

Our Night Sky for February 16 th, 2026

Later this month, after the 24th you might be able to catch a quick look at two or three planets for brief window just after sunset. Tonight, and continuing the entire week Jupiter still dominates the southern sky a little left and above Orion.

Last week I mentioned planetary occultations. There is an occultation of Mercury by our moon just after sunset on Wednesday evening, but it will be very tricky to see. In fact, you may not even find the moon since it is a new moon less than a day old. At about 6:30 the black area of the sky which is the unlit side of the moon is already hiding Mercury. But my sky map has it very close to an already hard to see moon and within a few minutes you might see Mercury emerge. Start a few minutes after sunset and locate Venus a few minutes after you should see Mercury a slight bit higher from the horizon. You must have a good view of the western horizon, next the sun has just set and still casts it's glow on our sky, third the moon is not illuminated just a dark area in a gray dimming sky, and finally Mercury is just on the dark limb of the moon and if the slight chance of it emerging I see on my computer is correct it will be just above the horizon, good luck. But my guess is that anyone that has ever seen a planetary occultation will be outside trying to spot this regardless of the odds against, One of the most amazing sights in Our Night Sky.