

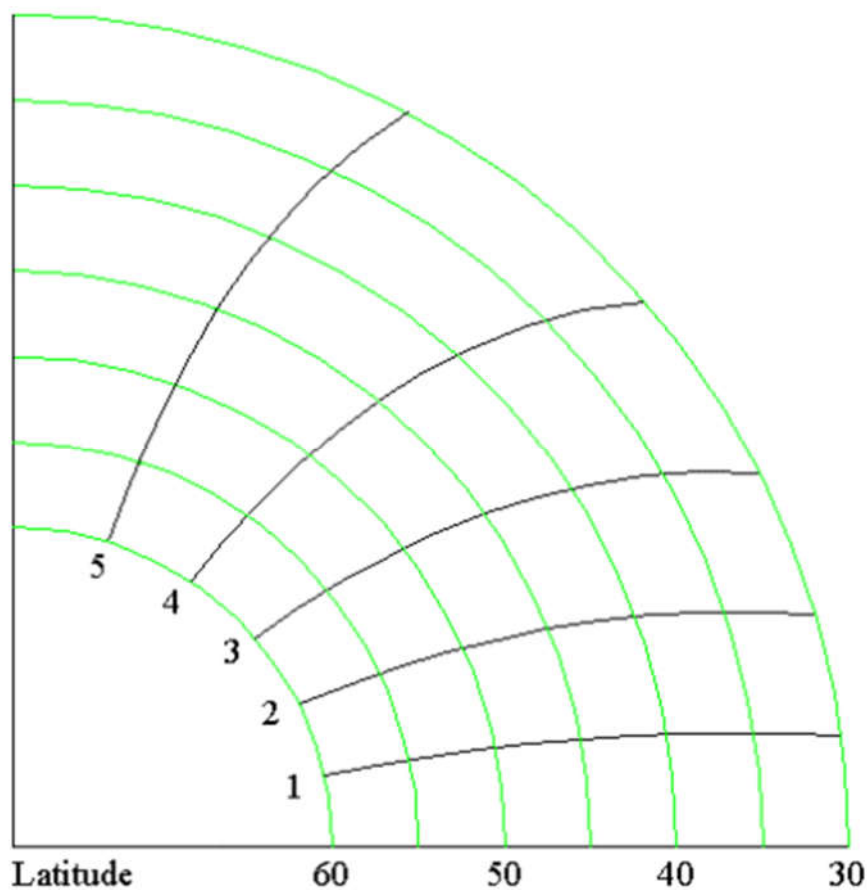
Year 2004

Article of the month June

Horizontal sundial design graph

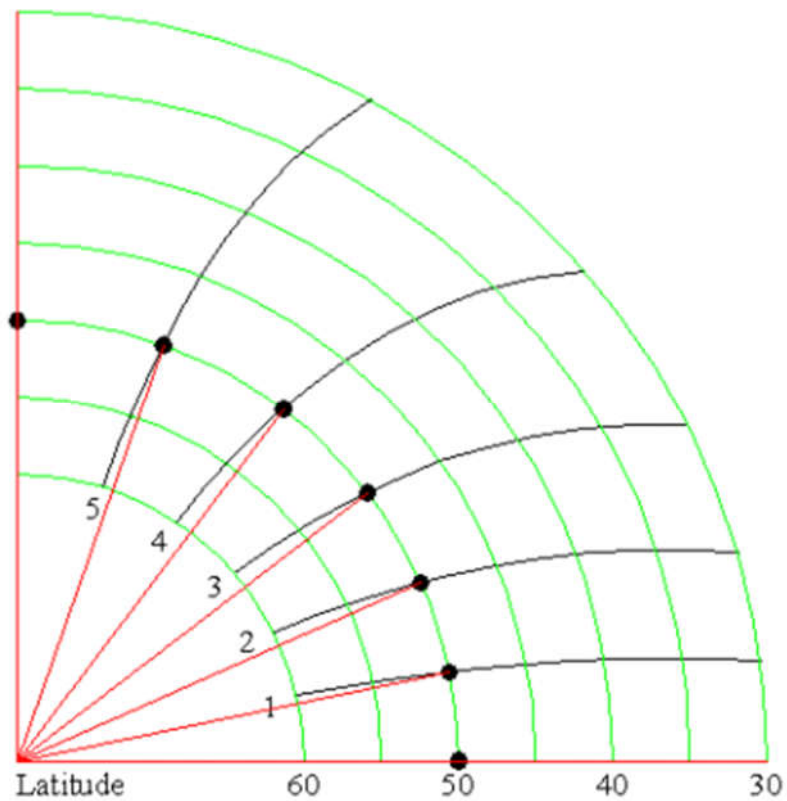
A quick sundial design using a computer is a snap. Scant keystrokes suffice to conjure up a complete drawing.

