

SUPERMOON TOTAL SOLAR ECLIPSE MARCH 8-9

SE2016M09T

The moon turns new on March 8 or 9, 2016, depending on your time zone. The new moon happens one day before the moon reaches lunar perigee – the moon's closest point to Earth in its orbit. Thus this new moon counts as a supermoon. It won't be visible in our sky, but it'll line up with the sun to create a larger-than-average effect on Earth's oceans. Plus this new supermoon swings right in front of the sun, so if you're at the right place on Earth, you might be able to view the new moon silhouette in front of the sun (but remember to use proper eye protection).

Who will see the March 8-9 eclipse? Note on the worldwide map above that the path of totality (in dark blue) passes mainly over the waters of the Pacific Ocean. Only those along that long yet narrow path can see the total eclipse of the sun. The path of totality starts at sunrise in the Indian Ocean to the west of Indonesia, and then goes eastward across the Indian and Pacific Oceans until it ends to the west of North America at sunset.

On a worldwide scale, the whole total eclipse from start to finish lasts for over three and one-third hours, yet at any point on the Earth's surface, the maximum duration for the total eclipse is just over four minutes. The best spots to watch this total solar eclipse from land are the various islands in Indonesia, which reside on the path of totality.

A much larger swath of the world gets to see varying degrees of a partial solar eclipse. Hawaii and Alaska see the partial eclipse at late afternoon on March 8, while south and eastern Asia, Korea, Japan, north and western Australia see it on the morning of March 9.

How to watch an eclipse safely? Remember to use proper eye protection if you want to observe this eclipse!

Partial eclipses are very beautiful, too. During the May 2012 eclipse, as the moon nearly blotted out the sun, many saw illuminated crescents dancing on roads, footpath, cars and buildings, when the leaves of trees and bushes acted as pinhole cameras and projected the eclipsed sun's image onto the surfaces below.

MARCH 9, 2016 PARTIAL ECLIPSE TIMES

For Darwin, Australia

Solar eclipse begins: 9:07 a.m. local time

Greatest eclipse: 10:17 a.m. local time

Solar eclipse ends: 11:34 a.m. local time

Maximum obscuration of solar disk: 50.3%

You can obtain all the relevant eclipse information at:

TimeandDate.com – gives eclipse times in local time

HM Nautical Almanac – eclipse animations for 246 localities

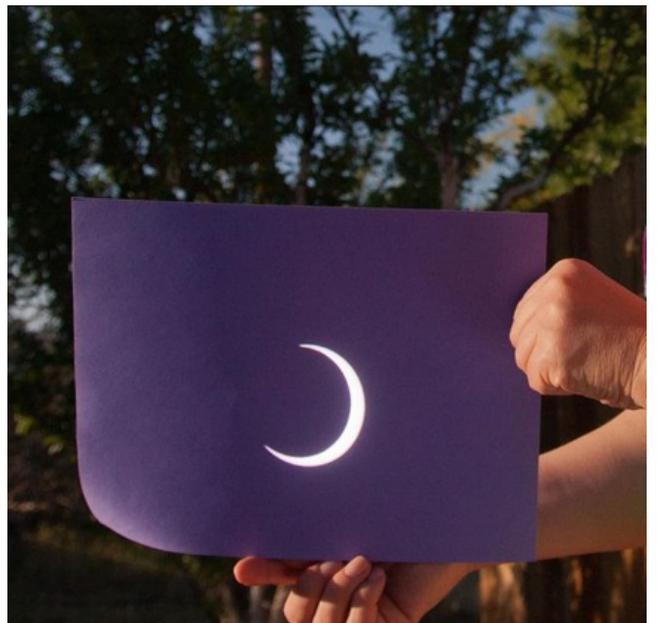
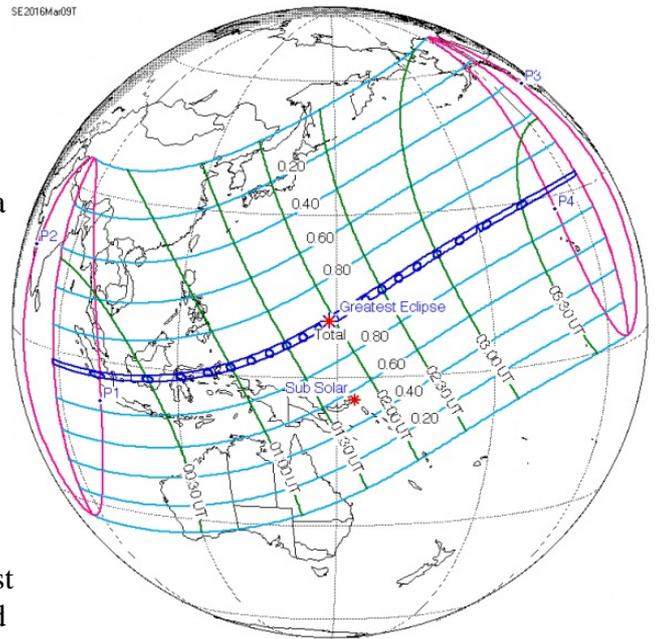
Interactive Google map – information is just a click away

Solar eclipse computer – courtesy of the US Naval observatory

Hermit Eclipse – select your preferred time zone

Solar Eclipses happen when the New Moon passes between the Earth and the Sun.

Lunar Eclipses happen when the Earth passes between the Full Moon and the Sun,
AK with EarthSky Notes



The photo above shows one method for safely watching the partial phases of a solar eclipse: the projection method.

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