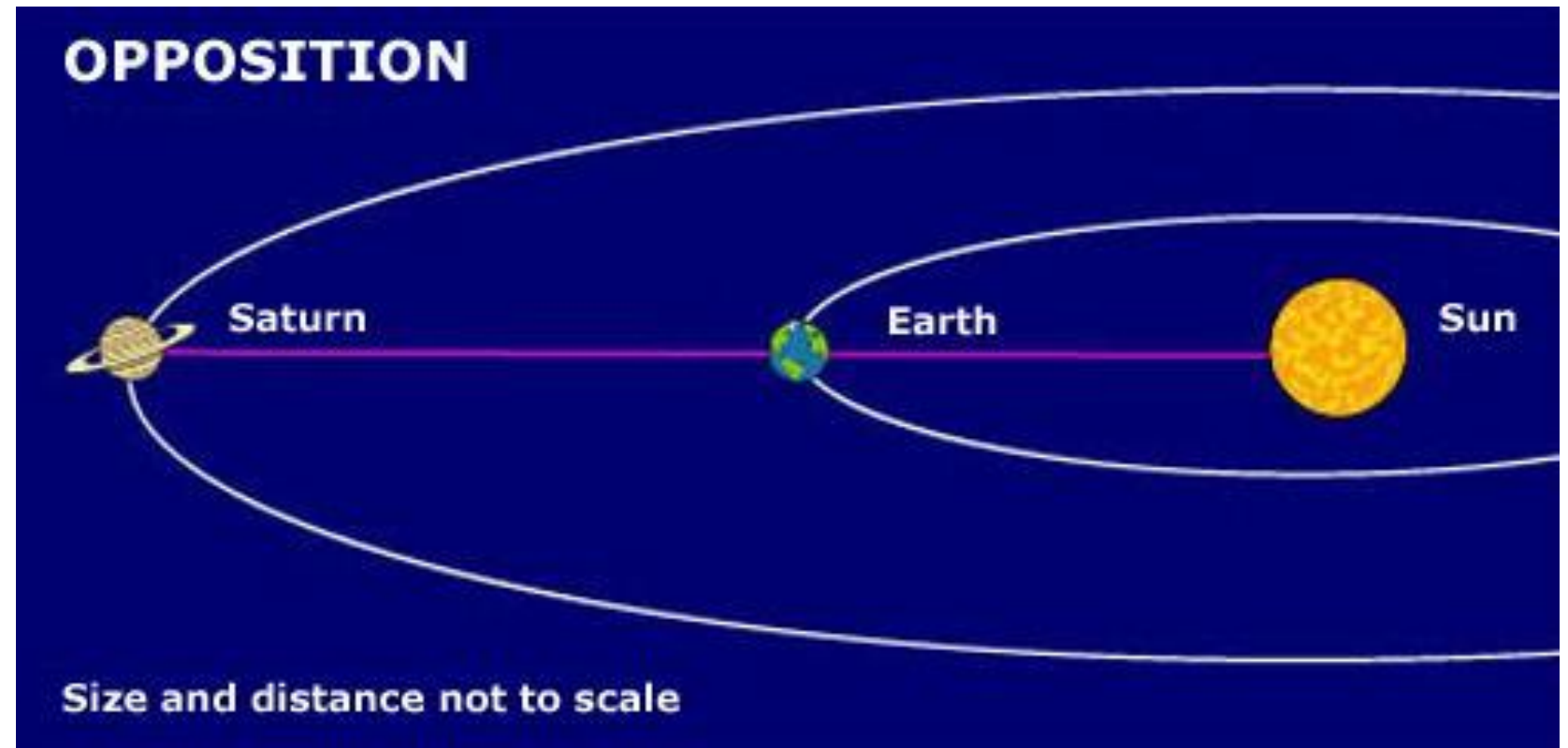


October 2026 Sky Events

Gas Giant Saturn Closest to Earth this Month

The planet Saturn, our solar system's "lord of the rings", **reaches "opposition"** (opposite the Earth from the Sun and closest for the year) on the night of **October 3/4**. At "opposition" Saturn will be a bright magnitude of +0.3.

