SKY CALENDAR MAY 2023

An aid to enjoying the changing sky

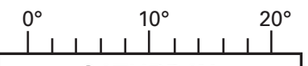
Planetarium business office:
(517) 355-4676
http://twitter.com/AbramsSkyNotes
http://abramsplanetarium.org/

Evenings: Venus at mag. –4.1 to –4.4 dominates! Observed at sunset or in twilight in early May, Venus attains its greatest altitude for this entire evening apparition: Seen from lat. 40° N, in first week, Venus is 39° up at sunset and 30° up at mid-twilight (when Sun is 9° below horizon). This month, it can be spotted in daytime 43° to 45° to upper left of setting Sun. Around sunset is good time for using a telescope to follow Venus' changing appearance. In May, the disk grows from 17" to 23" (arcseconds) across, while its phase decreases from about two-thirds to just over half illuminated (66% to 52%).

As sky darkens on **May 1**, Venus appears between Beta and Zeta Tauri, tips of Bull's horns. Find faint **Mars**, of mag. +1.4, nearly 26° to Venus' upper left, in Gemini 6° below Pollux. As Venus shifts 1.1° to 1.0° and Mars shifts nearly 0.6° daily against stars this month, watch for these events: **May 8**, Mars 5.0° S of Pollux. **May 10-12**, Venus passes 3.6° N of Eta and Mu in Gemini. **May 16**, Mars-Pollux-Castor in straight line, and Venus 0.7° N of Epsilon Gem. **May 21**, Venus forms isosceles triangle with Pollux and Castor, within 9° of each. **May 22-24**, Moon passes Venus and Mars. **May 28 & 29**, Venus 4.0° S of Pollux. **May 31**, Venus-Mars gap has closed to 11°; Mars faded to mag. +1.6. **June 1**, Venus-Pollux-Castor line up; Mars in Beehive Cluster that night and next.

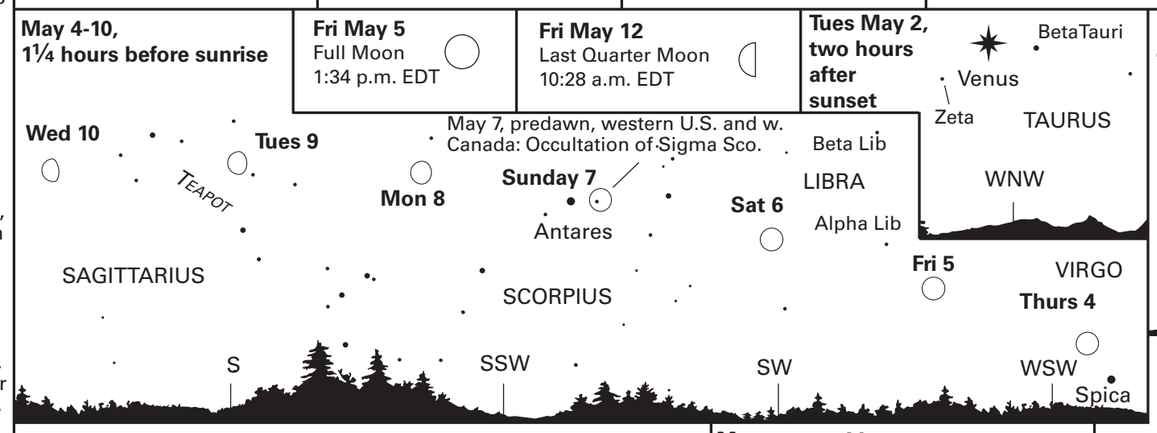
Mornings: Saturn, in Aquarius, glows at mag. +0.9 in ESE to SE as dawn brightens. A telescope shows the rings tipped only 8.0° to 7.4° from edgewise. On **May 13**, a fat 41-percent crescent Moon appears near Saturn. On **May 16**, locate recently emerged Jupiter (mag. –2.1) very low, north of east, 14°-15° lower left of the 12-percent waning crescent Moon. **On May 17, a 6-percent Moon occults Jupiter,** in daytime from eastern and central U.S. Disappearance at Moon's sunlit limb occurs before sunrise west of line from Baton Rouge, LA to Great Falls, MT, and reappearance at dark limb occurs before sunrise west of line from El Paso, TX to Bellingham, WA. From most of California and parts of neighboring states, Jupiter is already hidden at moonrise. Telescope recommended. **Mercury**, lower left of Jupiter, brightens from a too faint, mag. +1.6, when 6° from Jupiter on May 17; to +1.0 when 7° from Jupiter on May 22; and to mag. +0.4 when 12° from Jupiter on May 31.

