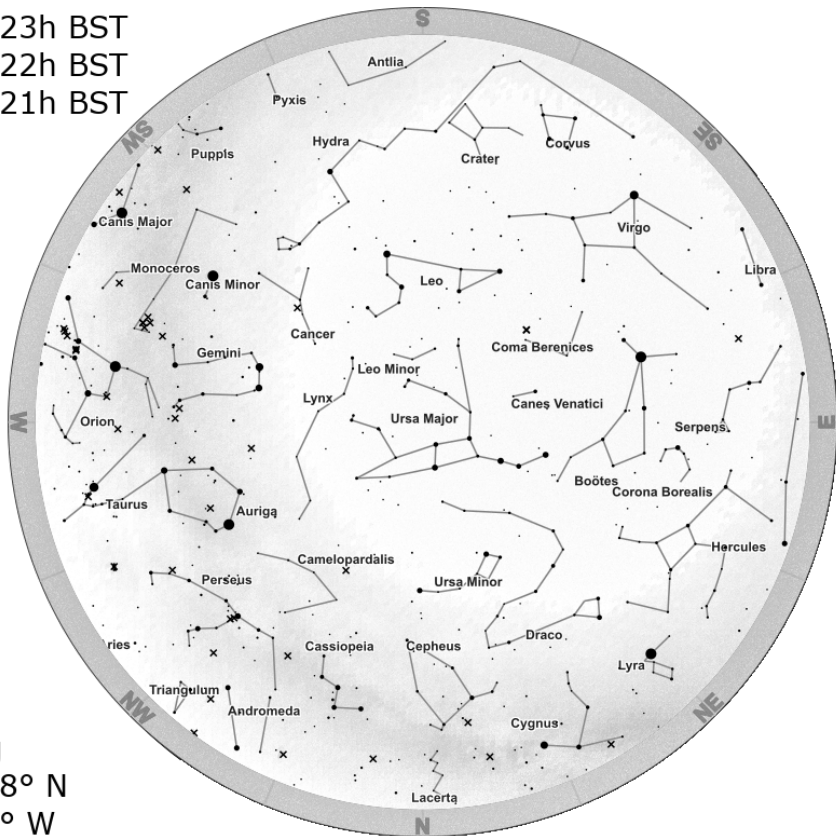


April Sky Notes 2021

01 Apr 23h BST

15 Apr 22h BST

30 Apr 21h BST



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.

Leo can be seen high in the southern sky after sunset this month. It sets in the west just before sunrise and can be seen all month long. Find it by looking for the asterism known as the Sickle, which forms a backwards question mark at one end of the constellation.

Ursa Major is a circumpolar constellation, so never sets below the horizon. It appears high, near the zenith, at sunset, and moves towards the west throughout the night. Look for the asterism known as the Plough to find it, forming the shape of a saucerpan that correlates to the bear's tail.

Ophiuchus rises in the early hours of the morning at the beginning of the month, rising earlier as the month goes on. It moves west across the sky during the night, and will be best seen just before sunrise in the southern sky. Ophiuchus forms a dual constellation with Serpens, which can be seen either side of it.

Planets

Mercury is close to the Sun this month, reaching a superior solar conjunction on the 19th and perihelion, its closest point to the Sun, on the 27th. It will not be visible for the month.

Venus stays very close to the Sun this month, so will not be visible.

Mars appears above the western horizon after sunset and sets in the early hours of the morning. It sets earlier as the month goes on, and will be in conjunction with the Moon on the 17th. There will also be a lunar occultation of Mars on the 17th, where the Moon moves in front of it.

Jupiter is only visible just before sunrise this month. Look for it low on the south eastern horizon. Jupiter will be in conjunction with the Moon on the 7th.

Saturn appears low on the south eastern horizon shortly before sunrise. It will be in conjunction with the Moon on the 6th.

Uranus is too faint to be seen with the naked eye. It appears at sunset before setting within a couple of hours, but only at the beginning of the month. Though not visible, there will be a solar conjunction with Uranus on the 30th.

Neptune is too faint to be seen with the naked eye. It sits below the horizon at night this month, but rises a little before the Sun in the east.

Meteor Showers

The **Lyrids** reach their peak on the night of the 22nd, but will be visible from the 16th to the 25th. The radiant (origin point) of the meteors is in the constellation of Hercules, and is above the horizon all night. Therefore meteors will be visible all night. Best displays are likely to be just before dawn. You will be able to see about 18 meteors per hour.

Moon

Last Quarter: 4th

New Moon: 12th

First Quarter: 20th

Full Moon: 27th

The Moon is at **perigee**, its closest point to the Earth, on the 27th, and **apogee**, its furthest point from the Earth on the 14th. This effect is not visually apparent.

The Moon is at **perihelion**, its closest point to the Sun, on the 9th, and **aphelion**, its furthest point from the Sun on the 29th. This effect is not visually apparent.

Points of Interest

The **Moon** will be in conjunction with dwarf planet **134340 Pluto** on the 5th. Pluto is too faint to be seen with the naked eye.

Asteroid 9 Metis reaches opposition on the 5th. Lying in the constellation of Virgo, it will reach its highest point around midnight. It will be visible between 21:34 and 04:55 BST using a four-inch telescope.

Dwarf planet **136108 Haumea** reaches opposition on the 18th. In the constellation of Boötes, it will be best visible when it reaches its highest point in the sky around midnight. Haumea becomes visible with a four-inch telescope at 21: 28 BST, before disappearing to dawn twilight at 04:31 GMT.

Comet **C/2020 R4 (ATLAS)** is at perigee, its closest point to the Earth, on the 23rd. It will be placed between the constellations of Hercules and Corona Borealis. The best view will likely be around 03:00 BST when it reaches its highest point in the sky.

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

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