

An all-haversine method for manual calculation of zenith distance, without multiplication  
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As shown before (by Hanno and Greg)

$$\text{hav } z = N + (1 - Q)\text{hav}(lha)$$

where  $N = \text{hav}(lat - dec)$ ,  $P = \text{hav}(lat + dec)$  and  $Q = N + P$

The multiplication of two 4-figure numbers in the second term is the error-prone part of the solution. Is it possible to get rid of this multiplication? By expanding above expression we get

$$\text{hav } z = \text{hav}(lat - dec) + \text{hav}(lha) - \text{hav}(lat - dec)\text{hav}(lha) - \text{hav}(lat + dec)\text{hav}(lha)$$

After some manipulation we'll find that the product of two haversines is

$$\text{hav}(x)\text{hav}(y) = \frac{1}{2} \left( \text{hav}(x) + \text{hav}(y) - \frac{\text{hav}(x + y) + \text{hav}(x - y)}{2} \right)$$

Thus we get, after some further manipulation

$$\begin{aligned} \text{hav } z &= \frac{1}{2} \left[ \text{hav}(lat - dec) - \text{hav}(lat + dec) \right. \\ &\quad \left. + \frac{\text{hav}(lat - dec + lha) + \text{hav}(lat - dec - lha) + \text{hav}(lat + dec + lha) + \text{hav}(lat + dec - lha)}{2} \right] \end{aligned}$$

By defining an additional four parameters

$$\begin{aligned} Np &= \text{hav}(lat - dec + lha) \\ Nn &= \text{hav}(lat - dec - lha) \\ Pp &= \text{hav}(lat + dec + lha) \\ Pn &= \text{hav}(lat + dec - lha) \end{aligned}$$

we get the simple expression 
$$\text{hav}(z) = \frac{1}{2} \left( N - P + \frac{Np + Nn + Pp + Pn}{2} \right)$$

Now the difficult multiplication is replaced by two simple "divide by 2", but the price we pay is the calculation of a few more angles and looking up their haversines; nothing is for free!

An example using Hanno's table of  $10^4 \text{hav}(x)$

<i>lat</i>	59° 18'				
<i>dec</i>	<u>-19 13</u>				
	78 31	N=4004.5			
<i>lha</i>	<u>27 45</u>				
	106 16		Np=6401		
	50 46		Nn=1838		
	40 5	P=1174.5			
	67 50		Pp=3113		
	12 20		<u>Pn= 115</u>		
		2830 (diff)	11467 (sum)		
			5734 (div by 2)		
			<u>2830 (N-P)</u>		
			8564 (add)		
			4282 (div by 2) giving z=81° 45'		
			and thus altitude = 8° 15'		