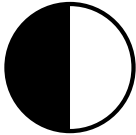
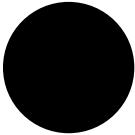
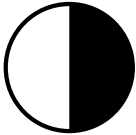
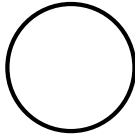


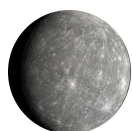
## What's Up - October 2026

### Moon

|                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                           |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  <p><b>Last Quarter</b><br/>3 October 2026<br/>15:25</p> |  <p><b>New Moon</b><br/>10 October 2026<br/>17:50</p> |  <p><b>First Quarter</b><br/>18 October 2026<br/>18:13</p> |  <p><b>Full Moon</b><br/>26 October 2026<br/>06:12</p> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

The moon is at perigee (closest to Earth) on 01/10 at 22:41, at a distance of 369 338 km, and again on 28/10 at 20:01, at a distance of 364 411 km. It is at apogee (furthest from Earth) on 17/10 at 00:56, at a distance of 404 639 km.

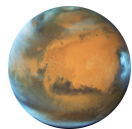
### Planets



**Mercury** (in Libra)  
↑ 07:05 ↓ 21:03  
Near the Moon on 12/10



**Venus** (in Virgo)  
↑ 06:13 ↓ 20:12  
Near the Moon on 12/10



**Mars** (in Cancer)  
↑ 02:53 ↓ 13:10  
Near the Moon on 05/10



**Jupiter** (in Leo)  
↑ 03:28 ↓ 14:11  
Near the Moon on 06/10



**Saturn** (in Cetus)  
↑ 17:54 ↓ 05:48  
Near the Moon on 24/10

*All the details (apart from the proximity to the Moon) are for mid-month in Cape Town.*

### More information



Scan the QR code for more information about the South African Astronomical Observatory (SAAO) and for details about visiting the SAAO in Cape Town or Sutherland.

### Some bright stars in the evening sky

Altair: white star, brightest star in Aquila  
Antares: red supergiant in Scorpius  
Betelgeuse: red supergiant in Orion  
Canopus: yellowish-white star in Carina  
Rigel: blue supergiant in Orion  
Sirius: brightest star in the night sky, in Canis Major  
Spica: bluish-white star in Virgo  
The Pointers: Alpha and Beta Centauri

### Meteor showers

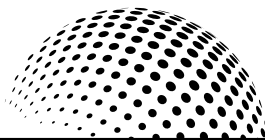
The Southern Taurids are active from 20/09 until 20/11, peaking on 05/11 with 7 meteors per hour. They are best viewed between 21:30 and 03:30. The Orionids are active from 02/10 until 07/11, peaking on 21/10 with 20 meteors per hour. They are best viewed between 00:00 and 04:00. The Northern Taurids are active from 20/10 until 10/12, peaking on 12/11 with 5 meteors per hour. They are best viewed between 21:30 and 03:30.

### Fun facts

On 30 August 2026 the Nancy Grace Roman Space Telescope started its journey into space on a SpaceX Falcon Heavy Rocket. It is named after NASA's first Chief of Astronomy, who is also known as the "mother of the Hubble Space Telescope". Its field of view is a hundred times larger than Hubble's, potentially allowing it to observe a billion galaxies and thousands of supernovae, explosions disrupting a whole star, during its lifetime.

This will allow Roman to gain precious new insights into the nature of the enigmatic dark energy, which is making the universe expand faster and faster.

