भगोल

Why the app is called Bhagol

It is not a misspelling of भूगोल, and it is not the same word as खगोल. Sanskrit has three spheres, and they are three different things.

One noun, three prefixes

गोल *gola* is simply a ball. What is technical is the syllable in front — and Āryabhaṭa, opening his chapter on spherics in 499 CE, puts three of them in a single compound: भूग्रहभानाम्, *of the earth, of the planets, of the stars*. Each gets a sphere of its own.

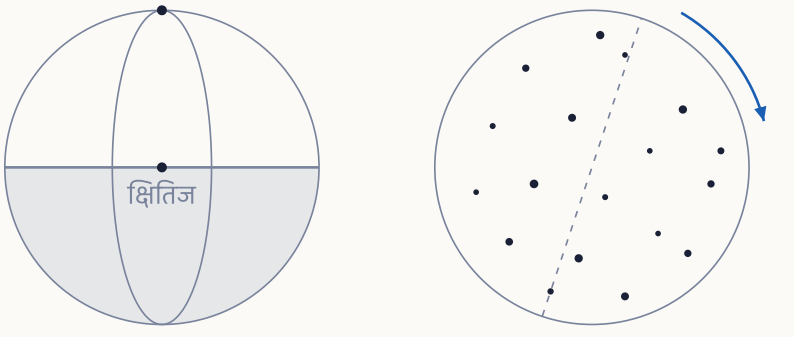
On its own भ *bha* means a star, an asterism: the same *bha* that makes भगण *bhagaṇa*, one full revolution through the stars, and भचक्र *bhacakra*, the star-wheel. ख *kha* is space — the emptiness the earth stands in the middle of.

भगोल	bha ‘star’ + gola ‘ball’ the sphere of the stars
भूगोल	bhū ‘earth’ + gola ‘ball’ the sphere of the earth
खगोल	kha ‘space’ + gola ‘ball’ the sphere of the sky

One noun, three prefixes — and the difference is a single syllable.

Only one of the two sky-spheres moves

That is what separates them. The **khagola** is the frame you observe from: the horizon, the meridian, the prime vertical, the circles fixed to where you are standing. The **bhagola** is the stars themselves, turning inside it.



खगोल
the circles that do not move

भगोल
everything that turns inside them

The frame, and what runs through it.

The texts are consistent about which one is in motion. Search the siddhāntas for what *revolves*, and the subject of the verb is never the khagola:

> Sūrya-siddhānta 12.62
>
> परतो विपरीतो +अयं भगोलः परिवर्तते ।। १२.६२ ।।
>
> ...beyond that, this star-sphere revolves reversed.

Āryabhaṭa says it with the same word, and gives the two poles their opposite views of it: the gods on Meru see half the bhagola turn leftward, the pretas at Baḍavāmukha in the south see the other half turn rightward.

And भूगोल, the one you were taught

The third sphere is not about the sky at all. The Sūrya-siddhānta's twelfth chapter — the **Bhūgolādhyāya** — opens by asking what measure the earth is, what shape, and what holds it up. That chapter became a school subject: भूगोल is the ordinary modern word for geography in Hindi, Marathi, Gujarati and Bengali. It is the only गोल most readers have ever seen in print, which is why भगोल looks like a mistake.

So why not खगोल?

Because खगोल names the frame, and खगोलशास्त्र is a fair name for the discipline — coordinates, circles, the machinery for saying *where*. भगोल names what is actually up there: the stars, in a sphere, turning. That is the thing the app draws.

भगोल — Bhagol: Indian Sky Map. Point your phone at the sky and it names what you are looking at: the 27 nakshatras, the Rashi Chakra, the nine grahas, and 975 star names in 57 languages of South Asia — each one cited to the source that recorded it.

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