Use this scale to measure angular distances between objects on diagrams below.



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY

May 4-10, 1¼ hours before sunrise



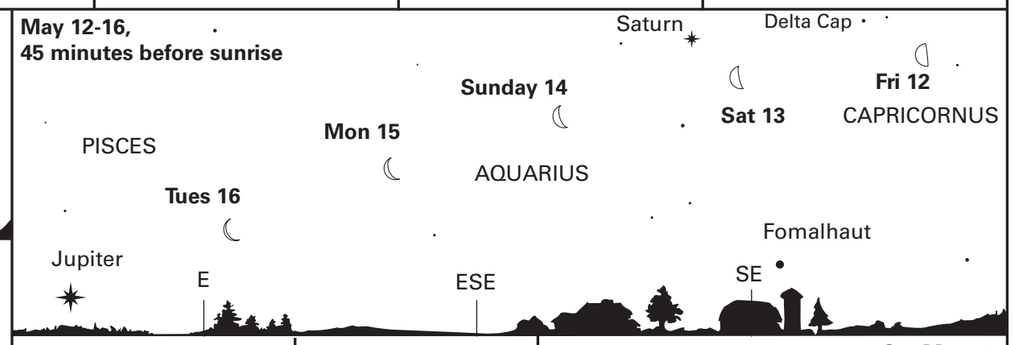
Fri May 5
Full Moon
1:34 p.m. EDT

Fri May 12
Last Quarter Moon
10:28 a.m. EDT

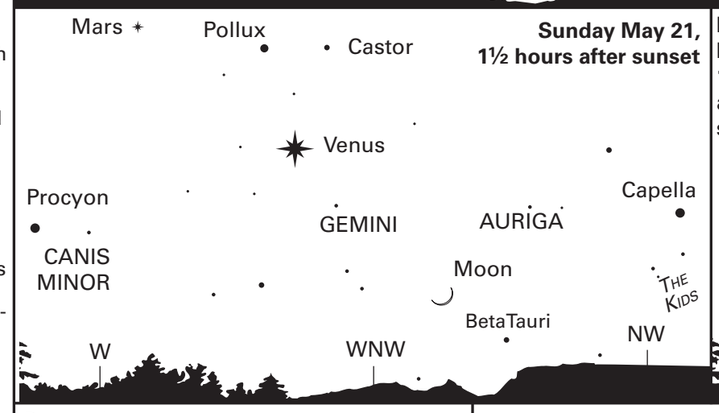
Tues May 2, two hours after sunset

May 7, predawn, western U.S. and w. Canada: Occultation of Sigma Sco.