Saturn at
"opposition":
opposite the Earth
from the Sun and
closest for the year.



October 2026 Sky Events

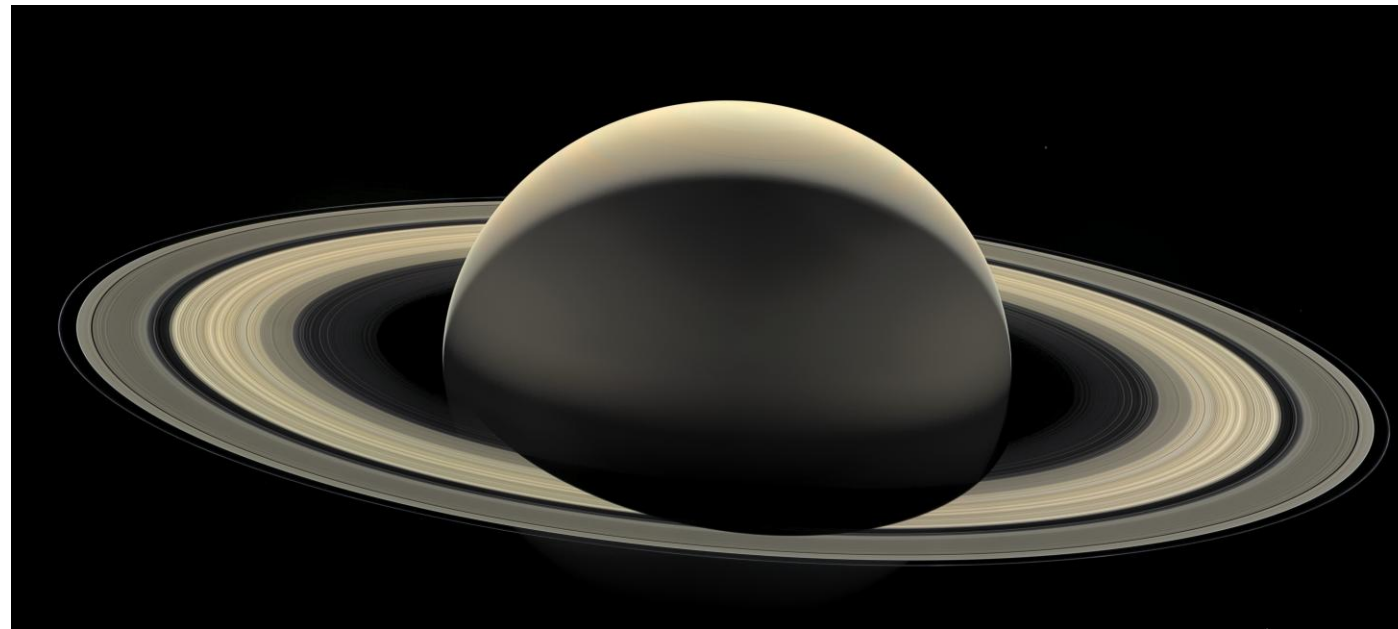
Gas Giant Saturn Closest to Earth this Month

At this opposition, Saturn's ring system is tipping back into view at an angle 7 to 8 degrees – exposing the planet's southern hemisphere.

Saturn is a fast rotator, with only a 10.7-hour day, but its orbit about the Sun takes 29.46 Earth years. Its disk is about 75,000 miles in diameter, but its icy ring system is some 175,000 miles across, with a maximum thickness of less than 100 meters!

Besides observing Saturn's spectacular ring system, modest amateur telescopes typically see up to 6 of Saturn's 293 known moons, including its largest and most famous moon – Titan.

