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**Five planets line up "like string of pearls" – 27th June, 2022**

## Level 4

Five planets have lined up in a space event called a conjunction. We could see Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn without a telescope. The rare planetary conjunction was best before dawn, about an hour before sunrise. An astronomer said it was, "like a string of pearls spread out from close to the horizon". She was very happy at seeing Mercury, which is usually hard to see. She said: "It is very satisfying [to] see this faint twinkling planet."

This month's conjunction was special because the planets appeared in the same order they are from the sun. Saturn was the farthest away and Mercury was nearest. This conjunction is rare because the five planets all have different orbits of the sun. The next conjunction will be in August 2040. Another astronomer said the conjunction was best on Friday morning as a crescent moon joined the five planets. She called it a "delightful sight".

## Level 5

Five planets in our solar system have lined up in a celestial event called a conjunction. All across the world, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn could be seen without a telescope. The rare planetary conjunction was visible in clear skies before dawn. A weather website said the best time to view it was about an hour before sunrise. An astronomer said it was, "like a string of pearls spread out from close to the horizon". She was particularly happy at seeing Mercury, which is usually hard to see. She said: "It is very satisfying [to] see this faint twinkling planet."

The next conjunction will not be visible from Earth for another 20 years. The next time one will be August 2040. This month's one was special because the planets appeared in the order they are positioned from the sun. Saturn was the farthest away and Mercury was nearest. Another astronomer said the conjunction was made better on Friday morning as a crescent moon joined the five planets. She called it a "delightful sight". The conjunction is rare because the five planets all have different orbits of the sun. Mercury takes 88 days to orbit the sun, while Saturn takes 29 years.

## Level 6

Five major planets in our solar system lined up in a row over the weekend in a celestial event called a conjunction. In many parts of the world, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn could be seen with the naked eye (without the need for a telescope). The rare planetary conjunction was visible in clear skies before dawn. The AccuWeather website said the best time to view this event was about an hour before sunrise. Astronomer Professor Lucie Green described the event as being, "like a string of pearls spread out from close to the horizon". Professor Green was particularly happy at seeing Mercury, which is usually hard to spot. She said: "It is very satisfying [to] see this faint twinkling planet."

AccuWeather said a conjunction in this order would not be visible from Earth again for another 20 years. The next time it will happen will be August 2040. It said this planetary event was special because the planets appeared in the order they are positioned from the sun, with Saturn being the farthest away and Mercury the nearest. Another astronomer, Dr Diana Hannikainen, said the conjunction was noteworthy on Friday morning as a crescent moon accompanied the five planets. She said the alignment was a "delightful sight". The conjunction is rare because the five planets all have different orbits of the sun. Mercury takes 88 days to orbit the sun, while Saturn takes 29 years.