

Astronomical Events of March 2018

- March 2** - **Full Moon.**
The Moon will be located on the opposite side of the Earth as the Sun and its face will be fully illuminated. This full moon was known by early Native American tribes as the Full Worm Moon because this was the time of year when the ground would begin to soften and the earthworms would reappear. This moon has also been known as the Full Crow Moon, the Full Crust Moon, the Full Sap Moon, and the Lenten Moon.
- March 15** - **Mercury at Greatest Eastern Elongation.**
The planet Mercury reaches greatest eastern elongation of 18.4 degrees from the Sun. This is the best time to view Mercury since it will be at its highest point above the horizon in the evening sky. Look for the planet low in the western sky just after sunset.
- March 17** - **New Moon.**
The Moon will be located on the same side of the Earth as the Sun and will not be visible in the night sky. This is the best time of the month to observe faint objects such as galaxies and star clusters because there is no moonlight to interfere.
- March 20** - **March Equinox.**
The Sun will shine directly on the equator and there will be nearly equal amounts of day and night throughout the world. This is also the first day of spring (vernal equinox) in the Northern Hemisphere and the first day of fall (autumnal equinox) in the Southern Hemisphere.
- March 31** - **Full Moon, Blue Moon.**
The Moon will be located on the opposite side of the Earth as the Sun and its face will be fully illuminated. Since this is the second full moon in the same month, it is sometimes referred to as a blue moon. This year is particularly unique in that January and March both contain two full moons while February has no full moon.