

Night Sky Viewing at Widener University

April 2026

Sunrise & Sunset Times (EDT)

	Sunrise	Sunset
Begin Month	6:45 am	7:26 pm
End Month	6:03 am	7:56 pm

Lunar Phases



Full
1st
"Pink Moon"



Last Quarter
10th



New
17th



First Quarter
23rd

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

Venus (*in Aries-Taurus*): This April, Venus beams like a yellow diamond hovering low above the horizon in the west-northwest. Venus outshines everything in the night sky except for the Moon. On April 1st, Venus sets just past 9 pm EDT, or a bit over 1½ hours after sunset, but it gets higher and sets later with each passing night. By the 30th, Venus has extended its post-sunset visibility to just under 2½ hours, setting by 10:15 pm. Look for Venus shining low above the western horizon starting 20-30 minutes after sunset.

Jupiter (*in Gemini*): Three months after its opposition with the Sun back in January, Jupiter continues to be a mighty beacon in the night sky, standing high in the south as darkness falls on April evenings. Though not nearly as brilliant as Venus, Jupiter is nevertheless a superb sight, resembling a majestic golden star in the constellation Gemini, just below the true (and less bright) stars Pollux and Castor. Jupiter remains in sight until it sets in the northwest around 3 am EDT on the 1st, and by 1 am on the 31st. A telescope will reveal Jupiter's 4 largest (Galilean) moons, cloud bands, and Great Red Spot.

Mercury (*in Aquarius-Pisces*): As April opens, Mercury is low in the east-southeast at dawn; a good pair of binoculars will help locate the elusive innermost world which resembles a bright star against the morning twilight. Mercury reaches its greatest western (morning) elongation with the Sun on April 3rd, after which it slowly sinks into the twilight, drifting past upward-bound Saturn on April 20th and eventually passing between the Sun and Earth (inferior conjunction) on May 14th.

Mars (*in Pisces*): Mars was in conjunction with the Sun back in early January, and it continues to be buried in the Sun's glare during April. Mars will gradually begin to emerge from the dawn twilight toward the middle or end of May.

Saturn (*in Pisces-Cetus*): Saturn was in conjunction with the Sun on March 25th, and as April begins the Ringed Planet is still too closely aligned with to the Sun to be perceived. As the month progresses, Saturn will slowly emerge from the dawn twilight, floating quite low above the eastern horizon before sunrise. On April 20th, Saturn slips between Mercury and Mars low above the eastern horizon. By the 30th, Saturn will rise just about an hour before the Sun.

Constellations & Bright Stars

Visible Around 9 pm EDT in April

Cassiopeia – low 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 NW
Bright star *Capella*

Taurus – getting low in WNW
Bright star *Aldebaran*
Star Clusters *Pleiades & Hyades*

Orion – getting low in WSW
Bright stars *Betelgeuse, Rigel*

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

Canis Major – up in SW, to lower left of Orion
Bright stars *Sirius, Adhara*

Canis Minor – in SSW, below Gemini
Bright star *Procyon*

Leo – high in S
Bright star *Regulus*

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

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

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

Virgo – rising in ESE
Bright star *Spica*

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