NASA's Cassini Spacecraft image



October 2026 Sky Events

Gas Giant Saturn Closest to Earth this Month

6 years
later

2025

5 years
earlier

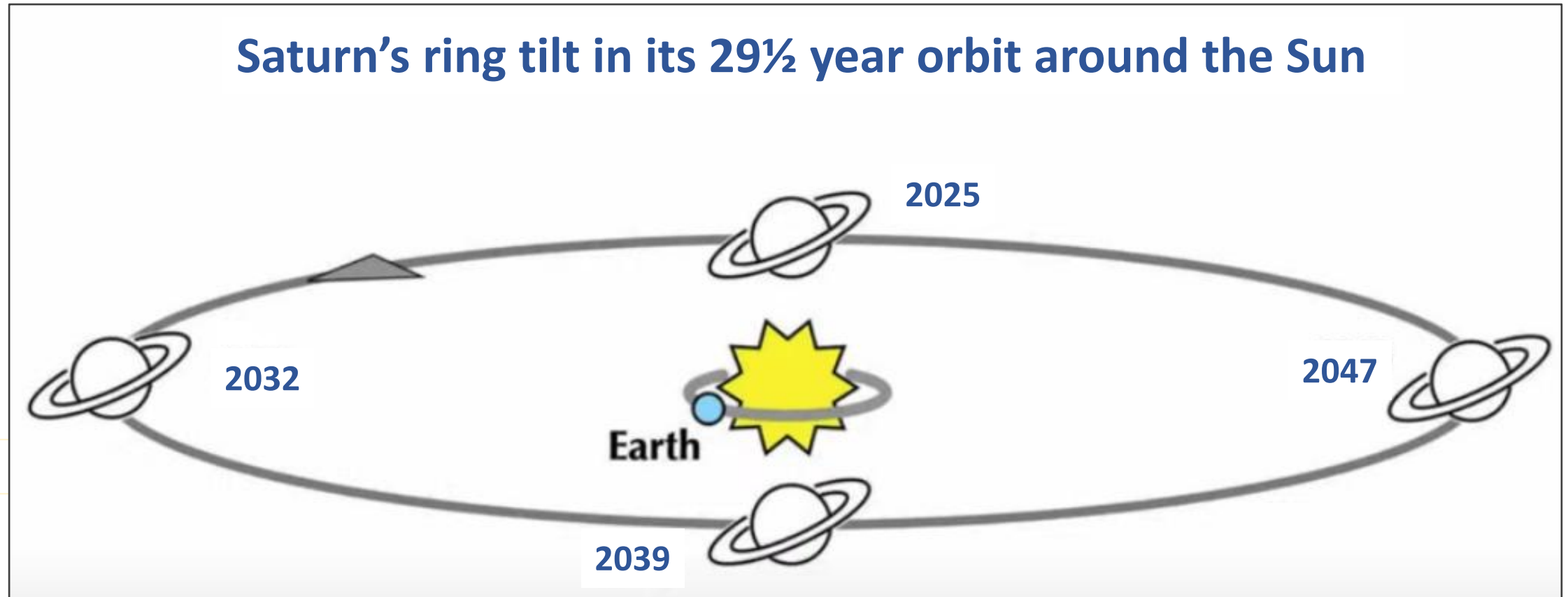
This beautiful montage of Saturn is imaged from Earth by [Damian Peach](#).

As Saturn advances in its orbit in the coming years, the view of the ring system will continue to open up, exposing its southern hemisphere to our view. In 2032, Saturn's rings will be at their maximum exposure angle of 27 degrees and wonderfully displayed in all their splendor!

