Starmap

MARCH/APRIL 2026

MARYLAND SCIENCE CENTER
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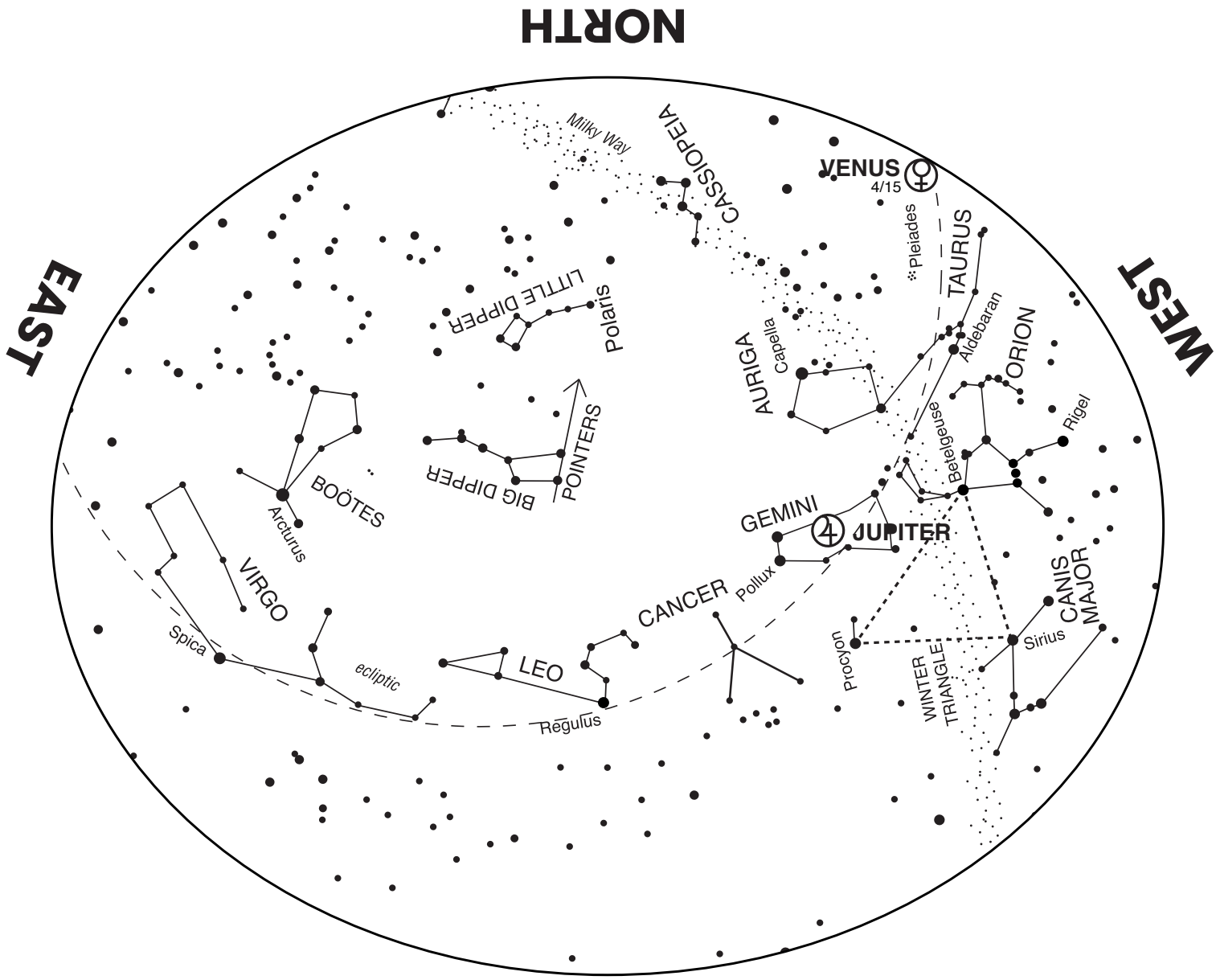

TO USE MAP:

Hold the map in front of you so that the direction you are facing is on the bottom. The stars on the lower half on the map will match up with the stars in the sky. The center of the map is directly overhead in the sky. Constellation and star pattern names are all capitalized. Names of stars have only the first letter capitalized. The map is valid within an hour of:

11:30pm Mid-March EDT
9:30pm Mid-April EDT

MAGNITUDE is a measure of a star's brightness. The lower the number, the brighter the star.

