

AUTUMN MOON WATCH

The moon is such a familiar object that we are inclined not to see it. Due to the moon's motion around the Earth relative to the sun, the fraction of the moon's surface that we see illuminated by the sun (the phase of the moon) changes in a definite and predictable pattern. Since the phase is determined by the moon's position relative to the sun and Earth, and the time of day is the sun's position with respect to an observer on the Earth, the different phases of the moon appear overhead at different times of day. For example, the full moon is on the opposite side of the Earth as the sun and thus is overhead only at midnight (it also rises at sunset and sets at sunrise). This project is to help you experience and see for yourself, the changing appearance of the moon and also, the different times of day the various phases are visible.

THE PROJECT

You and your partner are to observe the moon each day for two weeks, starting with the new moon. The dates and times for the phases in September and October are:

Phase:	New	1 st Quarter	Harvest Moon	3 rd Quarter	New
Date:	9/14 9:39 PM	9/22 3:31 PM	9/29 5:57 AM	10/6 9:47 AM	10/14 1:55 PM

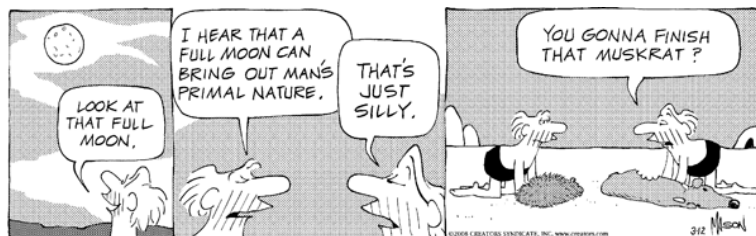
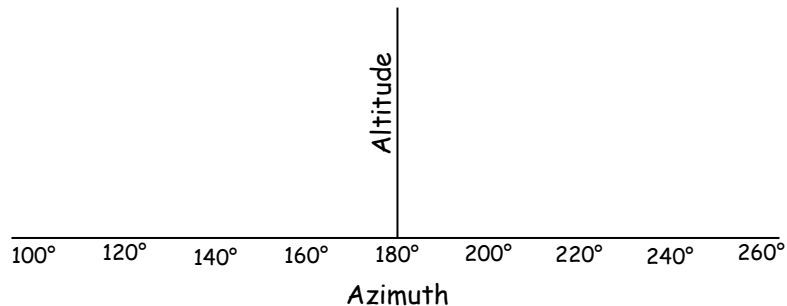
See pp. 350 - 353 in the *Field Guide* for an explanation and the dates of the phases of the moon through 2018. Pasachoff's *Eclipses and Moon Phases through 2027* are available on Canvas.

OBSERVATIONS: Each night from 9/17 through 9/28 (observing at 7 pm), observe the moon at around 7 pm (It's important to observe at same time every night!!), note its phase and measure its azimuth and altitude using your fists at arm's length. If you'll observe later than 7 pm, see Aileen.

- 🌐 If it is cloudy, go out and LOOK for the moon, anyway as it's often visible through clouds
- 🌐 Turn directly away from Polaris to face south (azimuth = $180 \pm$ measurement using fists).
- 🌐 If it's impossible for you to make an observation (the moon is not above the horizon, it's raining, you have a conflict, you forgot), note that in your log ... don't "dry lab" it!!

SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS: At the end of the project, plot the moon's attitude and azimuth on the different days ON A GRAPH PAPER DIAGRAM (with axes as shown ... graph paper available in the lab). You must also write a few paragraphs describing *how you observed* (where, when, with whom and how you made your measurements), *what you observed*, and *how it confirms or contradicts the theory* of the moon's motion around the Earth we have explored in class. Given the position of the moon and its phase, can you tell what time it is?

DUE ON FRIDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2023



MOON LOG

AND (PARTNERS)

DATE	TIME	LOCATION	PHASE	SKETCH OF THE MOON	ALTITUDE <small>That you actually measure!!</small>	AZIMUTH <small>That you actually measure!!</small>
9/16	7:00 PM	SLU	WAXING CRESCENT		Fists: 1	Fists: 6
					Degrees: 10	Degrees: $180 + 60 = 240$
9/17					Fists:	Fists:
					Degrees:	Degrees:
9/18					Fists:	Fists:
					Degrees:	Degrees:
9/19					Fists:	Fists:
					Degrees:	Degrees:
9/20					Fists:	Fists:
					Degrees:	Degrees:
9/21					Fists:	Fists:
					Degrees:	Degrees:
9/22					Fists:	Fists:
					Degrees:	Degrees:
9/23					Fists:	Fists:
					Degrees:	Degrees:
9/24					Fists:	Fists:
					Degrees:	Degrees:
9/25					Fists:	Fists:
					Degrees:	Degrees:
9/26					Fists:	Fists:
					Degrees:	Degrees:
9/27					Fists:	Fists:
					Degrees:	Degrees:
9/28					Fists:	Fists:
					Degrees:	Degrees:
9/29					Fists:	Fists:
					Degrees:	Degrees:
9/30					Fists:	Fists:
					Degrees:	Degrees:

↓ Moon in eastern sky, subtract measured azimuth from 180°.

Moon rises after 7 pm on October 29 & 30, so only groups observing after 7 pm should use these.