

# Night Sky Viewing at Widener University

## March 2026

### Sunrise & Sunset Times

	Sunrise	Sunset
Begin Month (EST)	6:35 am	5:53 pm
End Month (EDT)	6:47 am	7:25 pm

### Lunar Phases



Full  
3<sup>rd</sup>  
"Snow Moon"



Last Quarter  
11<sup>th</sup>



New  
18<sup>th</sup>



First Quarter  
25<sup>th</sup>

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

**Venus** (*in Pisces*): Having reached superior conjunction with the Sun back in early January, Venus is beginning to emerge from the evening twilight. Venus sets just an hour after sunset as March opens, and 1½ hours after the Sun by the 31<sup>st</sup>. If there are no trees or houses to obscure the view, look for Venus shining low above the western horizon starting 20-30 minutes after sunset. On the 8<sup>th</sup>, Venus passes to within a degree of Saturn. Binoculars will help pick out the pair from the twilight glow.

**Saturn** (*in Pisces*): As darkness falls on early March evenings, Saturn can be spotted low in the southwest resembling a bright star. On March 1<sup>st</sup>, Saturn sets at 7:30 pm, or only 1½ hours after sunset; afterwards, Saturn rapidly descends into the evening twilight. Saturn's reign in the evening sky comes to an end on March 25<sup>th</sup>, when Saturn passes behind the Sun (conjunction). Saturn then swings into the morning sky, and will reappear in the east at dawn during the closing days of April.

**Jupiter** (*in Gemini*): Now two months after its opposition with the Sun back in January, Jupiter stands high in the south as darkness falls on March evenings. Though not nearly as brilliant as Venus, Jupiter is nevertheless a lovely sight, resembling a majestic golden star in the constellation Gemini, just below the true (and much fainter) stars Pollux and Castor. Jupiter crosses the meridian around 8:30 pm EDT in the middle of March. It remains in sight until it sets in the west around 3:50 am EST on the 1<sup>st</sup>, and by 3 am EDT on the 31<sup>st</sup>. A telescope will reveal Jupiter's 4 largest (Galilean) moons, cloud bands, and Red Spot.

**Mercury** (*in Pisces-Aquarius*): On the first day of March, a good pair of binoculars will help spot Mercury quite low in the southwest at dusk, before it sets less than an hour after sunset. Over the next two or three days, Mercury vanishes into the twilight, eventually reaching inferior conjunction with the Sun on March 7<sup>th</sup>, after which it will reappear at dawn in the second half of March.

**Mars** (*in Aquarius*): Mars was in conjunction with the Sun back in early January; it continues to be lost in the Sun's glare in March. Mars will gradually begin to reappear low in the east at dawn in late spring 2026.

**Earth**: The noon Sun stands directly over Earth's equator at 9:46 pm EDT on March 20<sup>th</sup>. This point is the *Vernal Equinox*, which marks the start of spring in the northern hemisphere.

**Total Lunar Eclipse**: Occurs on March 3<sup>rd</sup>, when the Full Moon passes through the Earth's umbral shadow. For more information, visit: <https://science.nasa.gov/solar-system/moon/march-2026-total-lunar-eclipse-your-questions-answered/>.

### Constellations and Bright Stars Visible by 9 pm Local Time in March

**Cassiopeia** – high in NNW, looking like an “M”  
Bright stars *Shedar, Caph, Ruchbah*

**Perseus** – W of overhead, E of Cassiopeia  
Bright stars *Mirfak and Algol*

**Auriga** – high in NE  
Bright star *Capella*, just W of overhead by 9 pm

**Aries** – low in WNW  
Bright stars *Hamal, Sheratan*

**Taurus** – halfway up in WSW, to right of Orion  
Bright star *Aldebaran*  
Star Clusters *Pleiades & Hyades*

**Orion** – up in SW  
Bright stars *Betelgeuse, Rigel*

**Gemini** – high up in S, to upper left of Orion  
Bright stars *Pollux, Castor*  
Planet *Jupiter*

**Canis Major** – up in SSW, to lower left of Orion  
Bright star *Sirius*

**Canis Minor** – high in S, below Gemini  
Bright star *Procyon*

**Leo** – high in SE  
Bright star *Regulus*

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

**Hydra** – moderately high up in SE  
Bright star *Alphard* (“the Solitary One”),  
lower R of *Regulus*

**Boötes** – rising in NE, near handle of *Big Dipper*  
Bright star *Arcturus*

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/).