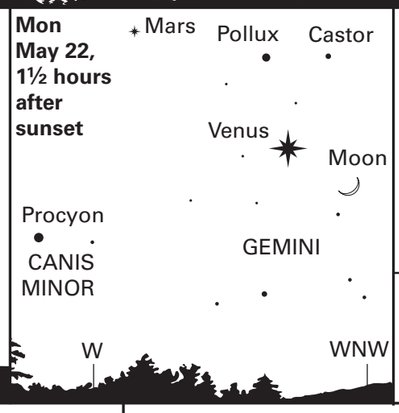
May 12-16, 45 minutes before sunrise



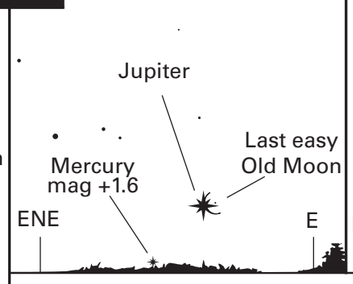
Sunday May 21, 1½ hours after sunset



Mon May 22, 1½ hours after sunset

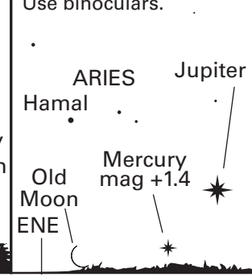


Wed May 17, 35 minutes before sunrise

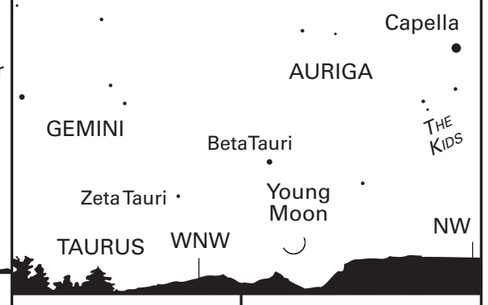


Thurs May 18, 30 min before sunrise

Use binoculars.



Sat May 20, one hour after sunset

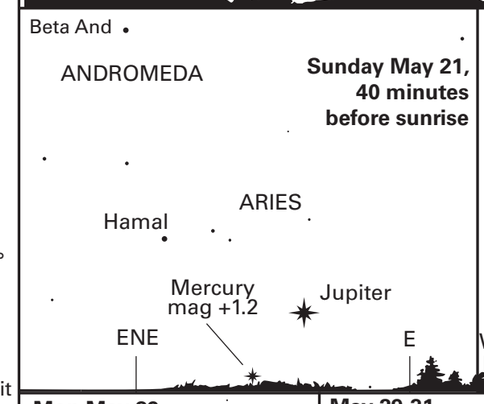


Times, local circumstances for **May 17 occultation of Jupiter** at *http://lunar-occultations.com/iota/planets/0517jupiter.htm* Scroll down to US cities, and convert UT to your time zone.

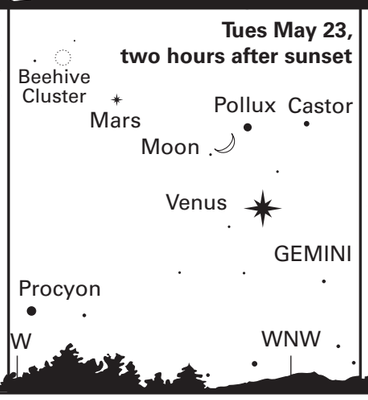
Fri May 19
New Moon
11:53 a.m. EDT

Sat May 27
First Quarter Moon
11:22 a.m. EDT

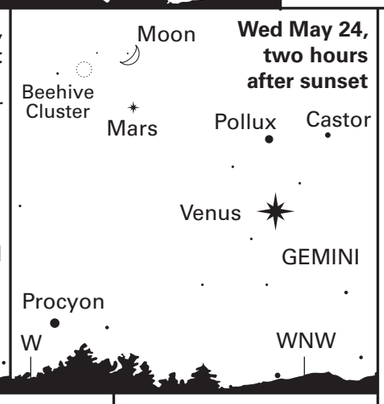
Sunday May 21, 40 minutes before sunrise



