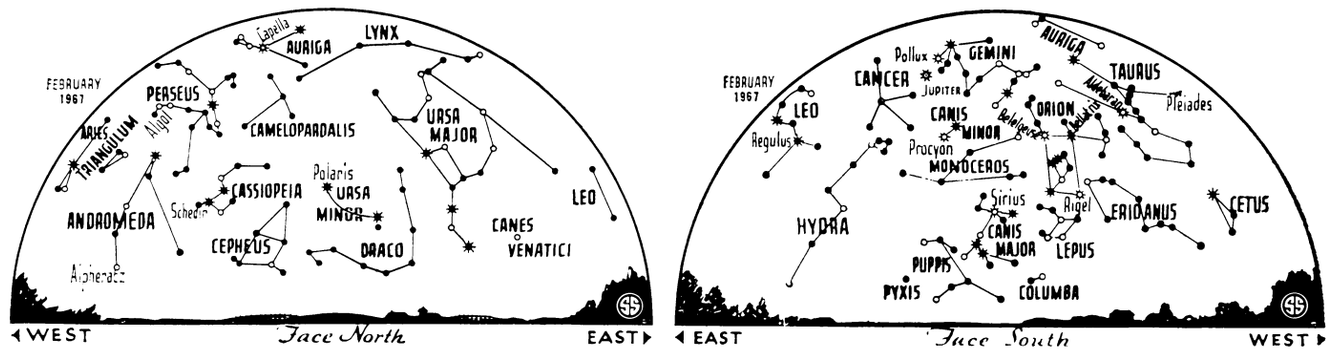

☼ ✷ ○ • SYMBOLS FOR STARS IN ORDER OF BRIGHTNESS

Five Planets Shine

by James Stokley

All five naked eye planets—Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn—will be visible on February evenings.

However, they will not appear at the same time since some will set before the last rises. Only one is in the sky at the times for which the accompanying maps are drawn.

Toward the southwest soon after sunset Venus, brightest of all the planets is visible. Long before the sky is completely dark it can be easily seen. On Friday evening, Feb. 10, the narrow crescent moon will stand to the planet's right.

Probably the next planet to appear will be Jupiter, in the constellation of Cancer, the crab.

Saturn also is in the sky in the early evening but still fainter, about a 25th as bright as Jupiter. Standing in the southwest, in Pisces, the fishes, Saturn sets more than three hours after the sun on Feb. 1.

The moon, still a crescent, passes south of Saturn on the 12th. On Feb. 23 Venus passes north of Saturn.

Mercury, innermost of the planets, is so close to the sun that it appears in the evening only when it is farthest east of the sun, which occur on Feb. 16. For a few days around this date near dusk, Mercury can be glimpsed very low in the southwest. It will be about a 12th as bright as Venus.

Mars, the last of the naked-eye planets to appear, rises about 11:30 p.m. (your own kind of standard time) at the beginning of February and about 10:00 at the month's end. The "red planet" is in Virgo, the virgin.

The accompanying maps show the skies as they appear about 10:00 p.m. on Feb. 1; 9:00 p.m. on the 15th, and 8:00 p.m. on the 28th. Jupiter is shown high in the south, in Cancer, the crab. Just below it is Canis Minor, the lesser dog, with brilliant Procyon. Still lower is the greater dog, Canis Major, where Sirius shines, the brightest star in the nighttime sky.

Higher than Sirius, and to the right, is the beautiful constellation of Orion, the warrior, with two first magnitude stars—Betelgeuse (above) and Rigel. Between them is a row of three fainter stars that are supposed to form the warrior's belt.

Taurus, the bull, is above and to the right of Orion, with the brilliant reddish star called Aldebaran. In the old mythical figures that were once drawn around the stars, Aldebaran, marked the eye of the bull.

Almost directly overhead (shown partly on the northern sky map, partly on the southern) is Auriga, the charioteer, with still another star of the first magnitude—Capella. To the southeast of the zenith is Gemini, the twins, with the first magnitude star, Pollux. Quite close to Jupiter, to the left of Cancer stands Leo, the lion, with the bright star named Regulus.

To the left of Canis Major stands a group of stars, marked Puppis, and a single one, labeled Pyxis. These are part of the great constellation of Argo Navis, the ship Argo. This was the vessel that, in mythological lore, carried the Argonauts on their quest.

CELESTIAL TIMETABLE FOR FEBRUARY

Feb.	EST	
1	6:30 p.m.	Moon in last quarter
9	5:44 a.m.	New moon
10	1:00 p.m.	Moon passes south of Mercury
11	4:00 a.m.	Moon passes south of Venus
12	8:00 a.m.	Moon passes south of Saturn
13	10:00 a.m.	Moon farthest from earth, distance 252,000 miles
16	11:00 a.m.	Mercury farthest east of sun; visible for a few day around this time low in southwest just after sunset.
17	10:57 a.m.	Moon in first quarter
18	3:40 a.m.	Algol (variable star in Perseus) at minimum brightness
21	12:30 a.m.	Algol at minimum
	6:30 p.m.	Moon passes north of Jupiter
23	7:00 a.m.	Venus passes north of Saturn
	9:20 p.m.	Algol at minimum
24	12:44 p.m.	Full moon
25	4:00 p.m.	Moon nearest; distance 223,000 miles
26	6:10 p.m.	Algol at minimum
28	10:00 a.m.	Moon passes south of Mars

Subtract one hour for CST, two hours for MST, and three hours for PST.