

Conjunction of the Harvest Moon with Venus & Spica

On September 5th, the waxing-crescent **Harvest Moon** appears at dusk for a get-together with **Venus**. The lunar crescent is very thin — 7% illuminated and only two days old. That evening the Moon sits about 7° from its planetary partner. It's positioned to the left of the “Evening Star”. Venus should be easier to spot, despite its low altitude, as it gleams brilliantly at magnitude -3.9 . You might even end up having to use Venus to locate the Moon. The best strategy is to get out your binoculars and begin hunting right after sunset, when the Moon and Venus are slightly higher than during twilight. Both objects fit into the same binocular field. You can try again the following evening (the 6th) when the Moon is a much wider 17° upper left of the Evening Star, and nearer the bright star **Spica** in Virgo. The Moon will be more illuminated and higher up that evening. The setup isn't quite as spectacular, but it's likely easier to see.

