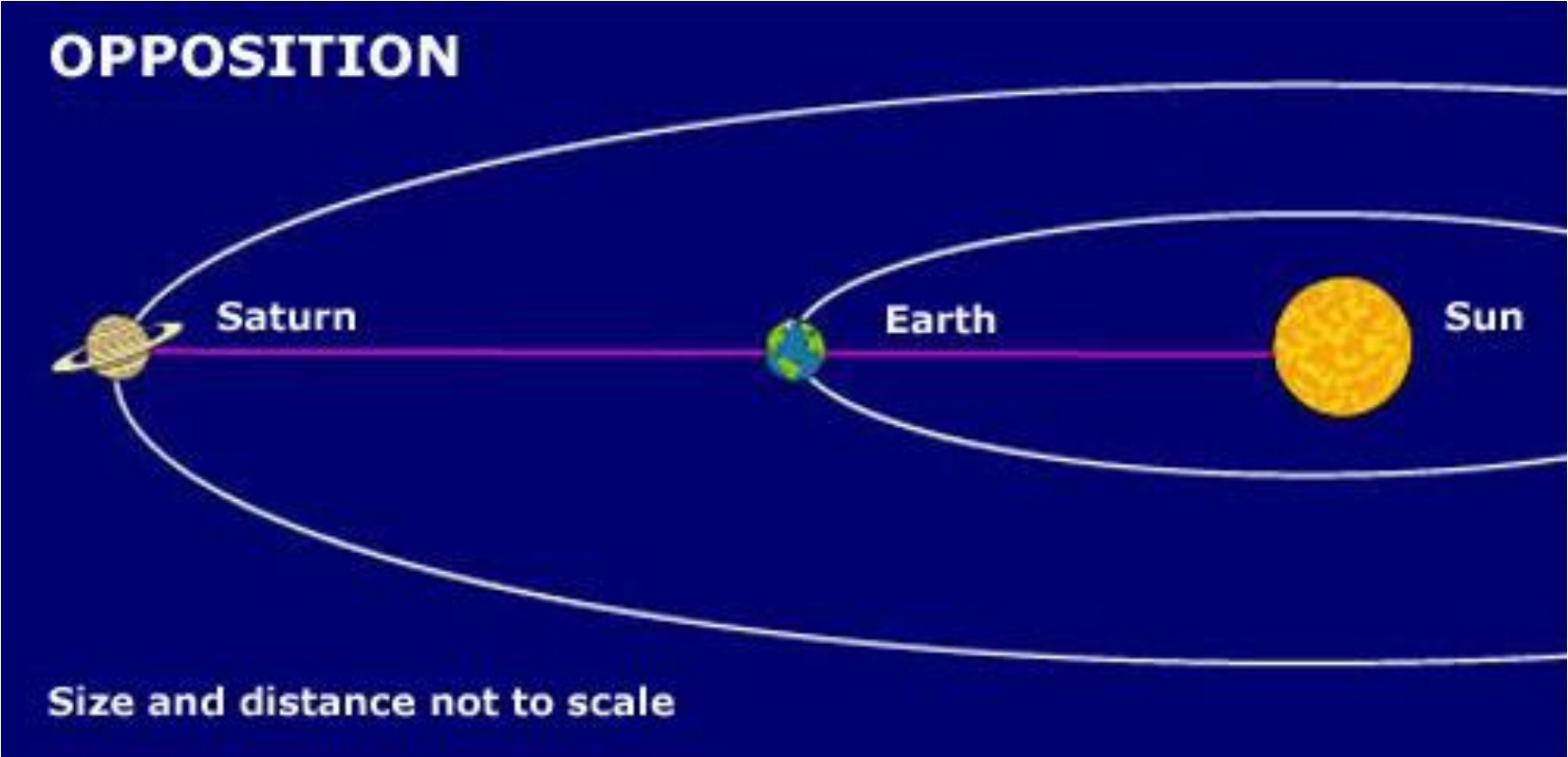


# August 2021 Sky Events

## Gas Giant Saturn Closest to Earth this Month

The planet **Saturn**, our solar system's "lord of the rings", reaches "**opposition**" (opposite the Earth from the Sun and closest for the year) on the night of **August 2<sup>nd</sup>**. At "opposition" Saturn will be a bright magnitude of +0.2!

Saturn at "opposition": opposite the Earth from the Sun and closest for the year.



