

New Moon 27 th June @ 09:09	First Quarter 5 th July @ 13:00	Full Moon 12 th July @ 12:25	Last Quarter 19 th July @ 03:09
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Note: Times are in Chailey local time – BST/GMT+1

The Summer Solstice on the 21st June this year marked the beginning of Summer. The Solstice marks the point when the Sun reaches the highest in the sky. Here in Chailey, the Sun will reach 62 ½ degrees above the horizon.

The Summer Solstice is also the longest period of daylight. The amount of daylight is the amount of time that the Sun is above the horizon. The amount of daylight will get shorter as we head into Autumn and towards Winter.

We have approximately 16 and a ½ hours of daylight on the 21st June in Chailey. By the end of July, that has reduced to 15 hours and 23 minutes. In contrast, at the point of Winter Solstice we only have 7 hours and 55 minutes of daylight, and the Sun only reaches 15.7 degrees above the horizon.

After the Sun has set, we are in twilight. There is enough light from the Sun shining into the atmosphere above our heads that it is not truly night time yet. There are 3 measures of twilight, which are defined by how many degrees the Sun is below the horizon. Civil Twilight is when the Sun is at least 6 degrees below the horizon, Nautical Twilight is when the Sun is at least 12 degrees below the horizon, and Astronomical Twilight is when the Sun is at least 18 degrees below the horizon. Astronomical Twilight is when the sky is truly dark when viewing from a non-light polluted area.

Unfortunately, there are not many places here in the UK which does not suffer from light pollution. Chailey is a reasonably good area, but our proximity to Lewes, Uckfield, Brighton, Haywards Heath and Burgess Hill means our skies are never truly dark. If you look to the North, you can even see the glow of London near the horizon.

Even though the sky never gets properly dark in our area of the world, there is still plenty to see. Venus is easily visible in the early morning sky throughout July, rising in the East at 3am. It is a very bright object, and so will be visible until just before the Sun rises. Saturn is in the constellation of Virgo throughout July. Look to the South approximately 30 degrees above the Horizon to see after the Sun goes down. Mars is also an easy planet to spot this month, also in the constellation of Virgo. Look for a bright red point of light about 20 degrees above the horizon to the South. Each day you should be able to see Mars getting apparently closer to Saturn throughout July and into August.

I am now available to give talks on Astronomy to local groups and schools. Please contact me on 01273 400989 or use the email address below. I am a registered STEM Ambassador, and have been CRB checked accordingly.

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