

Sky Highlights for December

December 1	Last quarter moon
December 9	New Moon
December 13-15	Peak of Geminid meteor shower
December 17	First quarter moon
December 22	Winter solstice at 0:06 AM CST (0600 UT)
December 23	Full Moon December's full moon is called the Cold or Long Night Moon, or the Moon Before Yule.
December 23	Jupiter at superior conjunction
December 24	Mars at opposition

Planets

Venus— High up in the southeast before sunrise, magnitude -4.2

Mars— A distinct reddish-orange in the evening sky, Mars is at it's brightest at magnitude 1.6. In Gemini and moving eastward toward Taurus, it's a beautiful addition to the area of sky known for the bright stars of winter.

Saturn— Rises around midnight in Leo. The rings are currently only tilted 7°.

Sky Highlights for January 2008

January 2	Earth at perihelion, the point in its orbit closest to the Sun.
January 8	New Moon
January 15	First quarter moon
January 22	Full Moon. January's full moon is called the Old or Wolf Moon
January 30	Last quarter moon Mars stops retrograde motion
January 31	Venus and Jupiter are only 1° apart in the predawn sky. (They'll be even closer on Feb. 1)

Planets

Mercury—Becomes visible in the west during the second week of the month, with best visibility 19th – 26th

Venus— High in the predawn sky in Scorpius, it drops lower throughout the month.

Mars— Starts at magnitude -1.5, but dims to 0.6 by end of month. Moves from Gemini into Taurus.

Jupiter— Becomes visible before sunrise at mid-month, then rises to meet Venus on the 31st.

Saturn— Rising around 9 PM in Leo, magnitude +0.5.