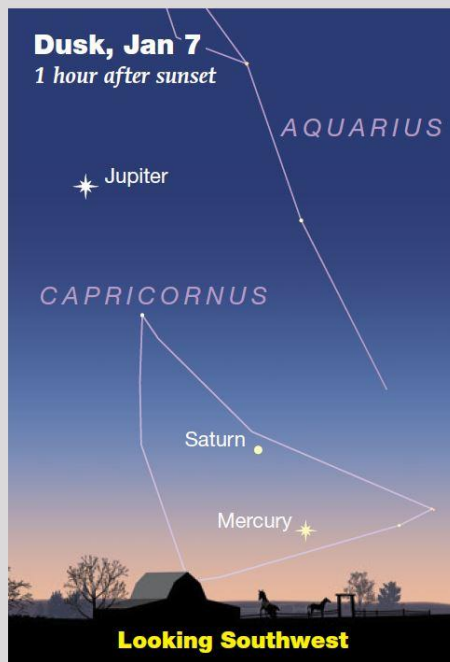
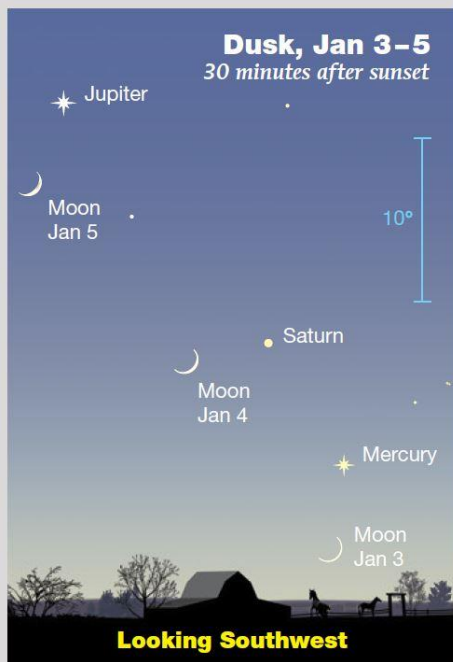


# The Moon Joins the Planets at Dusk

- a January 2022 Sky Event from the [Astronomy Club of Asheville](#)

*During the first two weeks of January, find the Moon and 3 planets aligned in the southwest at dusk.*



The above illustrations are courtesy of [SKY & TELESCOPE](#)

From **January 3-5**, the waxing crescent Wolf Moon will sail along the ecliptic past Mercury, Saturn, and Jupiter. This apparition of the innermost planet Mercury is a bright one, although brief. On **January 3<sup>rd</sup>**, find a location with a low view to the SW horizon, and then use binoculars to spot the narrow crescent Moon and Mercury. On that night, the very young Moon will be only 2% illuminated!

From **January 6-13**, Mercury is ascending off the horizon while Saturn is descending; this will give the appearance of the two planets approaching each other. After January 13<sup>th</sup>, Mercury begins descending toward the horizon, with Saturn and Jupiter in pursuit. Speedier Mercury fades as it reaches the horizon first around January 22<sup>nd</sup> – attaining *inferior conjunction* with the Sun (passing between the Earth and the Sun) on January 23<sup>rd</sup>. About 10 days later, you will find Mercury in the dawn skies.

This is the last month to observe Saturn as it attains *conjunction* with the Sun on February 4<sup>th</sup>. Jupiter follows suit – reaching *conjunction* a month later on March 5<sup>th</sup>. Jupiter and Saturn will not return to our early evening skies again until the middle of September 2022.

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