

What's in the Sky for October 2022

October is Meteor Season

There are seven meteor showers in October: five minor showers and two major showers originating from various areas of the sky during the evening and early morning hours. Keep your eyes to the sky this month and you may catch a falling star to wish upon. The **minor** showers are the Camelopardalids on October 5-6, the Southern Taurids on October 10, the Delta Aurigids on October 11, the Epsilon Geminids on October 18, and the Leonis Minorids on October 24. The **major** meteor showers are the Draconids on October 7-9 and the Orionids on October 21-22. See more on these below.

October 7-9: Draconids Meteor Shower Peak

A variable shower and usually not too impressive, but this one has been known to occasionally and unpredictably produce very high rates of meteors. Look high in the sky in the evening hours originating from the constellation Draco. However, the near full moon may drown it out.

October 9: Full Moon

October's full Moon is called the Hunter's Moon and will rise at 7:11 PM. We will have to wait until after sunset to watch it glow in the night sky. The Hunter's Moon is the first full moon to follow the Harvest Moon, meaning that it can occur in either October or November. It is believed to be called the Hunter's Moon because it signaled the time to go hunting in preparation for the cold winter ahead.

October 21-22: Orionids Meteor Shower Peak

The most anticipated night sky event in October is undoubtedly the Orionids meteor shower produced from the remnants of Haleys comet. Look to the east where the constellation of Orion is rising. The Orionids are easy to spot since they originate from a point in the night sky near the highly recognizable constellation Orion. In 2022 the constellation Orion should be visible throughout the night from about 11:45 PM CST onward until sunrise; anytime in that window would be good for trying to spot Orionids meteors. The best time will probably be after midnight around 1:00 AM. With the moon out of the way in the early morning you may see 10-20 meteors per hour.

October 25: New Moon

For those with telescopes the new moon is a great opportunity to view some of the fainter galaxies and other celestial objects. But this month I have different challenge for you: The SpaceX Starlink Satellites. There are about 2300 in orbit right now. They are sometimes confused for alien spacecraft as they move in a line across the night sky in numbers up 46 or more. Using the site [FindStarlink.com](https://www.findstarlink.com) you can put in your location and receive tips on when you can spot these "satellite trains" from your own backyard.

All Month: The Planets

Jupiter and Saturn continue to dominate the night sky in October. Jupiter is low in east after sunset. Saturn is significantly above it in the southeast. Mars will rise in the mid to late evening and is getting brighter as the Earth and Mars grow closer in their orbits. Mars will be high in the sky around 1:00AM and a good height for observing in the east. Uranus will be visible starting around 11:00 PM in the east and Neptune will be visible all night this month as it travels alongside Jupiter. You will need a medium or larger telescope for either Uranus or Neptune.