawn to scale; on the 2× close-up maps they are to scale if their diameter is larger than 2.5', and on the 3× maps, if they are larger than 1.7'.

While open clusters have irregular outlines, globulars are strongly circular, and their stars are much more numerous, and densely packed toward the center. They are among the oldest objects to be found in galaxies, with ages near 13 billion years. The number of stars comprising them can range from 10,000 to over 100,000. While open clusters are found strictly in the Galactic plane, globulars are grouped into two regions: around the "hub" at the center of our Milky Way and in its extended Galactic halo. All are gravitationally bound to our Galaxy even though a few are twice as far from its center as the Magellanic Clouds! Globulars are most numerous in the direction of the Galactic center (Chart 146 shows 22 of them), although many of these are greatly dimmed by interstellar dust (the non-NGC globulars listed for Chart 145 are examples).