

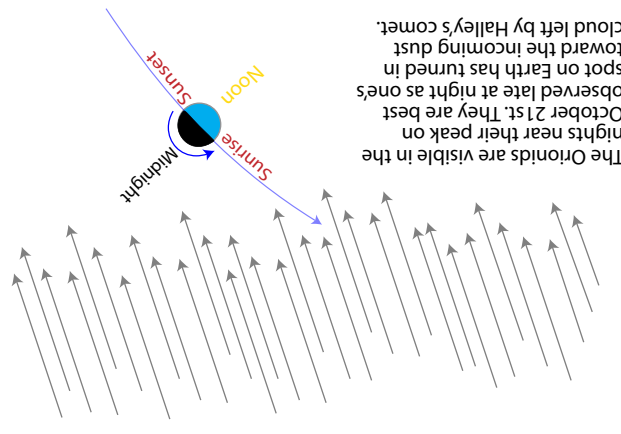
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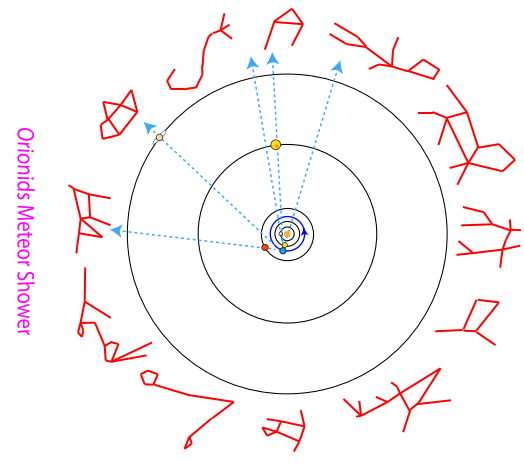
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Sun and visible planet positions on October 21, 2018



The Orionids are visible in the nights near their peak on October 21st. They are best observed late at night as one's spot on Earth has turned in toward the incoming dust cloud left by Halley's comet.

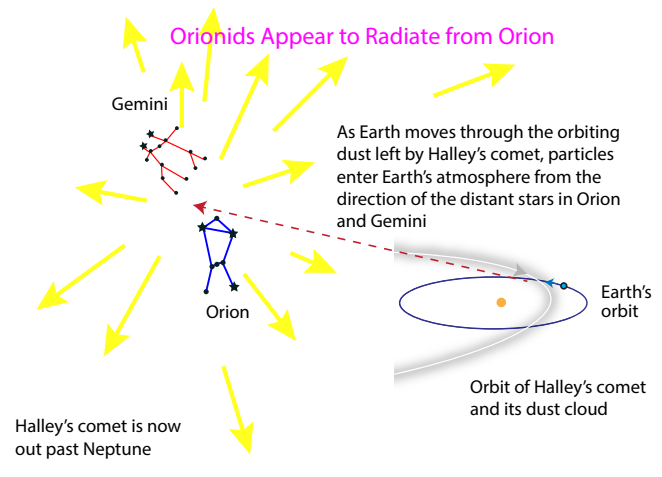
Orionids Peak the Night of October 21



Orionids Meteor Shower

Every October, Earth moves through the dust cloud left by the tail of Halley's comet during its many orbits around the Sun, creating a meteor shower as the particles enter the atmosphere. Since Earth is moving in its orbit in the direction of the constellation Orion, the dust enters the atmosphere from that direction, and the meteors appear to radiate out from a point in Orion near Gemini. Every May, Earth again passes through the comet's dust cloud and the meteors appear to emanate from Aquarius. Earth spins in the same direction that it orbits the Sun, so the Orionids are best viewed after midnight when Orion has risen and your spot on Earth is starting to face into the oncoming dust. The Orionids peak late at night or in the early morning around October 21. Halley's comet was last visible during its 1986 approach and its next apparition is in 2061.

Orionids Appear to Radiate from Orion



As Earth moves through the orbiting dust left by Halley's comet, particles enter Earth's atmosphere from the direction of the distant stars in Orion and Gemini

Orbit of Halley's comet and its dust cloud

Halley's comet is now out past Neptune