

# Night Sky Viewing at Widener University

## June 2017

### Sunrise & Sunset Times (EDT)

	Sunrise	Sunset
Begin Month	5:35 am	8:24 pm
End Month	5:36 am	8:34 pm

### Naked Eye Planets This Month in the Evening & Morning Sky

**Mars** (*in Taurus-Gemini*): This June, the planet Mars comes to the end of a more than year-long run in the evening sky. On June 1<sup>st</sup>, Mars is setting about one and a half hours after the Sun, and is barely discernable against the glow of evening twilight low in the northwest. On the evening of the 28<sup>th</sup>, Mercury passes just above Mars, but because both worlds set only about 30 minutes after the Sun on that date and hence are positioned very low above the northwestern horizon against the bright glare of dusk, binoculars will likely be needed to see the pair. By the start of July, Mars will have effectively vanished from the evening sky; it will be in conjunction with the Sun on July 26<sup>th</sup>.

**Jupiter** (*in Virgo*): Jupiter, now two months past opposition, continues to dominate the night sky until well after midnight. Jupiter resembles a brilliant golden star in Virgo above the bluish-white star Spica, which is noticeably fainter. Jupiter is due south (crosses the meridian) at nightfall in mid-June; it sets around 3 am on the 1<sup>st</sup>, and by 1 am on the 30<sup>th</sup>.

**Saturn** (*in Ophiuchus*): Saturn, currently within the constellation Ophiuchus, reaches opposition with the Sun on the 15<sup>th</sup>, when it rises as the Sun sets. Saturn resembles a moderately bright golden star as it climbs into the sky in the southeast as night falls. By about 1am Saturn stands low in the south. A small telescope (or a good pair of 10 x 50 binoculars mounted on a tripod) will reveal the magnificent ring system.

**Venus** (*in Pisces-Aries-Taurus*): Venus continues to stand out as the most brilliant object (other than the Moon) in the pre-dawn sky. Venus's brightness has decreased slightly over the past two months, but not by much. Venus reaches greatest elongation with the Sun on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, but this will not be particularly noteworthy because of the unfavorable orientation of the ecliptic plane to the eastern horizon at dawn. Venus rises around 3:30 am (about 2 hours before sunrise) at the beginning of June, and 30 minutes earlier, at 3 am, by the end of the month.

**Mercury** (*in Aries-Taurus-Gemini*): Mercury is at superior conjunction with the Sun on the 21<sup>st</sup>, and so for most of the month it will be too close to the Sun and too low in the sky to be spotted. Mercury does, however, have a close conjunction with Mars on the 28<sup>th</sup> (see **Mars** above).

**Sun** (*in Taurus-Gemini*): The Sun reaches the Summer Solstice on June 21<sup>st</sup> at 12:24 am EDT, marking the beginning of summer in the Northern Hemisphere. On that same day, the Sun crosses from the constellation Taurus into Gemini.

### Lunar Phases



### Constellations & Bright Stars Visible Around 10 pm EDT

**Leo** – halfway up in W  
Bright star *Regulus*

**Virgo** – up in SSW  
Bright star *Spica*  
Planet *Jupiter* to upper right of Spica

**Hydra** – extends below Leo & Virgo, setting in WSW  
Bright star *Alphard* ("the Solitary One"), to lower right of Regulus, is setting, or has just set

**Ursa Major** – high in NNW  
Asterism *Big Dipper*, w/ pointer stars *Merak*, *Dubhe*;  
handle stars *Alioth*, *Mizar* (& *Alcor*), *Alkaid*

**Ursa Minor** – halfway up in N, directly above Polaris  
Asterism *Little Dipper*, contains *Polaris* (North Star)

**Boötes** – high in S  
Bright star *Arcturus*, directly above Spica

**Corona Borealis** – high in S, to upper left of Arcturus  
Bright star *Gemma* (also called *Alphekka*)

**Libra** – one-third of way up in S  
Bright stars *Zubenelgenubi*, *Zubeneschamali*

**Scorpius** – low in SSE  
Bright star *Antares*

**Ophiuchus** – halfway up in SE  
Bright star *Ras Alhague*  
Planet *Saturn* to left of Antares

**Lyra** – getting higher in ENE  
Bright star *Vega*

**Aquila** – low in E  
Bright star *Altair*

**Cygnus** – getting higher in NE  
Bright star *Deneb*

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For more information on the night sky, visit the Widener Observatory Stargazing website at [www.widener.edu/stargazing/](http://www.widener.edu/stargazing/). A set of free sky maps can be obtained at [www.skymaps.com/](http://www.skymaps.com/).