

## **Retrograde Notion**

Did you ever notice how astronomers name things backward? For example, when I think about coordinates for the night sky, I understand that celestial longitudes increase toward my left as I face south. Yet we don't call these longitudes "left ascension" but rather "right ascension." Similarly, "declination" sounds like something declining downhill from the equator, but what it measures is an increasing angle, so it arguably could be called "inclination."

In timekeeping, "Julian Days" don't start at midnight in Greenwich, England, but rather at local noon there. They count Julian nights, not days. And "magnitude" doesn't measure brightness but rather its opposite: faintness.

Just saying.

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