

The Crescent Moon Sails by Saturn in the constellation Aquarius

On the nights of **January 13-14**, the waxing crescent Moon sails by the gas giant planet Saturn in constellation Aquarius, the Water Carrier. Saturn is descending lower each night toward the western horizon – soon to depart our evening skies until late summer. Saturn is located some 972 million miles (87 light minutes) behind the Moon.

The Moon orbits eastward, about 13° along the “ecliptic” (the path across the sky that the Sun, Moon, and planets appear to follow), from one day to the next, or about $\frac{1}{2}^\circ$ per hour. This shift means Earth has to rotate a little longer to bring the Moon into view, which is why moonrise is about 50 minutes later each day. On these cool winter evenings, try following this daily lunar movement across the sky.

Illustration courtesy of
[Sky & Telescope](#)

