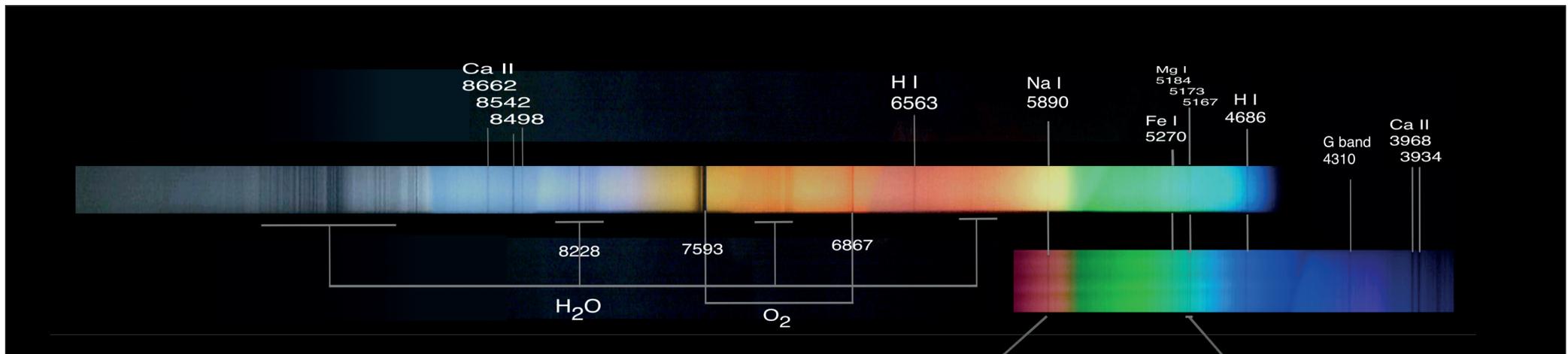


Spectroscopy



Light split into its constituent wavelengths is called a spectrum. The spectra of stars are continuous rainbows of colour, crossed by dark lines and bands, that are the signature of the different atoms and molecules in the outer layers of the star. Measurement of the strength of these lines, reveals the chemical composition and temperature of the star.



The Spectrum of the Sun

From the ultraviolet to the infrared.
Showing water and oxygen in the Earth's atmosphere
as well as elements in the Sun.

Spectrum graphic courtesy of Robin Catchpole

