

# Astronomy Club of Asheville

## June 2026 Highlight

### A Waxing Crescent Moon Hides the Planet Venus

From the Asheville region on the afternoon of Wednesday, **June 17<sup>th</sup>**, the waxing crescent Moon will occult (pass in front of) Earth's neighboring planet Venus.

Here in the Asheville area, this occultation will begin high in the southwest in the direction of the zodiac constellation Cancer. Use binoculars or a small telescope to help you observe Venus as it disappears and reappears from behind the 11% illuminated crescent Moon. Yes, with optical aid, you can observe this crescent Moon and the bright planet Venus in broad daylight.



*Venus' disappearance at 3:39 p.m.*



*Venus' reappearance at 5:07 p.m.*

Approximate timings for this 88-minute Venus occultation in the Asheville, NC region:

3:39 p.m. EDT (June 17)	1 <sup>st</sup> contact and the beginning of Venus' <b>disappearance</b>
5:07 p.m. EDT (June 17)	2 <sup>nd</sup> contact and the beginning of Venus' <b>reappearance</b>

**Venus** is the brightest planet as seen from Earth – primarily due to its high albedo (reflectivity). It reflects about 70% of the sunlight that reaches its cloud tops compared to only 30% for our home planet Earth.

**Find out more about this lunar occultation of Venus from the folks at Sky & Telescope on the next page.**

Courtesy of SKY & TELESCOPE

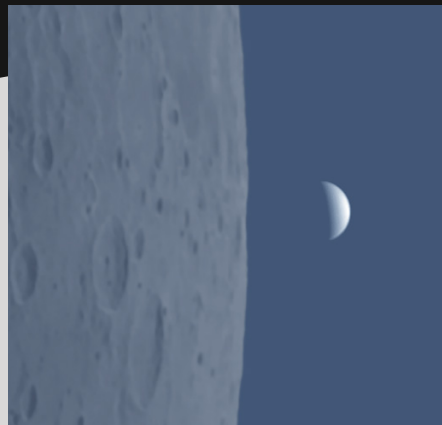
# A Daylight Occultation

Watch the crescent Moon occult Venus in the middle of the day.

The Moon is always a helpful guide, pointing the way to the stars and planets that lie along its path. A tireless teacher, it visits more than a dozen constellations and seven planets during each of its circuits around the sky.

This month, Earth's celestial partner has something wonderful in store. **On June 17th, the 11%-illuminated waxing crescent will occult Venus in the bright sunshine across the contiguous U.S.,** much of Canada, northern Mexico, the Caribbean, and northeastern South America. Venus will be in waning gibbous phase, 74% illuminated at magnitude -4.0, neatly complementing the Moon's sickle shape. The pair will lie a comfortable 38° east of the Sun.

When located sufficiently far from the Sun, Venus is readily visible with the



unaided eye in the daytime sky, so keen amateurs may attempt to see the Moon cover and uncover it without optical aid. It's easiest (and safest) if you observe the occultation from a shady spot to avoid the Sun's glare. But why make it hard on yourself? A pair of 35-mm or 50-mm binoculars will easily show the duo. A small telescope is best because it will not only reveal Venus as a pure white gibbous "moon" 28" across, but you'll see the blue sky slowly nibble it to nothing in approximately 30 seconds. Yes, blue sky. The planet disappears at the Moon's dark limb, which appears sky-blue in bright daylight.

Venus will reappear minutes to more than an hour later (depending on your location), emerging from the Moon's bright limb. Coming and going, both sides of this occultation will make for a fantastic observing experience. All you have to do is be there on time. From the East Coast the cover-up begins around 3:30–4:00 p.m. local

◀ Venus hovers above the Moon's cratered limb soon after emerging from behind the lunar crescent during the June 8, 2007, occultation.

time; 2:00–2:30 p.m. in the Midwest; 12:30–1 p.m. in the Mountain States; and 11:30–11:45 a.m. on the West Coast. More accurate times for your specific location can be found at [https://is.gd/iota\\_0617venus](https://is.gd/iota_0617venus). Rob Robinson, with the International Occultation Timing Association (IOTA), has set up this website with the times of disappearance and reappearance for a host of cities. Or just simulate the event for your location using your favorite planetarium app and note the times.

You can use a telescope to capture photos of the occultation, but a long telephoto lens on a basic tripod will also work well. Both objects are extremely bright, so a tracking drive isn't necessary.

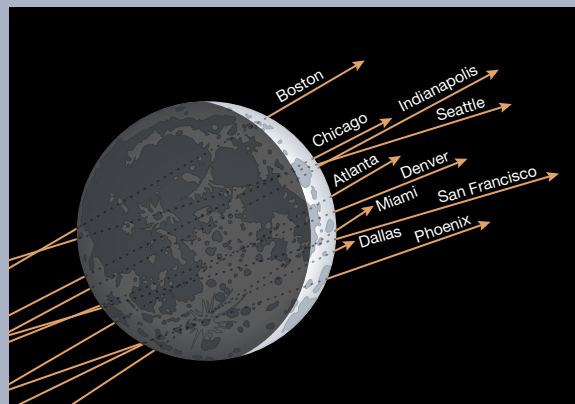
For those not in the occultation zone, there's still some good news. The Moon and Venus will be buddies all day long, so you can aim binoculars at the lunar crescent and catch the starlike planet hovering nearby.

Venus occultations are fairly uncommon for any particular region. The last one seen from the U.S. occurred on April 17, 2024, but it was only visible from the eastern third of the country. Bad weather can often add years to the time between opportunities. Each one means a chance to tune in to the music of the spheres and its ceaseless cycles that go on with and without us.\*\*\*

## Occultation of Venus on June 17, 2026

City	Disappearance (UT)	Reappearance (UT)
Atlanta	19:39.4	21:07.4
Boston	20:00.1	21:08.4
Chicago	19:24.8	20:50.1
Dallas	19:18.2	20:34.5
Denver	18:55.6	20:18.1
Indianapolis	19:28.4	20:55.7
Miami	20:06.3	21:24.7
Phoenix	18:50.9	19:55.1
San Francisco	18:33.6	19:44.6
Seattle	18:40.9	19:51.4

Ingress and egress times of the June 17th occultation of Venus. For cities not listed in this table, visit [https://is.gd/iota\\_0617venus](https://is.gd/iota_0617venus).



▲ This diagram shows the ingress and egress locations of Venus at the lunar limb for several U.S. cities. Times are listed in the adjacent table. North is up.