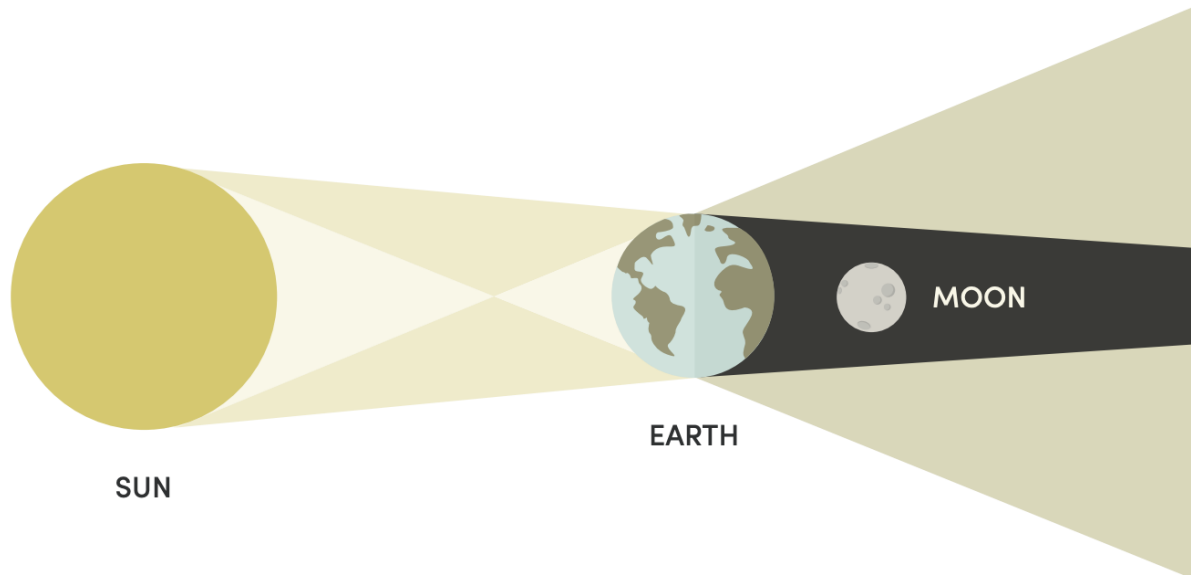


What Is a Lunar Eclipse?



Approximately two times each year, the **MOON** goes dark in the sky for a short period of time. This happens when **EARTH** moves between the sun and the moon during its **ORBIT** (the path a planet or moon moves in space). Earth makes a **SHADOW** that falls on the moon. When the moon is in Earth's shadow, we call that a **LUNAR ECLIPSE**.

During this event, the moon can turn a deep red or orange color. People call it a **BLOOD MOON**.

Spell

- **LUNAR ECLIPSE**
- **MOON**
- **EARTH**
- **ORBIT**

Comprehension Questions

1. What makes the moon turn dark? **EARTH'S SHADOW**
2. What color can the moon turn during a total lunar eclipse? **RED or ORANGE**
3. What do people call the moon when it turns those colors? **BLOOD MOON**

Prior Knowledge

What does the word “lunar” mean? **MOON**

When and Where to See the Blood Moon

A total lunar eclipse (when the Earth's shadow covers all the moon) will happen very soon, on **MARCH 3, 2026**. People in Western North America, Eastern **AUSTRALIA**, Eastern Asia, and places in the **PACIFIC** can look up and see the moon get dark and red. In North America, it will happen around 3 a.m. In Australia, it will happen around 10 p.m.

The entire **PROCESS** (all steps) of the Earth's shadow covering the moon will last a long time — more than five hours from start to finish. However, the moon only looks red for about one hour. You do not need special **GOGGLES (glasses)** that protect your eyes to watch it.

Spell

- **AUSTRALIA**
- **PACIFIC**
- **PROCESS**
- **GLASSES**

Comprehension Questions

1. On what dates can people see the next eclipse? **MARCH 3, 2026**
2. Do you need special protective goggles to see the lunar eclipse? **NO**
3. How long will the moon look red? **ONE HOUR**

Prior Knowledge Question

When does a lunar eclipse happen, during a new moon or a full moon? **FULL MOON**



Different Stages of an Eclipse

When an eclipse happens, the Earth's shadow has two **STAGES** (parts):

- **UMBRA** — the very dark part of the shadow
- **PENUMBRA** — the lighter edge of the shadow

As the Earth's shadow begins to cover the moon, the penumbra makes it look a little less bright and turn a yellow color. That will last two hours. Then, the moon moves into Earth's umbra and gets very dark. When the moon is entirely in the umbra, that's called **TOTALITY**, and that's when it will look red. After **APPROXIMATELY** (about) one hour of totality, the moon moves back into Earth's penumbra for a couple more hours, and then returns to normal.

Not everyone on Earth can see totality. Other parts of the world, like Eastern North America and Western Australia and Asia, will only see the umbra stage, part of the shadow. Each lunar eclipse is **VISIBLE** (can see it) in different parts of the world.

The next lunar eclipse in August 2026 will be seen by more people on Earth than usual. Although it will only be a **PARTIAL** lunar eclipse with no totality, 93% of the Earth will be able to see it. The next total lunar eclipse will occur on New Year's Eve 2028.

Spell

- **STAGES**
- **APPROXIMATELY**
- **VISIBLE**
- **PARTIAL**

Comprehension Questions

1. What part of the shadow is the darkest? **UMBRA**
2. What do we call it when the whole moon is in Earth's shadow? **TOTALITY**
3. Does every place on Earth get to see totality, or just some places? **SOME PLACES**

Prior Knowledge Question

What is the date of New Year's Eve? Which month and day (number)? **DECEMBER 31**

Challenge

Make your own eclipse! You'll need a flashlight or a bright lamp without a shade, a dark room with no windows (bathrooms work best) and a picture of the moon. Place the light source on one end of the dark room and tape the moon picture to the opposite wall. Pretend your body is the Earth, and as you "orbit" through the room, watch your shadow block the light shining on the moon. That's how eclipses work!