Night Sky Viewing at Widener University

June 2026

Sunrise & Sunset Times (EDT)

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

Lunar Phases

Last Quarter 8th | New 14th | First Quarter 21st | Full 29th "Strawberry Moon"

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

Mercury (*in Gemini*): Mercury is well placed for viewing through most of June; it looks like a bright star to the lower right of Venus and Jupiter, floating low above the northwestern horizon during evening twilight. On June 1st, Mercury sets in the west-northwest around 10 pm EDT, or 1½ hours after the Sun. Mercury reaches its greatest evening elongation with the Sun on June 15th, and on the following night a slender crescent Moon passes between Mercury and nearby Jupiter. Mercury and Jupiter are closest to each other on June 24th.

Venus (*in Gemini-Cancer*): Gleaming in the west-northwest during the early evening hours, Venus surpasses in brightness all other night-sky objects except the Moon. Throughout June, Venus sets at least 2½ hours after sunset, or at 11 pm EDT, allowing ample time to view it before bedtime. On the evening of June 9th, Jupiter slides just below Venus, resulting in a stunning pairing, and on June 17th Venus is grazed by the waxing crescent Moon, making for another delightful celestial sight.

Jupiter (*in Gemini-Cancer*): As June commences, Jupiter, resembling a luminous golden star, is perched below Gemini's brightest stars Pollux and Castor. The King of Planets stands high in the west at nightfall during June; it sets just after 11:30 pm EDT, or 3 hours after the Sun, on the 1st, and by 9:45 pm, or just over one hour after sunset, on the 30th. As noted above, Jupiter passes close to Venus on June 9th and to Mercury on June 24th. Jupiter vanishes into the evening twilight by mid-July; it reaches conjunction with the Sun on July 29th.

Saturn (*in Pisces*): Saturn was in conjunction with the Sun back in March, and since then it has climbed significantly out of the dawn twilight. On June 1st, Saturn rises at 3 am, or 2½ hours before sunrise. By the 30th, Saturn will be rising at 1 am, an ample 4½ hours before the Sun. On June 10th, a waning crescent Moon drifts above Saturn.

Mars (*in Aries-Taurus*): Now five months after solar conjunction back in January, Mars continues its slow ascent out of the dawn twilight. Mars rises by 4 am EDT, or 1½ hours before the Sun, on June 1st, and by 3 am, or 2½ hours before sunrise, on June 30th. On the morning of June 12th, a skinny waning crescent Moon slides above Mars. While only modestly bright at this time, Mars will steadily gain in brightness until it reaches peak magnitude during its opposition next February.

Earth: Earth reaches the Summer Solstice on June 21th at 4:25 am EDT, when the Northern Hemisphere is tilted maximally toward the Sun, marking the start of astronomical summer in the Northern Hemisphere and of winter in the Southern Hemisphere.

Constellations & Bright Stars Visible Around 10 pm EDT in June

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

Virgo – up in SSW
Bright star *Spica*

Hydra – extends below Leo & Virgo
Bright star *Alphard* ("the Solitary One"), setting in SW

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 *Alphecca*)

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*

Sagittarius – just rising in SE

Lyra – getting higher in ENE
Bright star *Vega*

Aquila – low in E
Bright star *Altair*

Cygnus – getting higher in NE
Bright star *Deneb*

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/.