

Our Night Sky for March 9th,2026

This is the time of year that driving west on highway 16 anytime close to sundown is a bit tricky. A good part of that drive is due west and looking directly at the setting sun, drive carefully. But shortly after the sun sets by about 7:30, you should see a very bright Venus following the sun and setting at about twenty minutes later. these times are a bit vague because it depends on your view of the horizon. Remember the circular orbit that Venus follows is much closer to the sun. There are times that Venus is better illuminated ,It now rivals the brightest star in our sky Sirius with a magnitude of -1.44. Venus has a magnitude of -3.83, which is considerably brighter. The magnitude scale is used to describe the brightness of objects in our sky, lower numbers and continuing into negative values are brighter.

The moon has a magnitude of -10.51 and the sun's magnitude is -26.7.

On the other end of the scale the faintest stars you can see with un-aided eye is about 6.5 under ideal sky conditions. This means that the range that is used to describe stars in our skies is at it's brightest -1.44 (Sirius) and any faint stars at approximately magnitude 6.

When using star charts to find a specific star you begin with constellations and easy to identify stars. Once you have a bright nearby star you look for simple shapes and patterns to help zero in on specific stars. and knowing which stars are brighter or dimmer. With these tools you can center on millions of interesting objects in Our Night Sky.