

International Space Station Visibility

You can see the International Space Station (ISS) pass over Manitoba this week in the early morning sky! It appears as a bright moving “star” that outshines nearly every other star in the sky. There are seven humans living on that moving point of light, 400 km above the surface of the earth!

ISS visibility for southern Manitoba – Feb 25 – Mar 6, 2021

Date	Brightness (mag)	Start			Highest point			End			Pass type
		Time	Alt.	Az.	Time	Alt.	Az.	Time	Alt.	Az.	
25 Feb	-3.2	05:35:05	37°	SSW	05:36:04	52°	SSE	05:39:21	10°	ENE	visible
26 Feb	-2.0	04:49:35	30°	ESE	04:49:35	30°	ESE	04:51:50	10°	E	visible
26 Feb	-3.7	06:22:32	14°	W	06:25:23	74°	NNW	06:28:45	10°	ENE	visible
27 Feb	-0.4	04:04:01	11°	E	04:04:01	11°	E	04:04:13	10°	E	visible
27 Feb	-3.9	05:36:58	45°	WSW	05:37:54	89°	NW	05:41:16	10°	ENE	visible
28 Feb	-2.7	04:51:21	44°	E	04:51:21	44°	E	04:53:48	10°	ENE	visible
28 Feb	-3.5	06:24:18	12°	W	06:27:20	62°	N	06:30:41	10°	E	visible
01 Mar	-0.6	04:05:41	14°	E	04:05:41	14°	E	04:06:18	10°	ENE	visible
01 Mar	-3.6	05:38:38	36°	WNW	05:39:49	65°	N	05:43:10	10°	ENE	visible
02 Mar	-3.0	04:52:57	53°	NE	04:52:57	53°	NE	04:55:39	10°	ENE	visible
02 Mar	-3.6	06:25:54	10°	WNW	06:29:16	68°	N	06:32:37	10°	E	visible
03 Mar	-0.8	04:07:14	17°	ENE	04:07:14	17°	ENE	04:08:08	10°	ENE	visible
03 Mar	-3.5	05:40:11	29°	WNW	05:41:43	63°	N	05:45:04	10°	E	visible
04 Mar	-3.3	04:54:28	58°	NNE	04:54:28	58°	NNE	04:57:30	10°	E	visible
04 Mar	-3.7	06:27:43	10°	WNW	06:31:05	85°	SSW	06:34:27	10°	ESE	visible
05 Mar	-1.0	04:08:46	20°	ENE	04:08:46	20°	ENE	04:09:55	10°	ENE	visible
05 Mar	-3.7	05:41:43	25°	WNW	05:43:33	79°	NNE	05:46:55	10°	E	visible
06 Mar	-3.6	04:56:01	68°	NNE	04:56:01	68°	NNE	04:59:20	10°	E	visible

Brightness is how bright the ISS will appear in the sky – more negative numbers are brighter. The ISS will start off faint as it appears, and then reach maximum brightness when it gets to its highest point, usually outshining any of the other stars.

Time is the local time for Winnipeg, in the 24-hour style (so 19:00 = 7 PM). Other areas of southern Manitoba will be similar. For those in other locations, you can use heavens-above.com to set your own location to get predictions.

Alt. is the “altitude” above the horizon – not a physical distance but an angle. The horizon is defined as 0° altitude and the point straight overhead is defined as 90° altitude. ISS passes normally start at 10° when the space station starts to clear the thicker air near the horizon. Passes with a maximum Alt. near 90° are the best ones to view, but other ones are still good as long as they get high enough to clear any trees or buildings you have near your observing site.

Az. Is “azimuth”, which is the direction to look: “N” for north, “NW” for northwest, “NNW” for northnorthwest, etc. A direction like “northwest” is halfway between north and west; a direction like “northnorthwest” is halfway between north and northwest.

For more skywatching resources, visit the Planetarium’s Dome@Home website at ManitobaMuseum.CA/dome-at-home. Catch Dome@Home live on Thursday nights at 7 PM on Zoom, Facebook, and YouTube! Dome@Home is supported by the Province of Manitoba’s “Safe at Home” grant program.