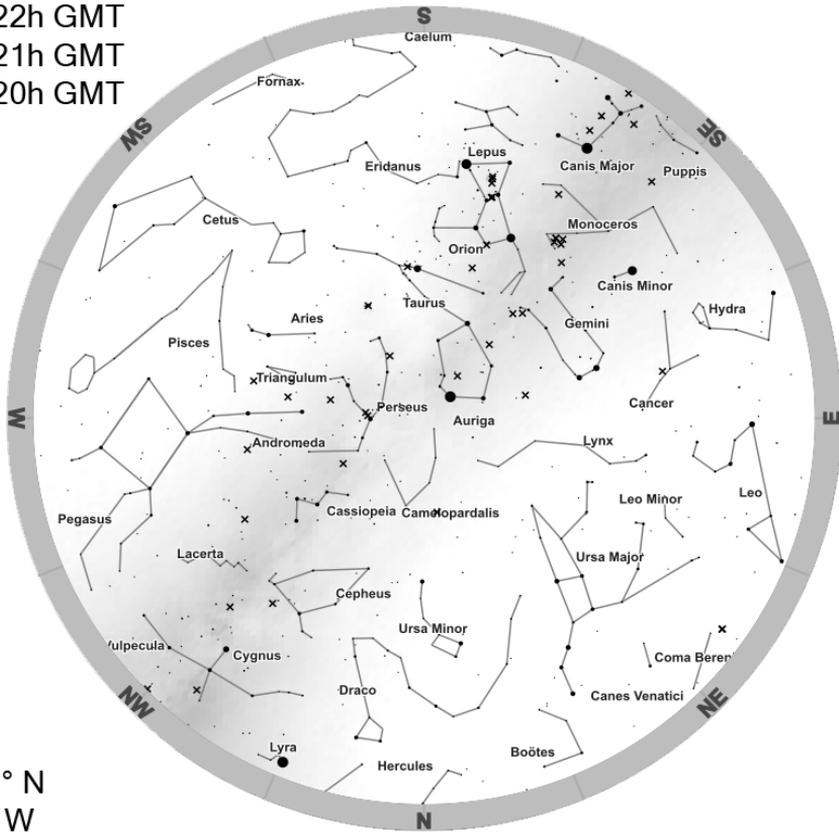


January Sky Notes 2021

01 Jan 22h GMT

15 Jan 21h GMT

30 Jan 20h GMT



Woking

51.3168° N

0.5600° W

<https://in-the-sky.org>

Constellations

These constellations are well placed in the evening this month, but many more can be seen. Check the star map for more.

Orion is visible for almost the whole night, setting a couple of hours before dawn. Look for the distinctive Orion's Belt (three stars in a diagonal line) rising in the east and moving across the southern sky. As the month continues, it begins to set earlier in the night.

Draco can be seen in the northern sky this month. As a circumpolar constellation, it is visible all night, reaching its highest point just before dawn. At this point it is close to the zenith, fading as dawn breaks closer to it each night.

Monoceros moves across the southern sky this month, rising in the east and setting in the west each night. It rises later as the month goes on, setting just before dawn. Look for it immediately to the left of Orion, but be prepared for the faintness of its stars.

Planets

Mercury is mostly below the horizon this month. However, it can be seen for a short time after sunset near the end of the month, just above the western horizon. Mercury reaches greatest eastern elongation on the 24th, making this the best night to see it. On the 25th, half the planet is in shadow (dichotomy), and it reaches its highest point in the sky on the 27th. Perihelion is on the 29th, but this effect is not visually apparent.

Venus is not visible at all this month. Therefore its conjunction with the dwarf planet Pluto on the 29th appears below the horizon.

Mars can be seen from sunset through the the early hours of the morning. It sets earlier as time goes on, amounting to a difference of about an hour over the course of the month. Mars will be in conjunction with the Moon and Uranus on the 21st.

Jupiter is unlikely to be seen this month, as it sets very soon after the Sun and rises after it. There is a small chance of seeing it immediately above the south western horizon just after sunset. Never look or point binoculars directly at the Sun. Jupiter is at solar conjunction 29th, appearing close to the Sun in the sky and therefore not visible.

Saturn stays extremely close to Jupiter this month, and as such cannot be seen. When it is not below the horizon, it is likely to be drowned out by the light of the larger and nearer Jupiter. Saturn is at solar conjunction on the 24th, appearing close to the Sun in the sky and therefore not visible.

Uranus is too faint to be seen with the naked eye. It is in the sky from sunset through to the early hours of the morning, setting earlier as the month goes on. Look for it high in the south, moving across the sky and setting in the west. Uranus is in conjunction with Mars on the 21st.

Neptune is too faint to be seen with the naked eye. It follows a similar path to Uranus, but appears lower in the sky. Therefore, it also sets earlier, visible for just a few hours after sunset. Neptune is in conjunction with the dwarf planet Ceres on the 10th.

Meteor Showers

The **Quadrantids** reach their peak on the night of the 3rd. The radiant (origin point) of the meteors is in the constellation of Boötes. Meteors are visible all night, as Boötes is circumpolar and always in the sky. Best displays will likely be just before dawn. This is one of the biggest meteor showers of the year - you should be able to see up to 120 meteors per hour!

The **γ-Ursae Minorids** reach their peak on the night of the 19th. The radiant (origin point) of the meteors is in the constellation of Ursa Minor. This constellation is circumpolar, so meteors will be visible all night. Best displays are likely to be just before dawn, as it reaches its highest point after sunrise. You are likely to see about 2 meteors per hour.

Moon

Last Quarter: 6th

New Moon: 13th

First Quarter: 20th

Full Moon: 28th

The Moon is at **perigee**, its closest point to the Earth, on the 9th, and **apogee**, its furthest point from the Earth on the 21st. This effect is not visually apparent.

The Moon is at **perihelion**, its closest point to the Sun, on the 12th, and **aphelion**, its furthest point from the Sun on the 29th. This effect is not visually apparent.

Points of Interest

Asteroid **15 Eunomia** reaches opposition on the 21st. It sits in the constellation of Cancer and will be visible between 19:09 and 05:17. Best views will be around midnight, when it reaches its highest point in the sky.

Asteroid **14 Irene** reaches opposition on the 24th. It sits in the constellation of Cancer and will be visible from 18:26 through to dawn. Best views will be around midnight, when it reaches its highest point in the sky.

The Earth reaches **perihelion** on the 2nd. This effect is not visually apparent.

Visit <https://spotthestation.nasa.gov/sightings/> to find out when the ISS will be visible from your location.

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