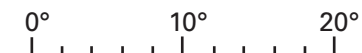


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**SKY CALENDAR MAY 2017**  
 An aid to enjoying the changing sky

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

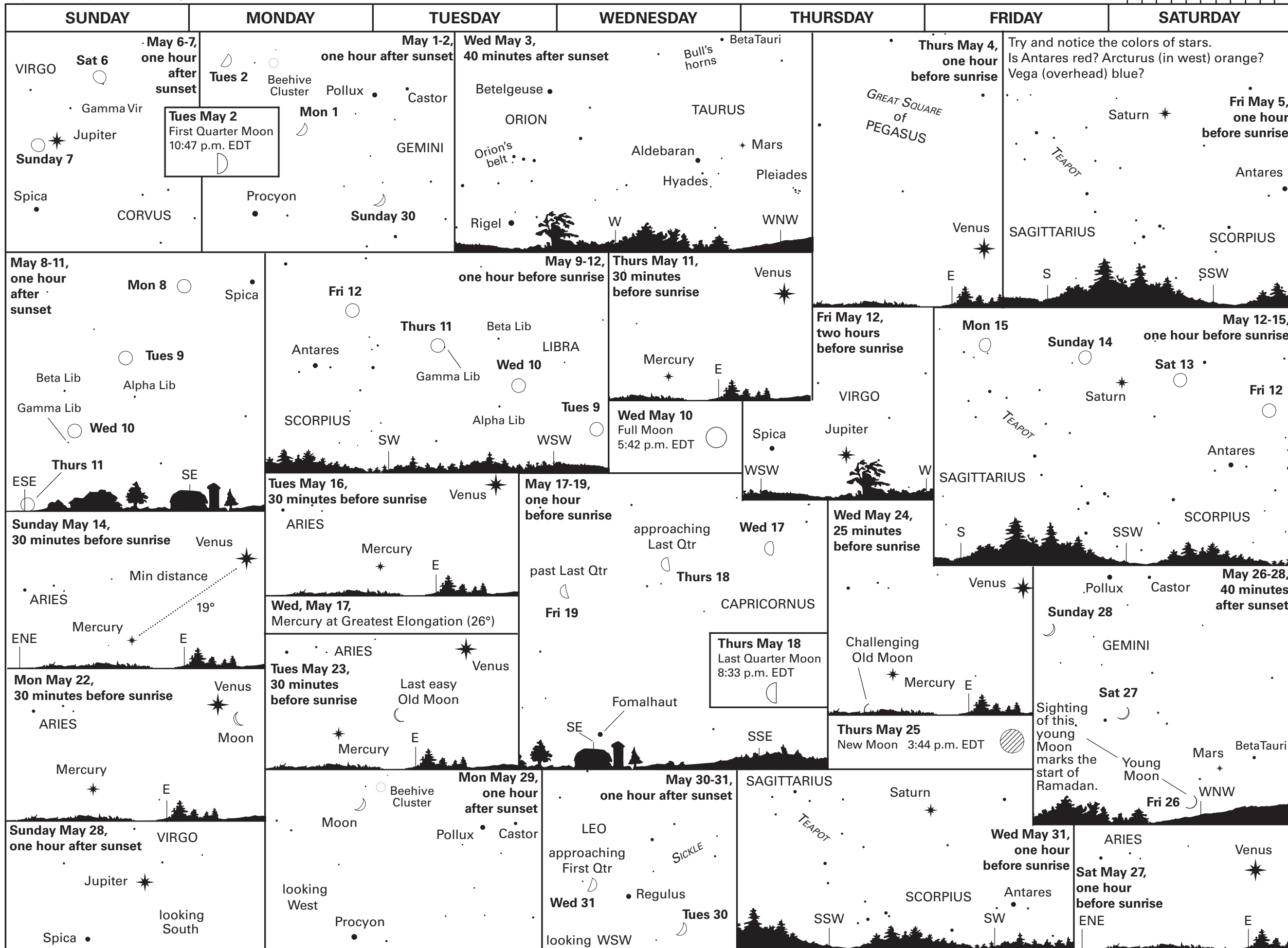


**Evening planets: Jupiter** dominates the evening sky. Look for the giant planet in the southeast after sunset at the start of the month. By month's end, Jupiter is in the south at mid-twilight. Watch the gibbous moon pass Jupiter May 7. **Mars** can be found low in the WNW in the evening twilight. Mars passes 6° to the upper right of the star Aldebaran in Taurus the Bull on May 5. Mars is now fainter than the star due to its distance from us on the far side of the solar system. At mid-month, Mars is 2.5 astronomical units or 230 million miles away from Earth. By the last week of May, **Saturn** rises just before the end of astronomical twilight.

**Morning Planets: Venus** shines brightly, low in the east. Venus rises about an hour before sunrise. Look for the waning crescent Moon and Venus May 22. Try looking for Venus in the daytime. Keep watching Venus as the sun rises. The view through binoculars or a telescope shows Venus growing from a 27% to a 48% crescent as its angular size shrinks from 38 to 25 arcseconds. Find **Mercury** to the lower left of Venus starting in the second week of May. The low angle of the ecliptic keeps Mercury close to the horizon throughout its apparition. Many of our diagrams showing Mercury in the morning sky depict the scene 30 minutes before sunrise. Since the sky is bright at that time, start looking for Mercury with binoculars about 15 minutes earlier. Mercury will be lower but the sky will be darker. **Saturn** starts May in the SSW dawn sky and moves to the southwest down by the end of the month. The Moon passes Saturn May 13-14.

The **Eta Aquariid meteor shower** peaks the night of May 5 into the morning of May 6. A waxing gibbous moon interferes with the faint meteors until the predawn hours of May 6.

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