

The second phase is called the waxing crescent moon. This is when the moon appears like a crescent and then starts to grow.

The third phase occurs when half the moon is lit up. This comes approximately a week after the new moon. This phase is called the first quarter moon. The name refers to the fact that the moon's cycle is a quarter of the way finished.

The fourth phase is called the waxing gibbous moon. This is when more than half the moon is lit up and continues to grow.

The fifth phase is referred to as the full moon. This is when the entire moon that is facing Earth is lit up. The moon appears as a full circle. This occurs when the moon is exactly opposite the sun.

The sixth phase is called the waning gibbous moon. It is when more than half the moon is lit but waning in size.

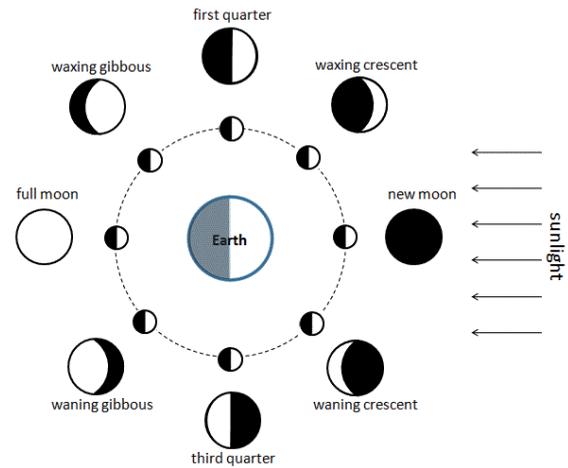


Diagram of the phases of the moon as it orbits Earth

Then comes phase seven—the last quarter moon. This is when half the moon is lit up and waning. During this phase, the moon's cycle is three-quarters of the way finished.

Finally, there is the eighth phase—called the waning crescent moon. This is when the moon appears like a crescent, having waned in size during the previous days.

The cycle of eight phases then begins again.

Each complete cycle of lunar phases is called a lunation or a lunar month. The lunar cycle takes 29.5 days. A lunar year of 12 lunar months is approximately 354–355 days long.

May Moons 2005						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
8 new	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31	1	2	3	4
5	6 new	7	8	9	10	11

Moon phase calendar for May-June, 2005

### Facts About Lunar Phases

Interestingly, the phases of the moon look different on different sides of the world. In the Northern and Southern Hemispheres, the opposite sides of the moon appear to wax and wane.

The lunar phases also help us understand lunar and solar eclipses. A lunar eclipse is when Earth's shadow blocks the sunlight from reflecting off the moon. This causes the moon to become completely dark. Lunar eclipses can only occur at the full moon phase.



A total lunar eclipse occurred in 2014. The moon still glows during a total eclipse due to light reflecting off Earth's atmosphere.