

The Crescent Moon Sails by Saturn

On the nights of **January 21-23**, the waxing crescent Moon sails by the planet Saturn in the zodiac constellation Pisces, the Fishes. Saturn is descending lower each night toward the western horizon – departing our evening skies in March.

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 needs to rotate a little longer each day to bring the Moon back 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](#)