October 2026 Sky Events

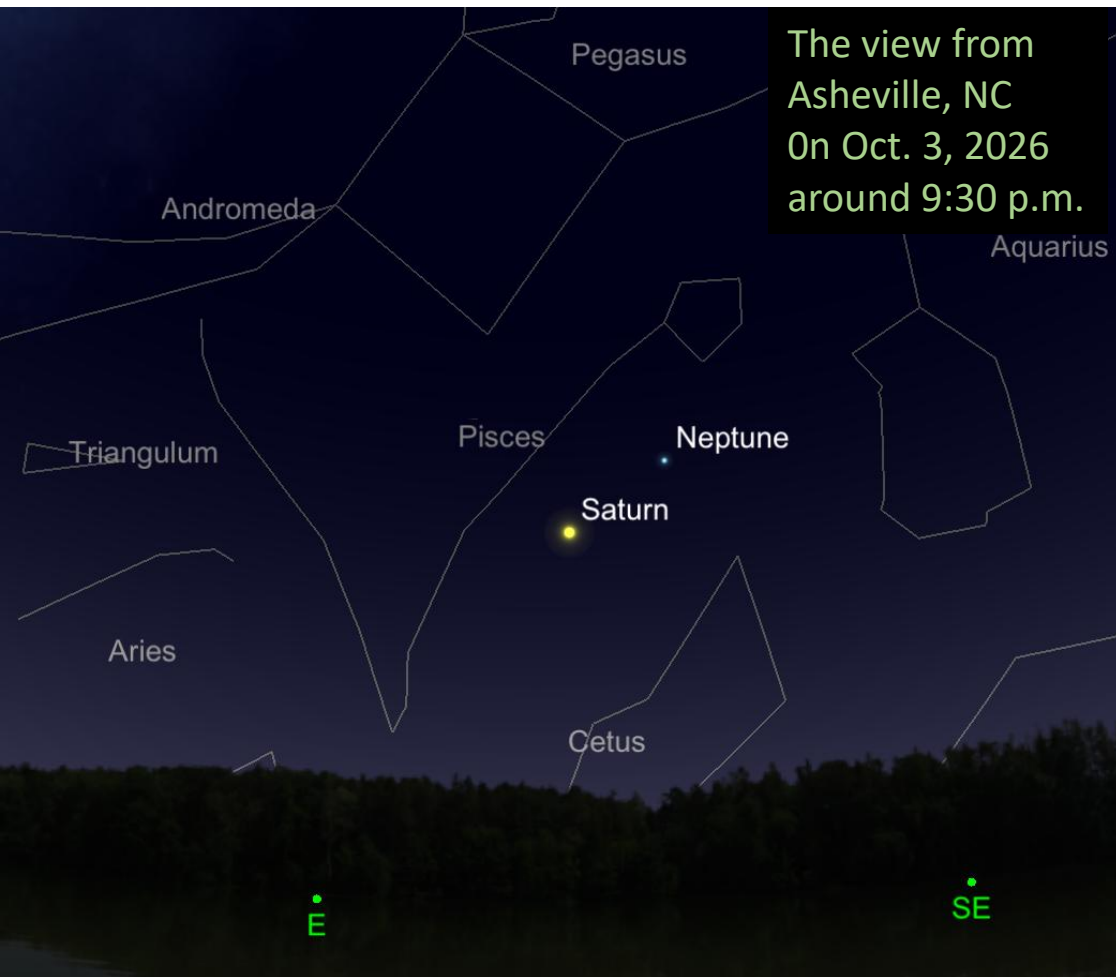
Gas Giant Saturn Closest to Earth this Month

Saturn's ring system tilt, as it orbits around the Sun, is illustrated below. The rings are very near edge-on as seen from Earth in 2025 and 2039, while they are at maximum tilt of 27 degrees in 2032 and 2047.



October 2026 Sky Events

Gas Giant Saturn Closest to Earth this Month



Located in the constellation Cetus (along the border of the constellation Pisces, the Fishes) Saturn is positioned some 784 million miles (or 70 light minutes) away from Earth at “opposition” on the night of October 3/4.

Rising at dusk in the east and setting at dawn in the west, the planet Saturn is visible all night during the weeks surrounding this opposition.

Use binoculars or a small telescope to spot the faint, pale-blue disk of the planet Neptune, about 7 degrees above/west of Saturn.

Illustration created with SkySafari and PowerPoint software