

## Our Night Sky for December 1 st. 2025

This week, we will look for something quite different in our sky. Normally if we are searching for a planet in our solar system they will be found in our nearby neighborhood. The planets are millions to billions of kilometers from our planet but compared to the distance to even nearby stars they are next door to us. Our nearest star Proxima Centauri. Proxima is 4.2 light years from us, that is about 40 trillion kilometers from earth. Voyager 1 is the furthest man-made object from earth at about 25 billion kilometers and that has taken nearly 50 years, and it is barely out of our solar system traveling at 61,000 kilometers an hour.

Those are all numbers that are hard to grasp. Let's look for something much closer. An object that averages about 400 kilometers above our heads. The International Space Station orbits the earth every 90 minutes on a very predictable orbit. There are many easy-to-use resources on the internet to give you an exact time of the next overhead pass. Because of the tilt of its orbit, it doesn't pass high overhead regularly. You will find if you check the online sites that the space station passes overhead with good visibility for a few days and then several days it gets barely above the horizon. So, check the sites often and be patient.

Tonight, if you have a good view of the southern horizon at 5:06 pm traveling east and setting about five minutes later. But Tuesday December 2<sup>nd</sup> at 4:18 about a six-minute passage but with the sun just below the south west horizon