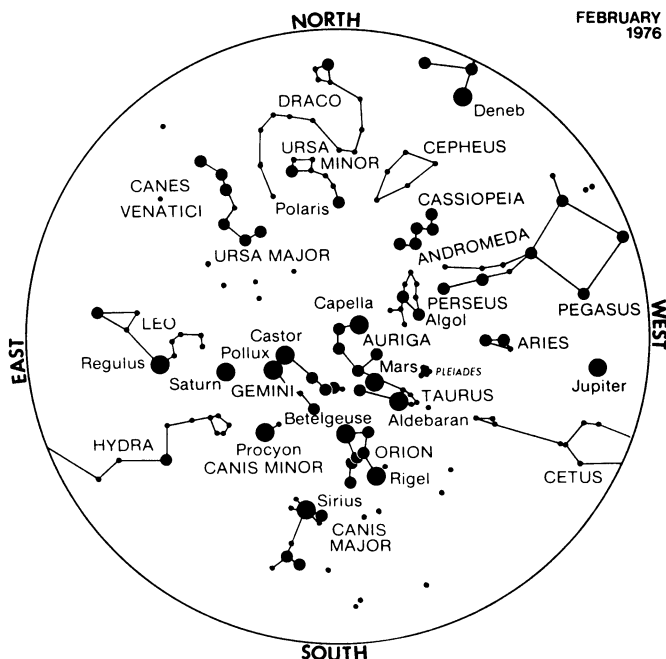


# STARS OF FEBRUARY

FEBRUARY  
1976

## CELESTIAL TIME TABLE

Feb.	2	6:25 pm EST	Algol (variable star in Perseus) at minimum brightness
	5	8:00 am	Moon farthest, distance 251,700 miles
		10:00 pm	Moon passes north of Jupiter
	8	5:05 am	Moon in first quarter
	10	11:00 am	Moon passes south of Mars
	13	2:00 pm	Moon passes south of Saturn
	15	11:43 am	Full moon
	16	10:00 am	Mercury farthest west of sun
	17	2:25 am	Algol at minimum
		5:00 am	Moon nearest, distance 224,500 miles
	19	11:10 pm	Algol at minimum
	22	3:16 am	Moon in last quarter
		8:05 pm	Algol at minimum
	27	9:00 am	Moon passes north of Venus
	29	6:25 pm	New moon



BY JAMES STOKLEY

Although the three brilliant planets that shone in the evening skies of recent months have faded a little, they still continue to be prominent.

Jupiter, which is in the west in Pisces, is brightest so it's easy to locate. Look for it early in the evening, for it sets around 10 p.m. local standard time at the beginning of the month. At the end it sets two hours earlier.

Mars, high in the west in Taurus, is less than a fifth as bright and its red color helps you to identify it. Saturn, a little fainter than Mars, stands high in the east-

ern sky. During the month its slow westward motion takes it across the border of Cancer into the next and more prominent constellation of Gemini.

As it passes among the bright planets and stars, the moon will add to February's sky display. On the evening of Feb. 5, a thick crescent, it passes about eight times its own diameter to the north of Jupiter. On Feb. 9 it will be approaching Mars, passing that planet the following morning, while below our horizon. During daylight hours on Feb. 13, two days before it's full, the moon passes south of

Saturn, but that evening they'll be close.

Full moon comes on the rare date of Feb. 29, which occurs only once in four years, during a leap year. This happens when the year number divides by four without leaving a remainder.

During February, about an hour and a half before sunrise, Venus appears in the east. It will be easily visible in the glow of dawn because it's so brilliant—about four and a third times as bright as Jupiter. As the waning crescent moon passes Venus on Feb. 27 they will be a striking sight. □

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