- 1st or brighter magnitude star
- 2nd magnitude star
- 3rd magnitude star
- 4th or fainter magnitude star

ECLIPTIC:

The imaginary path of the Sun through the year. Constellations of the zodiac surround the ecliptic and the Moon and planets appear along it.

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IN THE MARCH/APRIL SKY

March 3
Full Moon
Total Lunar Eclipse
(See Celestial Highlights)

March 8
Daylight Savings Time begins

March 11
Last Quarter Moon

March 18
New Moon

March 20
Vernal Equinox
Moon near Venus
(See Celestial Highlights)

March 25
First Quarter Moon

March 26
Moon near Jupiter

April 2
Full Moon

April 3
Mercury at greatest elongation
(See Celestial Highlights)

April 10
Last Quarter Moon

April 17
New Moon

April 19
Moon near Venus

April 22
Moon near Jupiter
Lyrid Meteor Shower peaks
(See Celestial Highlights)

April 23
First Quarter Moon

CELESTIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Total Lunar Eclipse, March 3 – A Total Lunar Eclipse happens when the Sun, Earth, and Moon align, with Earth in the middle. Starting around 3:45am on March 3, the Moon dims as it passes into the shadow of the Earth. The Moon is fully covered by the shadow around 6:00am, giving it a dark red color. This red tint is from sunlight passing through the Earth's atmosphere, which scatters blue light, as though the Earth is projecting a sunset onto the Moon. The Moon starts to exit Earth's shadow around 7:00am and will return to its normal colors over the next few hours. This event can be easily observed at home without a telescope.

Daylight Savings Time Begins, Sunday, March 8, 2:00am – Remember to turn your clocks *forward* one hour before going to bed Saturday night!

Vernal Equinox, March 20, 10:46am – The Vernal Equinox marks the first day of spring. The Equinoxes are the only two days each year when the sun rises due east and sets due west everywhere on Earth! If you happen to be standing at the Earth's equator at noon during the Equinox, the sun passes directly overhead.

Planet and Moon Groupings – A crescent moon will join Venus in the Western sky in the twilight of March 20 and April 19. On March 26, the First Quarter Moon will chase Jupiter across the night sky. On April 22, the two will appear even closer in the constellation Gemini.

Mercury at its Greatest Elongation West, April 3 – On April 3, Mercury is at its farthest Western separation from the Sun in our sky. This event makes Mercury especially visible. Look for Mercury just before sunrise on the Eastern horizon.

Lyrid Meteor Shower, April 22 – The Lyrid Meteor Shower peaks in the early morning on April 22, with an average of 20 meteors per hour in ideal conditions. The shower is centered around the constellation Hercules, but meteors will streak across a wide area of sky. This is an annual meteor shower, occurring when the Earth passes through a stream of debris left behind by Comet Thatcher. The moon is below the horizon in the early morning, creating great observing conditions.

The Observatory at the Maryland Science Center info:
Safe solar viewing is offered Saturdays from 1:00pm-4:00pm, weather permitting (entry included with Science Center admission).

The bi-monthly STARMAP is available on the web at
https://www.mdsci.org/planetarium

MERCURY

When:
March: not visible
Early April: before sunrise

Where:
Eastern horizon

Constellation:
Pisces

VENUS

When:
Visible after sunset

Where:
Western horizon

Constellation:
Pisces, Aries

MARS

When:
Not visible

Where:
Not visible

Constellation:
Not visible

JUPITER

When:
Visible

Where:
High in the sky moving towards the western horizon

Constellation:
Gemini

SATURN

When:
Until March 8: visible after sunset

Where:
Western horizon

Constellation:
Pisces