

Amazing Space!

October - December 2020

See a planet without a telescope

Despite what many people think, you don't need a telescope to see a planet in the night sky. The origins of the word planet (ancient Greek for 'wandering star') gives you a clue as to what you need to look for.

To make planet spotting even easier, use the Moon as a celestial signpost to find Mars, Jupiter and Saturn at different times during October, November and December 2020.

More finder charts can be found on the Nightskyonline website.

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See the Moon and Mars together on Thursday 29 October 2020

Moon 

Mars 

Chart prepared for 7.30 pm AEST or 8.30 pm AEDT. Look above the North Eastern horizon.

See Jupiter, Saturn and the Moon together on Thursday 19 November 2020

Moon  Saturn 
Jupiter 

Chart prepared for 7:45 am AEST or 8:45 am AEDT. Look above the Western horizon.

See Jupiter, Saturn and the Moon together on Thursday 17 December 2020



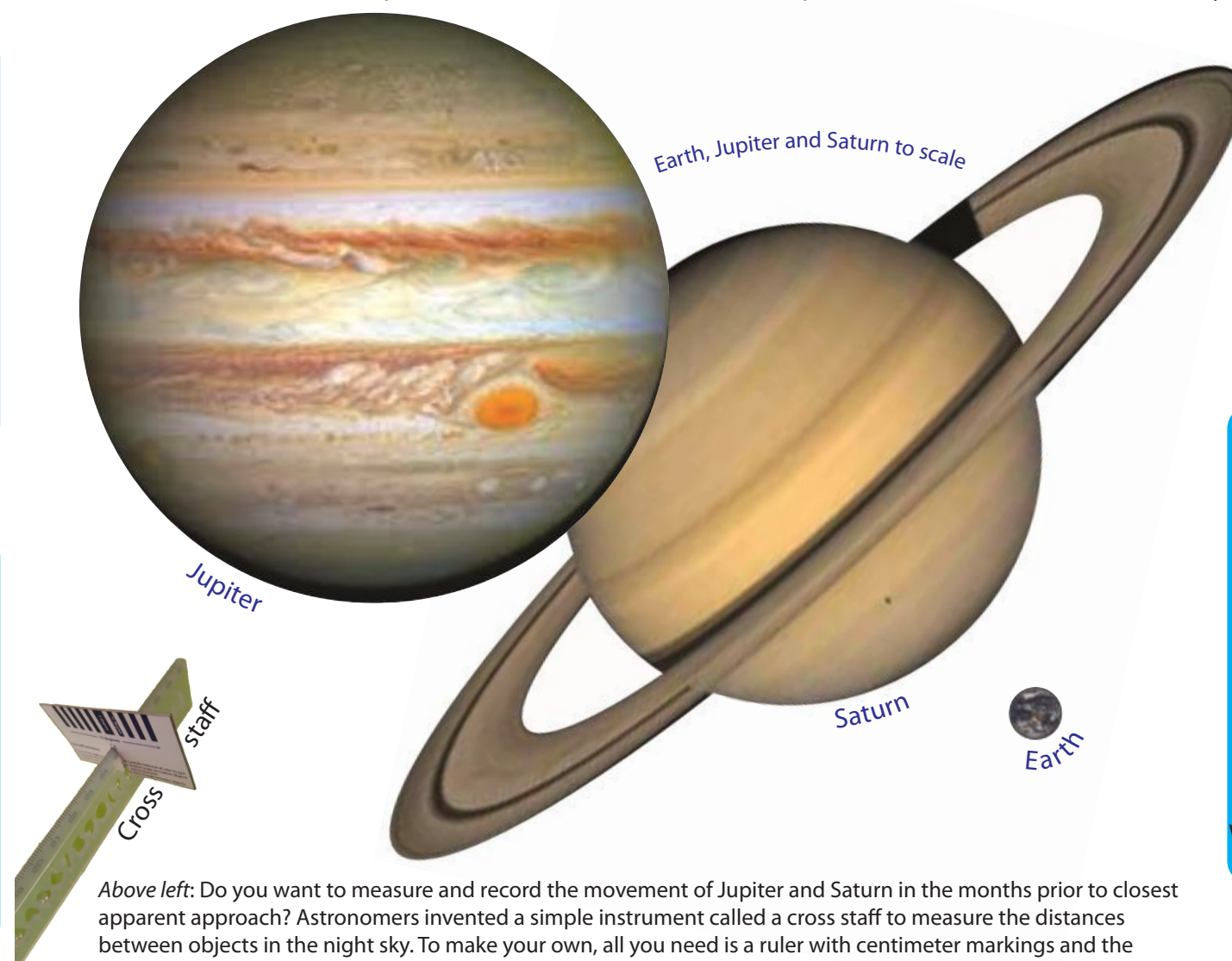
Moon  Saturn 
Jupiter 

Chart prepared for 8:15 am AEST or 9:15 am AEDT. Look low above the Western horizon.



Above left: Do you want to measure and record the movement of Jupiter and Saturn in the months prior to closest apparent approach? Astronomers invented a simple instrument called a cross staff to measure the distances between objects in the night sky. To make your own, all you need is a ruler with centimeter markings and the instructions (download from <http://nightskyonline.info/?p=27152>). Once you have made the cross staff, observe the planets apparent positions once per week in the leadup to closest approach on 21 December 2020.

How close will Jupiter and Saturn get?

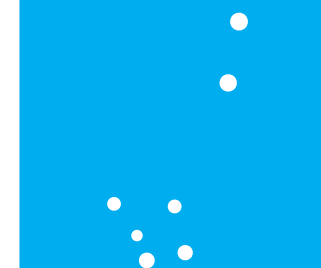


Above: The closest apparent approach between Jupiter and Saturn on 21 December 2020 will be the size of the small black circle next to the Moon.

Constellations

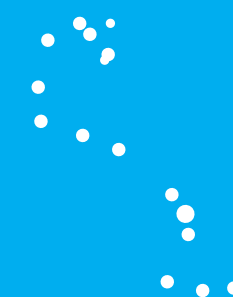
Constellations are imaginary pictures in the sky. Can you imagine a giant Cross or a Scorpion in the night sky? Use these charts to help you find the stars around which the ancient people created their constellations.

Crux 'The Southern Cross' and 'The Pointers'



Look above the South Western horizon at the end of evening twilight.

Scorpius 'The Scorpion'



Look above the Western horizon at 7.30 pm AEST in mid-October.

Crescent Moon



21 October
19 November
19 December

First Quarter Moon



23 October
22 November
22 December

Gibbous Moon



26 October
25 November
24 December

Full Moon



2/31 October
30 November
30 December