

Our Night Sky for July 27 th, 2026

As Mercury and Venus orbit the sun, they sometimes rise and set close to it, making them hard to see. Venus is still trailing the sun by about an hour, so it is easiest to spot only with a clear view of the western horizon. Later in the year, it will be farther from the sun and much easier to see.

Last week I briefly mentioned trying to find the Andromeda galaxy in our eastern sky. Right now, Andromeda is almost due east, about midway to the zenith. Start with the small kite-shaped Lyra and its bright star Vega overhead, then scan down to the familiar W of Cassiopeia and its lower-right point.

As previously suggested about overhead now is the small kite shaped Lyra with the very bright star Vega. As the sun sets earlier each night you will see Vega at about the same spot for most of the summer. But let's scan down to the familiar "W" of Cassiopeia and the lower right point.

Now look for a line of two stars rising from a horizontal line of four. Right above those two stars and two or three finger widths above look for a faint fuzzy smudge

For faint, nebulous targets, give your eyes a few minutes to dark-adapt. Avoid screens and use a dim red flashlight if you need a sky map. If Andromeda is still hard to see, try averted vision: look slightly beside the target so the dimmer parts stand out. From Cassiopeia's lower star, look toward the two stars pointing to Andromeda; at the end should be a faint fuzzy beauty in our night sky.