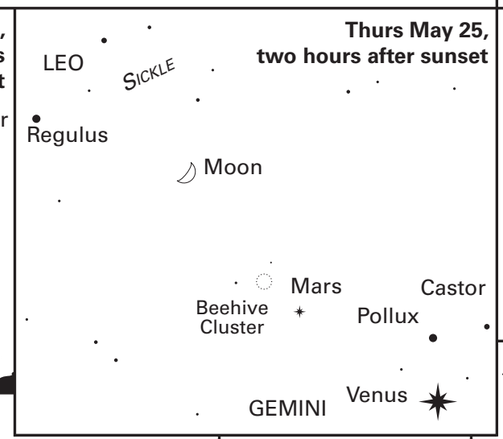
Tues May 23, two hours after sunset



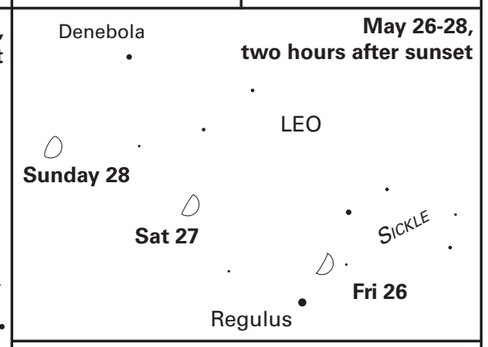
Wed May 24, two hours after sunset



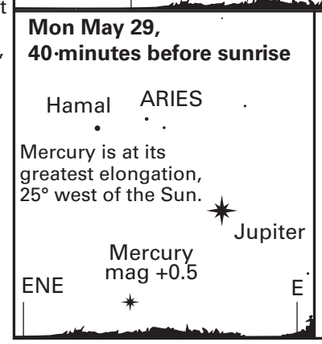
Thurs May 25, two hours after sunset



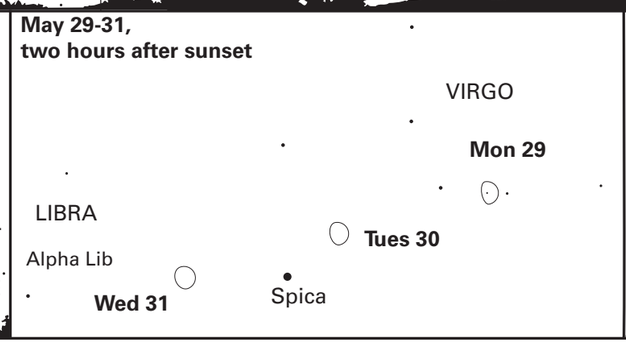
May 26-28, two hours after sunset



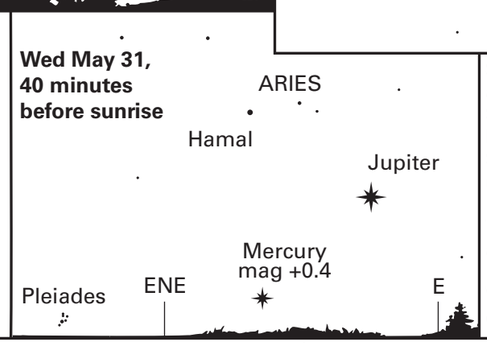
Mon May 29, 40 minutes before sunrise



May 29-31, two hours after sunset

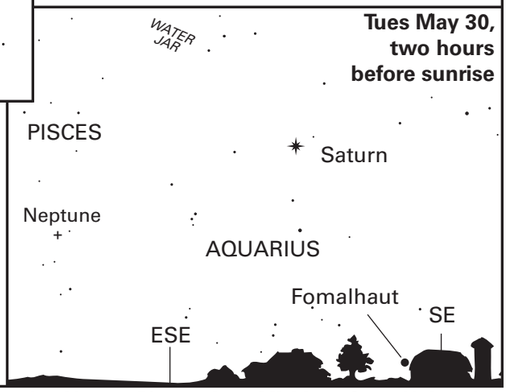


Wed May 31, 40 minutes before sunrise



Sunday May 28: Saturn at quadrature, 90° W of Sun. Spaceship Earth heading toward Saturn. See Saturn's shadow cast upon its ring, at WNW limb of planet.
Tues May 30: Mars at aphelion, 1.666 a.u. from Sun.
Wed May 31: Antares at opposition.

Tues May 30, two hours before sunrise



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