

Our Night Sky for October 5th, 2026

For several weeks now the only planet easy to access in our evening skies is Saturn. This week Saturn is still in our southeastern sky. Saturn reached opposition October 4th at 12 universal time. Which means it is at its best illumination and closest to earth until this time next year.

If you are up very early in the morning tomorrow after about 3 am or should I say before 4 am. A look due east will reward you with a view of Jupiter joined by a waning crescent moon. A little up or about half way to the Gemini twins Castor and Pollux you will see Mars also approaching greatest illumination.

On the Night of October 5, or the morning of Tuesday October 6th, the moon will eclipse Jupiter normally called a lunar occultation. There is a difference between two sky software programs and the moon may just touch the edge of Jupiter from our location. The moon rises at about 2:10 am already covering Jupiter. Jupiter comes out from behind the moon at about 3:30 am, about 10 degrees above the eastern horizon. This should be especially interesting because the dark area of the waning moon is hiding Jupiter. If you are watching, with a telescope the first sight of Jupiter will be between mountain peaks and in valleys on the moon. Depending on your latitude on earth and combining with other astronomers the height and depth of these valleys can be measured.

An occultation of Jupiter by the moon is particularly spectacular and hopefully we will see this event as it moves across our night sky