

# Night Sky Viewing at Widener University

## August 2025

### Sunrise & Sunset Times (EDT)

	Sunrise	Sunset
Begin Month	6:01 am	8:14 pm
End Month	6:29 am	7:34 pm

### Lunar Phases



### Naked-Eye Planets in the Evening & Morning Sky this Month

**Mars** (*in Virgo*): Mars resembles an orange star in western Virgo, half-way between two bluish-white true stars: Leo's Regulus and Virgo's Spica. Mars treks eastward through Virgo during August, leaving Regulus behind and approaching Spica, which it will pair up with in mid-September. During August, Mars sets around 10:15 pm and 9 pm (which are 2 and 1½ hours after sunset) on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup>, respectively.

**Saturn** (*in Pisces*): Nestled among the dim stars of Pisces, Saturn rises at 10:30 pm on the 1<sup>st</sup> and by 8:30 pm on the 31<sup>st</sup>; it stands halfway up in the south by 3:30 am EDT midmonth. Saturn, resembling a bright, cream-colored star, easily outshines all the true stars in its vicinity, including Fomalhaut, which lies well to Saturn's lower right. Saturn's best showing will come in late September, when it reaches opposition with the Sun. As a bonus, the faint, bluish-green planet Neptune lies just above Saturn, making for a beautiful pairing in a wide-field scope.

**Venus** (*in Gemini-Cancer*): A majestic celestial beacon in the pre-dawn sky, Venus is unmistakable, glowing like a radiant yellow diamond in the east-northeast. Venus rises around 3 am EDT, or nearly three hours before the Sun, in early August, and just before 4 am, or 2½ hours before sunrise, at month's end. The celestial event of the month occurs on the morning of August 12<sup>th</sup>, when Venus and Jupiter cross paths, making for a spectacular pairing of the two brightest planets in the sky.

**Jupiter** (*in Gemini*): Following its conjunction with the Sun back in late June, Jupiter began to reappear low in the northeast at dawn in mid-July. As August opens, Jupiter has put considerable distance between itself and the Sun, and is rising at about 3:45 am, or 2½ hours before the Sun. By month's end, Jupiter is rising by 2:15 am, or 4½ hours before sunrise. Look toward the northeast for brilliant Jupiter, which resembles a golden star, but which far outshines any of the nearby true stars.

**Mercury** (*in Cancer-Leo*): Mercury begins to emerge from the dawn glow after about August 12<sup>th</sup>. On August 19<sup>th</sup>, Mercury reaches its greatest elongation west of the Sun, when it rises 1½ hours before sunrise and can be spotted very low above the northeastern horizon. Mercury gets brighter toward the end of the month, but it also sinks closer to the horizon, rising just one hour before the Sun by the 31<sup>st</sup>.

**Perseid Meteor Shower**: On the night of August 12-13, Earth will pass through the debris of Comet Swift-Tuttle, producing the Perseid Meteor Shower, so named because it appears to radiate from the constellation Perseus. Unfortunately, the Moon's phase will be waning gibbous, and its bright glare, which begins before midnight and continues through the early morning hours, will hinder seeing the fainter meteors.

### Constellations & Bright Stars Visible Around 10 pm in August

**Ursa Major** – dipping toward NW horizon  
Asterism *Big Dipper*, w/ pointer stars *Merak*, *Dubhe*; handle stars *Alioth*, *Mizar* (& *Alcor*), *Alkaid*

**Ursa Minor** – up in NNW, to upper left of North Star  
Asterism *Little Dipper*, contains *Polaris* (North Star)

**Virgo** – low in WSW  
Bright star *Spica*, setting

**Boötes** – high in WSW  
Bright star *Arcturus*, well above Spica

**Corona Borealis** – high in SSW, just east of Boötes  
Bright star *Gemma* (also called *Alphecca*)

**Libra** – low in SW  
Bright stars *Zubenelgenubi*, *Zubeneschamali*

**Scorpius** – low in S  
Bright star *Antares*; stars *Shaula* and *Lesath* form Cat's Eyes in Scorpion's tail

**Ophiuchus** – halfway up in S, above Scorpius  
Bright star *Ras Alhague*

**Sagittarius** – low in SSE  
Asterism the "Tea Pot"

**Lyra** – high overhead  
Bright star *Vega*

**Aquila** – halfway up in SE  
Bright star *Altair*

**Cygnus** – high in E, below Lyra  
Bright star *Deneb*, forms Summer Triangle with *Altair* & *Vega*

**Pegasus (including the Great Square)** – rising in E

**Cassiopeia** – rising, low in NNE  
Easily recognizable "W" shape

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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/).