

TONIGHT'S SKY



December
2016

1

00:00:08,160 --> 00:00:14,730

Your guide to constellations, deep-sky objects, planets, and events.

2

00:00:14,730 --> 00:00:21,100

Tonight's Sky, highlights of the December sky.

3

00:00:40,100 --> 00:00:46,000

After the Sun sets on these short December days, you can find Venus and Mars

4

00:00:46,000 --> 00:00:53,270

hanging out in the darkening southwestern sky.

5

00:00:53,270 --> 00:01:00,300

The two planets will move closer together as the month progresses.

6

00:01:12,500 --> 00:01:19,200

Two prominent constellations in the December night sky represent notable individuals

7

00:01:19,200 --> 00:01:24,000

of ancient Greek mythology.

8

00:01:26,270 --> 00:01:33,080

The great hero Perseus holds the head of Medusa the Gorgon.

9

00:01:33,080 --> 00:01:43,400

Located in Perseus is M34, an open star cluster about 1,400 light-years away from us.

10

00:01:49,210 --> 00:01:54,500

Open star clusters are groups of young stars that all formed at the same time

11

00:01:54,500 --> 00:01:59,240

within a large cloud of dust and gas.

12
00:01:59,240 --> 00:02:07,000
Look for it with the naked eye or with binoculars
in a dark sky.

13
00:02:19,120 --> 00:02:27,690
Queen Cassiopeia was punished for her conceit
and vanity by being tied to her throne.

14
00:02:31,300 --> 00:02:38,860
Cassiopeia's "M" or "W" shape makes
this constellation easy to identify.

15
00:02:38,860 --> 00:02:44,300
Eta Cassiopeiae is a wonderful and
colorful double star.

16
00:02:44,300 --> 00:02:52,870
Use binoculars or a small telescope to discern
its gold and blue hues.

17
00:02:54,500 --> 00:03:05,300
M103 in Cassiopeia is a fine open star cluster
with a prominent red star near the center.

18
00:03:09,000 --> 00:03:15,000
Its fan shape is evident in binoculars.

19
00:03:15,000 --> 00:03:20,700
Lying between Cassiopeia and Perseus is the
lovely Double Cluster.

20
00:03:20,700 --> 00:03:25,510
This pair of open star clusters is easy to
see with binoculars.

21
00:03:26,500 --> 00:03:32,700
The Double Cluster resembles a handful of
diamonds scattered on black velvet,

22

00:03:32,700 --> 00:03:38,000

with a ruby in between.

23

00:03:52,200 --> 00:03:59,000

Jupiter rises into the southeastern sky well before the Sun appears.

24

00:04:06,780 --> 00:04:15,500

Aim a telescope at the giant planet to spy its dark cloud bands and a few of its moons.

25

00:04:28,400 --> 00:04:34,700

The mid-December night sky hosts the lovely Geminid meteor shower.

26

00:04:34,700 --> 00:04:41,500

The shower peaks on the night of December 13th to the 14th.

27

00:04:41,500 --> 00:04:50,000

This year, however, a full moon interferes, making dim meteors hard to see.