

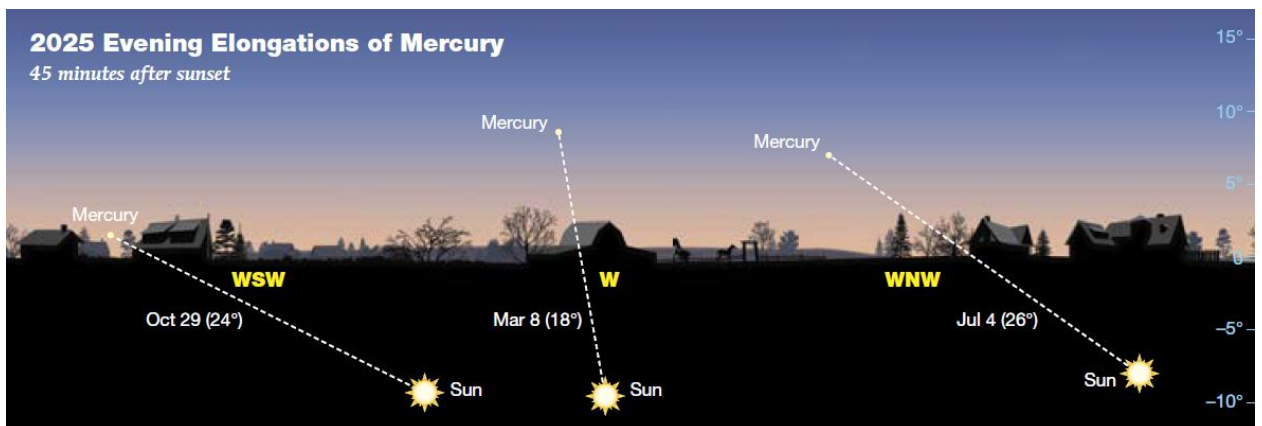
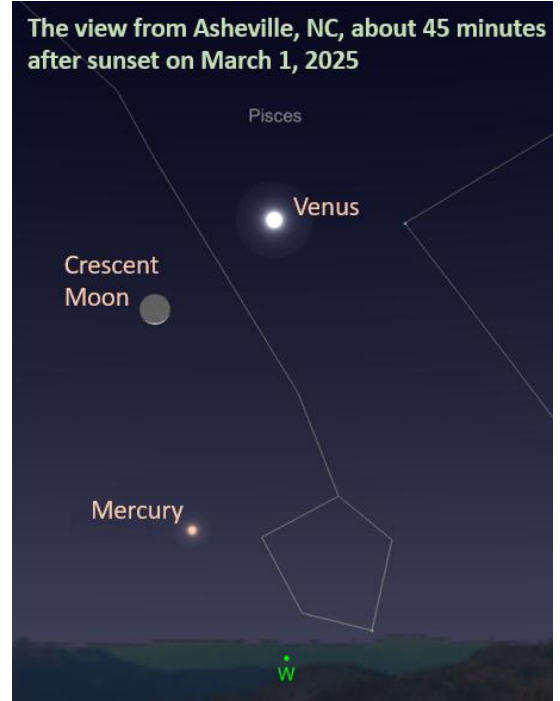
March 2025 Highlight

Mercury at its Best Evening Apparition for 2025

This small, elusive, innermost solar system planet is visible at its best in the early evening skies for the year 2025 at the beginning of March. Of the 5 naked-eye planets, Mercury is the most difficult to spot, and it is the one that most humans have never wittingly observed. Because Mercury is so close to the Sun, it never ventures far enough away from the Sun to be seen in a truly dark sky; it is only visible during dusk or at dawn. That being said, if you know where and when to look, Mercury is bright enough to be spotted without much difficulty.

About 45 minutes after sunset during the first two weeks of March, Mercury is positioned at its best viewing opportunity at dusk for 2025. It can be located low to the western horizon in the zodiac constellation Pisces, the Fishes. Brilliant Venus is easy to spot, while Mercury shines at magnitude -1.0.

Mercury reaches “greatest elongation east” of the Sun on March 8th – an elongation of about 18°. This is the first of three dusk apparitions for Mercury in 2025, and the one where the planet is highest off the horizon, despite it being the smallest elongation of the three. This happens in March because the ecliptic (the apparent path that the planets and the Sun follow across our skies) is nearly perpendicular to the horizon in March – it’s near the equinox.



On these early March evenings, Mercury shines brighter than most stars, and it is closer to us than the Sun, at a distance of about 84 million miles (about 7 light minutes). With a small telescope, you should be able to distinguish its waning, crescent shape – about 43% illuminated. Mercury will be highest off the western horizon on March 8th.

So, take the challenge to spot Mercury during the first 2 weeks of March!

