

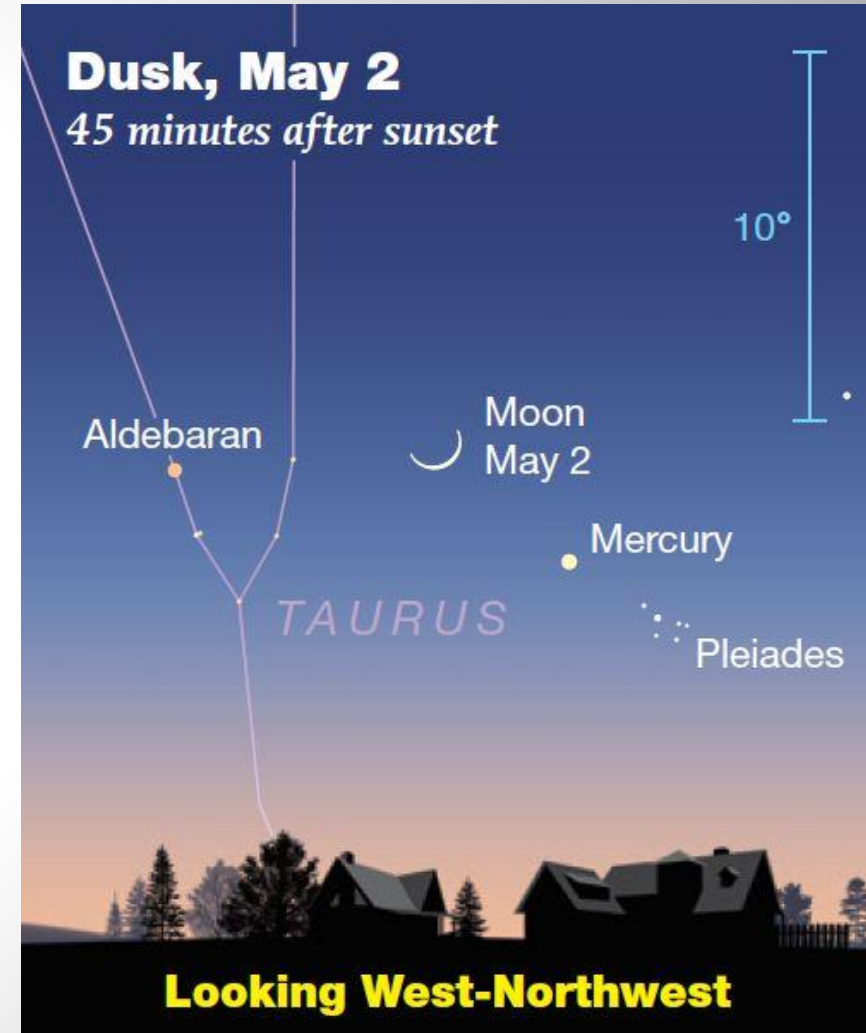
Astronomy Club of Asheville
May 2022 Sky Events

The Moon Joins the Planet Mercury near the Pleiades Star Cluster at Dusk

On the evening of **May 2nd**, look for the speedy and elusive innermost planet Mercury, near the Pleiades star cluster during twilight. An only 4% illuminated, waxing crescent Moon also joins the show.

Shining at magnitude +0.9, Mercury should be easy to spot at dusk, especially if you use a pair of binoculars. With a small telescope, you may notice that Mercury's 27% illuminated disk is a distinct crescent shape. Consider that the reflected sunlight from the small planet's disk is traveling some 72 million miles – a journey of about 6½ light minutes!

As seen from Earth while it orbits about our Sun, Mercury, like Venus, goes through phases similar to our Moon. And Mercury's fleet-footed journey about our star takes only 88 Earth days to complete – travelling through space at 29 miles per second, faster than any other planet.



Looking West-Northwest
Illustration courtesy of [Sky & Telescope](#)