

Sky Highlights for June

June 1	Full Moon June's full moon is called the Hay, Rose, Strawberry, or Honey Moon.
June 5	Jupiter at opposition
June 8	Last quarter moon. Mercury, Venus, Saturn & Jupiter can all be seen in one night, covering a span of 155°.
June 12	Venus just south of Venus
June 15	New Moon
June 21	Summer solstice at 1:06 PM CDT (1806 UT)
June 22	First quarter moon

Planets

Mercury—Low in the west-northwest after sunset below Pollux & Castor in Gemini, it fades into the sunset by midmonth.

Venus—see below *

Mars— Low in the ESE at dawn, Mars starts climbing higher throughout the month. Magnitude +0.8.

Jupiter— At magnitude -2.6 in Scorpius, Jupiter rises at dusk, and is visible all night. It's located just above and to the left of Antares. *More below**

Saturn—see below*

Dance of the Planets in June

This month is a great time to see why they're called planets! "*Planetes*" means "wander" in Greek, and you can really see the movement of planets against the background stars this month.

The most dramatic movement is between Venus and Saturn. On June 1st, Saturn in Leo and Venus in Gemini are 22° apart. Throughout the month, Venus moves across Cancer into Leo. **On June 30, Venus and Saturn are only 0.7° apart**, the best pairing of planets this year. And while all this traveling is going on, Venus changes from slightly gibbous to a thick crescent.

A slightly less dramatic movement also occurs throughout the summer involving Jupiter. It's easy to see its movement by tracking its position relative to brilliant Antares in Scorpius. The planet starts the month above and slightly left of Antares, but ends the month lower and further west of the star.

This is a great opportunity to show others how the planets actually move over time, and enjoy the wonder of it yourself.

Sky Highlights for July

July 7	Last quarter moon
July 14	New Moon
July 22	First quarter moon
July 28	Peak of the southern Delta Aquarid meteor shower; largely drowned out by moonlight.
July 30	Full Moon July's full moon is called the Buck, Hay or Thunder Moon

Planets

Mercury—Emerges low in the ENE before sunrise in Gemini, brightening to magnitude -1.0 by the 31st.

Venus— Starting the month just 0.8° to the lower left of Saturn, Venus goes left and curves downward, sinking into sunset at month's end.

Mars— Rising several hours before sunrise at magnitude +0.7, Mars is taking aim on the Pleiades for meeting in early August.

Jupiter— Visible all night long, magnitude -2.5 in Scorpius.

Saturn— Starting the month just 0.8° to the upper right of Venus, Saturn is sinking into the west in Leo, becoming barely visible by month's end.