

The Sky This Month

March 9th - April 20th 2020



What's On

9 March

Full Moon – ‘Supermoon’. The Moon will be located on the opposite side of the Earth as the Sun and so its face will be fully illuminated. This phase occurs at 17:48 UTC. Second of four supermoons for 2020. The Moon will be at its closest approach to the Earth and may look slightly larger and brighter than usual.

18 March

Mars, Jupiter, Saturn and a waning crescent Moon – look southeast – before Dawn.

20 March

March Equinox – the March equinox occurs at 03:50 UTC. The Sun will shine directly on the equator and there will be nearly equal amounts of day and night throughout the world. Also the first day of spring (vernal equinox) in the Northern Hemisphere and the first day of fall (autumnal equinox) in the Southern Hemisphere.

24 March

New Moon The Moon will be located on the same side of the Earth as the Sun and will not be visible. This phase occurs at 09:29 UTC. This is the best time of the month to observe faint objects such as galaxies and star clusters because there is no moonlight to interfere with visibility.

Mercury at Greatest Western Elongation. The planet Mercury reaches greatest western elongation of 27.8 degrees from the Sun. This is the best time to view Mercury since it will be at its highest point above the horizon in the morning sky. Look for the planet low in the eastern sky just before sunrise.

Venus at Greatest Eastern Elongation. The planet Venus reaches greatest eastern elongation of 46.1 degrees from the Sun. This is the best time to view Venus since it will be at its highest point above the horizon in the evening sky. Look for the bright planet in the western sky after sunset.

28 March

Venus and a thin crescent Moon will be seen near the Hyades and Pleiades Clusters. In the early evening, Venus can be found to the upper right of a very thin crescent Moon. Both are lying below the Hyades and Pleiades Clusters.

31 March

Saturn, Jupiter and Mars – visible before dawn.

3 April

Venus passes in front of the southern portion of the Pleiades cluster: a beautiful sight. Look through binoculars or a telescope to see the immensely rich star field, and also Venus in its half phase.

8 April

Full Moon – ‘Supermoon’. The Moon will be located on the opposite side of the Earth as the Sun and its face will be fully illuminated. This phase occurs at 02:35 UTC.