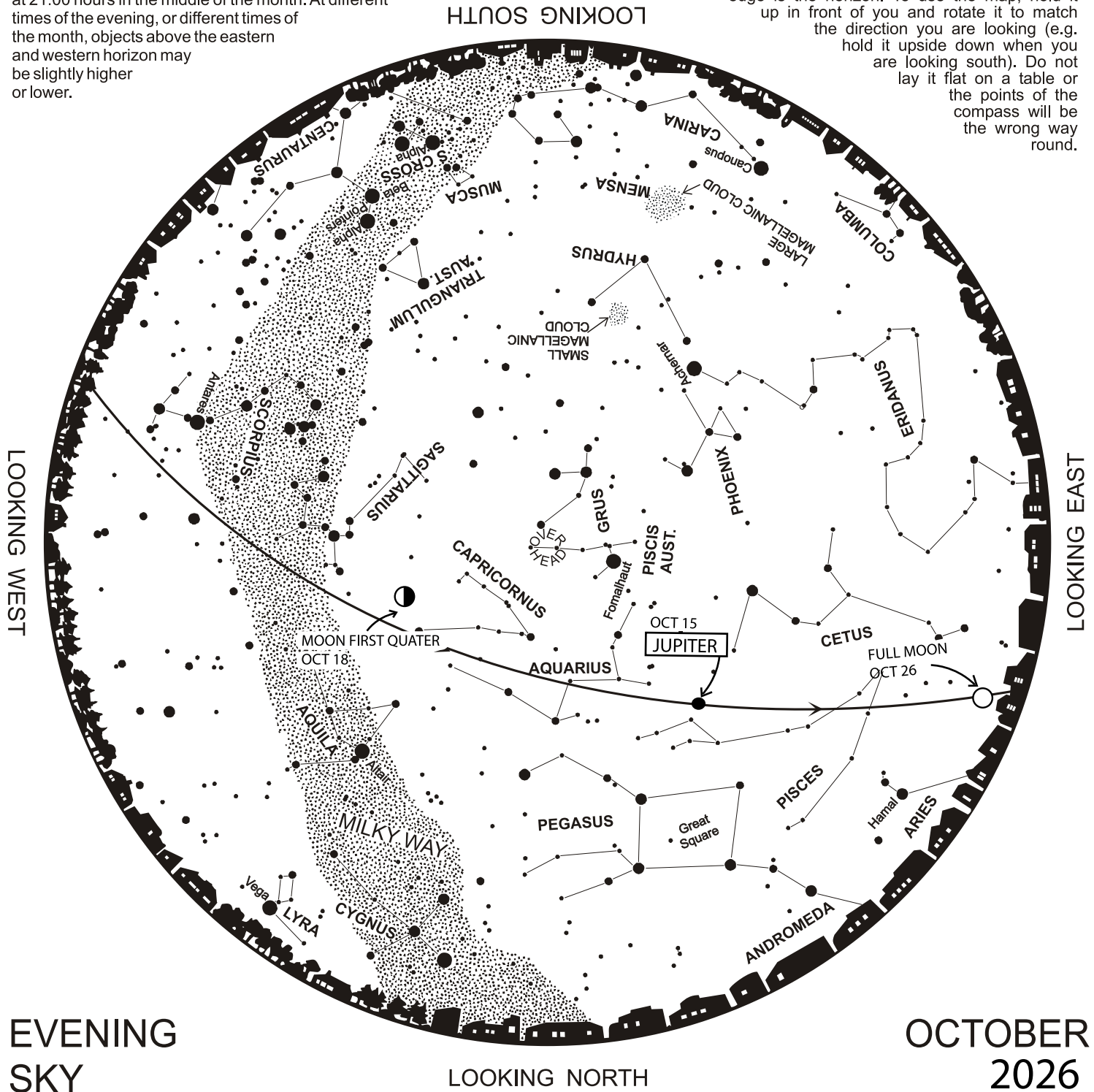
But Roman has another ace up its sleeve as well: Its complex coronagraph demonstrates the technology for blocking off light of stars, which would otherwise outshine the light from the orbiting planets. This paves the way to future missions to analyse the light of rocky planets, looking for signs of life and maybe bringing us closer to answering the question whether we are alone in the cosmos.



## IZIKO PLANETARIUM AND DIGITAL DOME

The map shows the night sky visible above the Cape at 21:00 hours in the middle of the month. At different times of the evening, or different times of the month, objects above the eastern and western horizon may be slightly higher or lower.

The centre of the map is the overhead point, the edge is the horizon. To use the map, hold it up in front of you and rotate it to match the direction you are looking (e.g. hold it upside down when you are looking south). Do not lay it flat on a table or the points of the compass will be the wrong way round.



## EVENING SKY

## OCTOBER 2026

This October Pegasus moves from the northeastern sky toward the northwest, bringing Andromeda into a more prominent position. Under clear, dark skies, observers may also be able to spot the Andromeda Galaxy (M31), our nearest large neighbouring galaxy, about 2.5 million light-years away. In the southern sky, the Large and Small Magellanic Clouds appear as faint, hazy patches. These irregular dwarf galaxies lie approximately 160,000 and 200,000 light-years away, respectively.

In some San traditions, the Milky Way is associated with a story of a young girl throwing glowing wood ashes into the sky, creating a pathway of light. The Magellanic Clouds can be imagined as larger clumps of these celestial embers scattered along the Milky Way. In the northeast, Aries rises below Pisces, while Canopus, the second-brightest star in the

night sky, becomes increasingly prominent in the southern sky. Meanwhile, Ophiuchus, sometimes referred to as the 13th constellation of the zodiac, and Libra gradually descend toward the western horizon.

The New Moon occurs on 10 October, providing darker skies for stargazing. The Full Moon follows on 26 October, sometimes referred to locally as the Whale Moon, this coincides with the time when whales begin their return journey south. During October, Cetus, the constellation representing a sea monster or whale in Greek mythology, also rises higher in the sky. Cetus lies among several constellations associated with water and is part of what is often referred to as the "celestial sea." Saturn remains visible near the region of Pisces and Cetus.