



### Evening sky in October 2016

The Southern Cross (Crux) appears virtually upside down, low above the southwestern horizon. Slightly above and to the west are the two Pointers, Alpha and Beta Centauri. Alpha Centauri is the closest star to our solar system, just over 4 light years away, and is a triple star system. The smallest star in this system is a red dwarf star, Proxima Centauri. In August 2016 it was announced that a planet slightly larger than Earth is in orbit around Proxima Centauri, making it the closest known exoplanet to Earth. Overhead is Fomalhaut in the Southern Fish (Piscis Austrinis) with its planet, Fomalhaut b, the first exoplanet captured in visible light when it was photographed by Hubble Space Telescope. To the north-east is a large "square" of stars in the Flying Horse (Pegasus) while the (Scorpius) is low in the west.

From 3 Oct. To 8 Oct. The waxing Moon passes by Venus (in Libra), Saturn and Mars (both in Ophiuchus) in the early-evening sky. There are two New Moons this month (on 1 Oct. And 30 Oct.) with the second one called a "black moon" in the media, much like a second Full Moon is called a "blue moon". The Moon is in the evening sky until Oct 17.