How different things were a few centuries ago. Still, tools did exist for rapid drafting. Here is a graph for horizontal sundials between 30 and 60 degrees latitude.



The next figure shows how to use the graph to find afternoon hour lines for a sundial for 50 degrees south.

Mirroring the pattern downward yields morning lines.

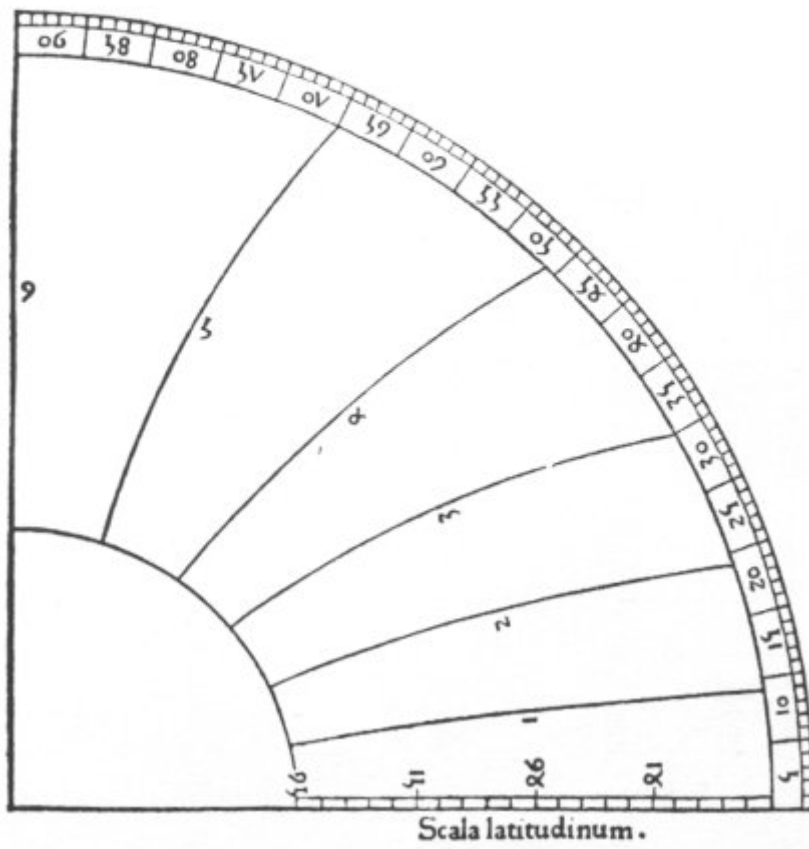


The figures above were inspired by the example of Regiomontanus from his *Der Deutsche Kalender des Johannes Regiomontan*, published in 1474. His graph, restricted to latitudes between 36 and 56 degrees, is shown below*.

It is remarkable that Regiomontanus, too, drew his graph for sundials on southern latitudes, far from usual at the time. Or was it a mistake?

It really does not matter much. The hour lines remain the same, only the numbering should be fitted to the correct latitude.

QVADRANS HOROLOGII
HORIZONTALIS.



Fer de Vries

* From a 1937 facsimile.

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