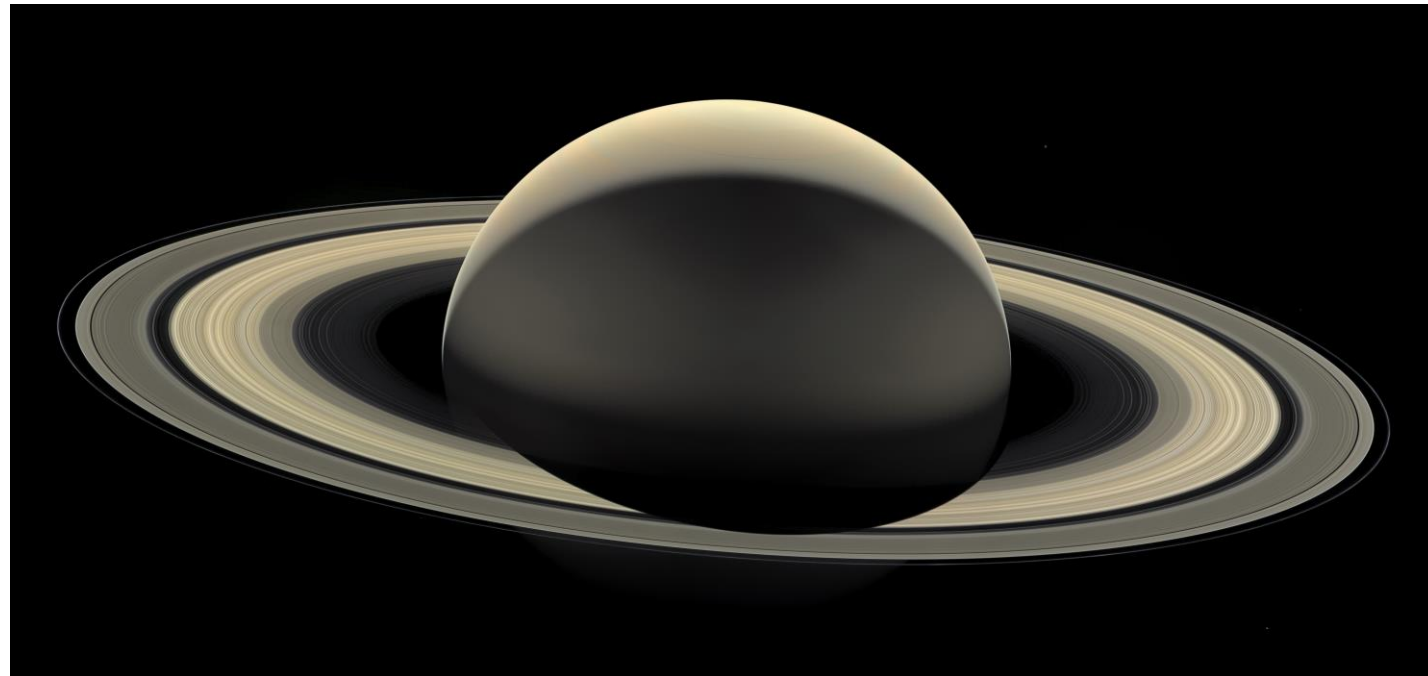
## August 2021 Sky Events

### Gas Giant Saturn Closest to Earth this Month

During August, Saturn, as well as Jupiter, can be found in the zodiac constellation Capricornus - the Sea Goat, rising in the E-SE just after evening twilight.

Saturn is a fast rotator, with only a 10.7 hour day, but its orbit about the Sun takes 29.46 Earth years. Its disk is about 75,000 miles in diameter, but its ring system is some 175,000 miles across, with an average thickness of only 10 meters!

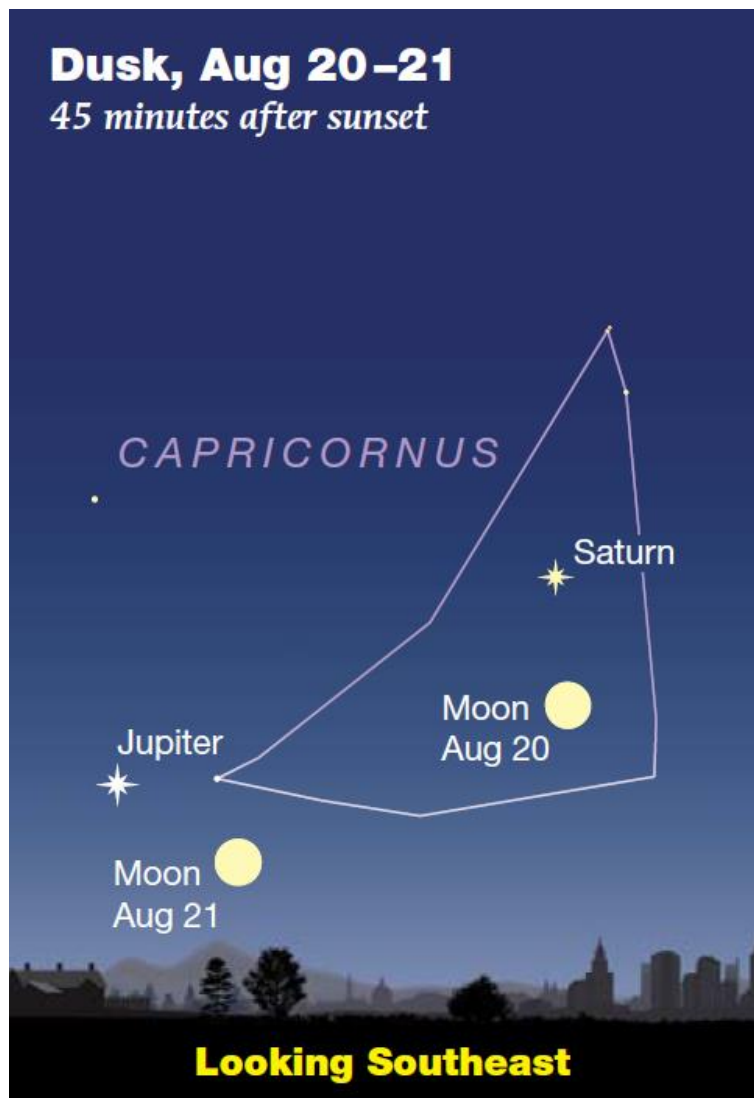
Besides easily observing Saturn's spectacular ring system, modest amateur telescopes typically see up to 6 of Saturn's 82 known moons, including its largest and most famous moon – Titan.



NASA's Cassini Spacecraft image

# August 2021 Sky Events

## Gas Giant Saturn Closest to Earth this Month



Rising at dusk and setting at dawn, the planet Saturn is visible, along with Jupiter, all night during the month of August.

Located in the zodiac constellation Capricornus, the Sea Goat, Saturn is positioned some 830 million miles (or 74 light minutes) away from Earth at “opposition” on August 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Jupiter is less than half as far from us as Saturn in August, and it also shines some 16 times brighter than Saturn in our night sky this month.

Illustration courtesy of [Sky & Telescope](#)