

Conjunction of Saturn with Mercury

On **February 24th** during early evening twilight, with a clear view low to the western horizon, bright Mercury will be aligned near much fainter Saturn. The two planets will trade positions on the following night, with Mercury rising above the descending Saturn. Sunset occurs around 6:21 p.m. EST on these evenings, and the 2 planets will set soon afterwards.

So, you should try to observe them around 7:11 p.m. EST. Using binoculars or a small telescope will improve your chances of locating the 2 planets, especially faint Saturn.

If you succeed in locating these 2 planets, you can then continue your planet observing by scanning the sky for the other solar system planets that are all visible on the night of Feb. 24th. Begin by spotting Venus (in Pisces) above Mercury and Saturn, then bright Jupiter high in the south (in Taurus), next orange Mars to the left of Jupiter (in Gemini).

Now that you located all five “naked-eye” planets, go after Neptune in the west below Venus (in Pisces) and Uranus between Venus and Jupiter (in Aries). You will need a location chart and binoculars or a small telescope to bag Uranus and Neptune and thus complete observing all our solar system planets in one viewing session!



Illustration created using SkySafari & PowerPoint software