



June - August 2021



International Space Station crew members have been gardening in space and were able to enjoy a fresh supply of leafy greens on board, in April this year. Credit: NASA

What to look out for

10 June - Annular Solar Eclipse A ring of light appears around the darkened Moon. A partial eclipse will be visible in the UK, around 11.13am. **Protect your eyes – do not look directly at the Sun!**

10 June - New Moon The best time to observe the night sky as moonlight will not interfere.

21 June - June Solstice This is the first day of summer in the Northern Hemisphere and the first day of winter in the Southern Hemisphere. Possibly the first day of freedom after Lockdown too.....

24 June - Full Moon, Supermoon This full moon has been known as the Strawberry Moon because it coincides with the peak of the strawberry harvest. It has also been known as the Rose Moon or Honey Moon. The Moon will be near its closest approach to the Earth and may look slightly larger and brighter than usual.

4 July - Mercury at Greatest Western Elongation Mercury will be at its highest point above the horizon in the morning sky. Look for the planet low in the eastern sky, just before sunrise.

10 July - New Moon The best time to observe the night sky as moonlight will not interfere.

12 July - Venus, Mars and the Moon visible close together

24 July - Full Moon This full moon is known as the Buck Moon, Thunder Moon or Hay Moon.

28/29 July - Delta Aquarids Meteor Shower The Delta Aquarids can produce up to 20 meteors per hour. The shower runs from 12 July to 23 August but peaks this year on the night of 28/29 July. Unfortunately, the nearly full moon will reduce visibility of the meteors but with patience you should be able to catch a few. Best viewing will be after midnight, meteors appearing anywhere in the sky.

2 August - Saturn at Opposition The planet will be brighter than at any other time of the year and will be visible all night long. A medium-sized telescope will allow you to see Saturn's rings and a few of its brightest moons.

8 August - New Moon The best time to observe the night sky as moonlight will not interfere.

10 August - Moon placed between Venus and Mars

12/13 August - Perseids Meteor Shower Up to 60 meteors per hour are produced at the peak of this shower. It runs annually from 17 July to 24 August but peaks this year on the night of 12/13 August. The waxing crescent moon will leave dark skies for what could be a great show. Best viewing will be after midnight and although meteors will radiate from the constellation Perseus, they can appear anywhere in the sky.

19 August - Jupiter at Opposition The giant planet will be at its closest approach to Earth, brighter than at any other time of the year and visible all night long. A good pair of binoculars should allow you to see Jupiter's 4 largest moons. Look out for Saturn near the Moon too.

22 August - Full Moon, Blue Moon The extra full moon of the season is known as a blue moon and this one was known as the Sturgeon Moon.



*After a successful first flight on 19 April 2021, NASA's Ingenuity Mars Helicopter showed that powered flight is possible on the Red Planet. The Ingenuity experiment will explore how aerial scouting could benefit future exploration of Mars and other celestial bodies.
Credit: NASA/JPL-Caltech/MSSS*

Useful websites

<https://www.space.com>

<https://www.nasa.gov/>

<https://astronomynow.com/uk-sky-chart/>

<https://www.skyatnightmagazine.com/advice/skills/astronomy-guide-viewing-planets-night-sky/>

<http://www.seasky.org/astronomy/astronomy-calendar-2021.html>

<https://www.timeanddate.com/astronomy/sights-to-see.html>

Spot the International Space Station:

https://spotthestation.nasa.gov/sightings/view.cfm?country=United_Kingdom®ion=England&city=Kettering#.Xxl13ihKhPY

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