As June opens, four naked-eye planets form a long line across the sky in morning twilight, from Venus, very low north of east, through Mars and Jupiter close together in ESE, to Saturn well up in SSE to S (see illustration for June 1).

Mercury is too faint to be seen in early June, but brightens to mag. +1.0 by June 11, to +0.5 on June 16, to 0.0 on June 21, and to –0.7 at month's end. Mercury remains low through this apparition, so binoculars are recommended to catch it in the twilight glow. Look lower left of Venus, by 12° on June 11-12; and by 11° on June 13-15. Mercury reaches greatest elongation 23° from Sun on June 16, and from then through June 25 it remains 10° lower left of Venus. From lat. 40° N, Mercury is highest in morning twilight on June 23. On same date, Venus passes 6° south of the Pleiades, while Mercury passes within 3° north of Aldebaran, On June 29 and 30, Mercury is again 12° lower left of Venus.

Once Mercury becomes visible, all five naked-eye planets will be in fine display, from Mercury and Venus low in ENE to Saturn well up in S, in correct order of their actual distances from the Sun, as shown in diagram for June 17-23. The Moon, waning from Full to a thin crescent, is simultaneously visible June 14-27. During June 23-25 the waning crescent Moon appears between Venus and Mars. Standing in for Earth, the Moon on those three mornings joins the five bright planets in correct order of distance from Sun.

Using binoculars of 50mm aperture or better, you can also spot **Neptune** near our "Neptune's Dipper" asterism, except when Moon is bright. Uranus becomes visible after mid-month. For details on locating these faint planets, and more, visit our Extra Content Page, at abramsplanetarium.org/ msta/

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An aid to enjoying the changing sky



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Use this scale to measure angular distances between objects on diagrams below.