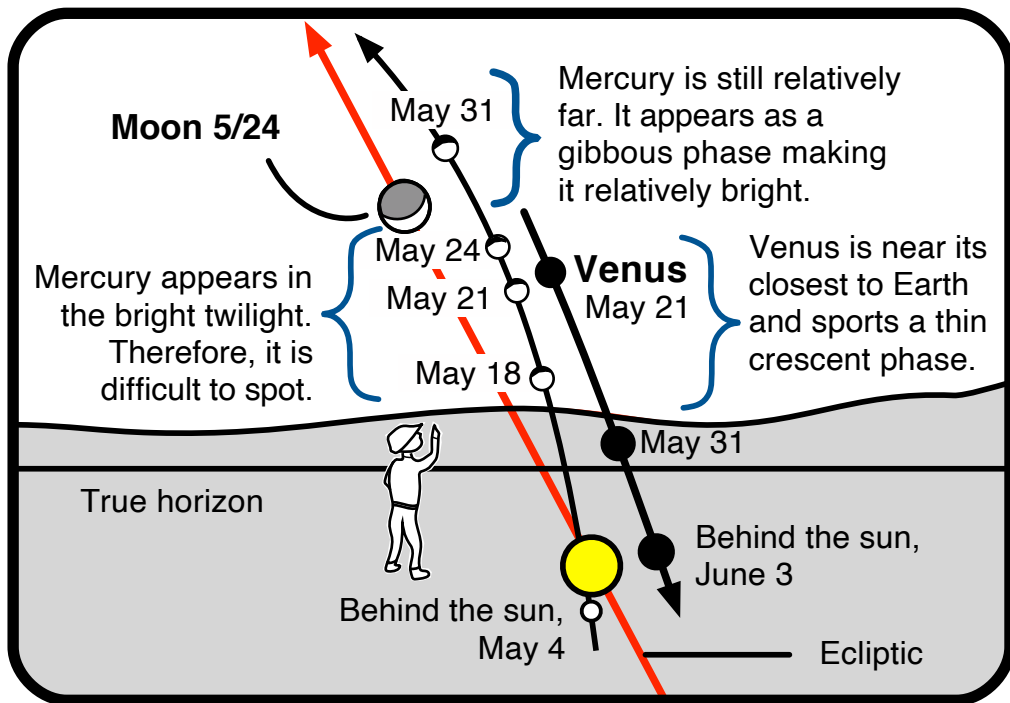


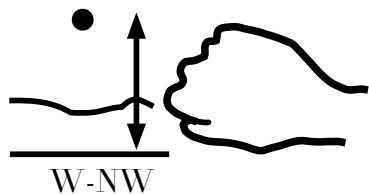
If you can observe only one celestial event this month, see this one:



May 2020: Mercury & Venus forty minutes after sunset in the west-northwest

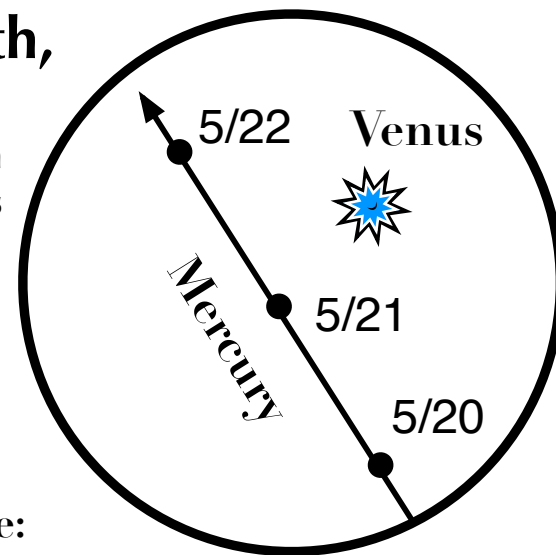


Mercury



Mercury appears about "1 fist width on a fully extended arm" above the true W-NW horizon forty minutes after sunset.

View through
10x50 binoculars
on May 20-22



The Scene:

Mercury and Venus in the evening twilight

Have you ever spotted Mercury? Many stargazers have not. The third week of May presents a good opportunity to catch the elusive little planet as it moves in the same part of the sky as bright Venus. Look low into the west-northwestern twilight forty minutes after sunset.

Mercury rises above the w-nw horizon after May 18, then climbs higher each evening, becoming easier to spot. Simultaneously, easily-seen Venus drops closer to the horizon all month, eventually passing the sun on June 3.

- As Venus drops closer to the horizon, it becomes difficult to see after May 24.
- Using binoculars, look on May 20-22 for little Mercury passing the much brighter Venus. Can you see it with the unaided eye?
- With steadily held binoculars, can you see the tiny, thin crescent of Venus? You may need to wear sunglasses to cut through the glare of the planet.