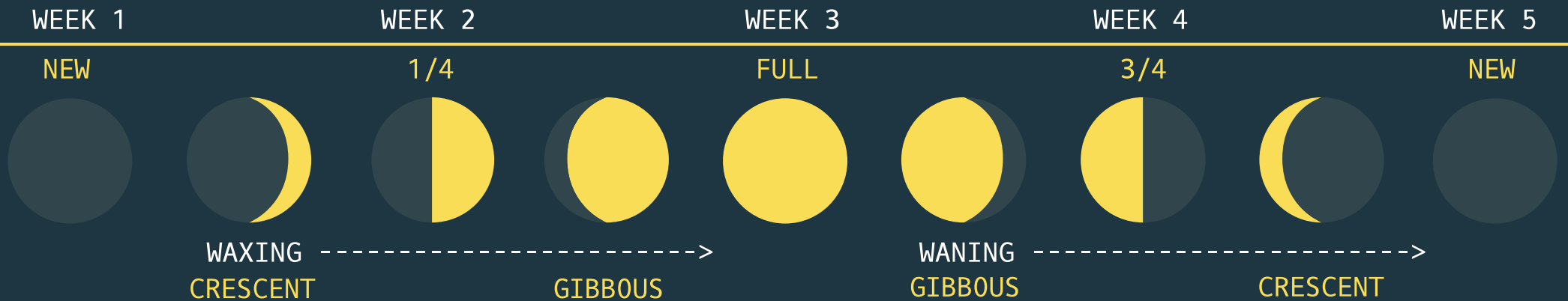




Phases of the Moon



MOON PHASES

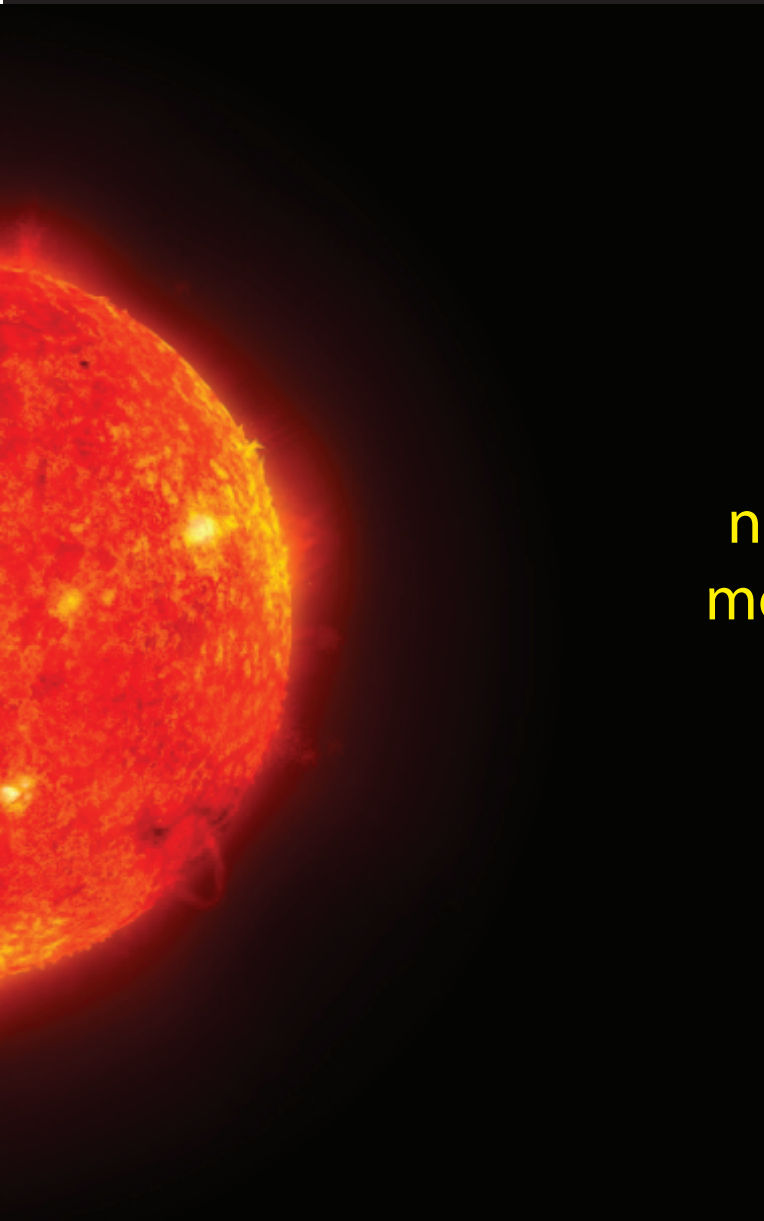


If you look up in the night sky you may see the bright shining face of a full moon. On another night the face of the Moon has changed and looks like a small crescent. Other nights it may be hard to find the moon in the sky at all.

Why does the Moon change its face so often?



The Moon emits no light. The light you can see is reflected light from the Sun and the Earth.



new moon

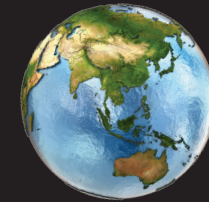
waning crescent



last quarter



waning gibbous



full moon

waxing crescent

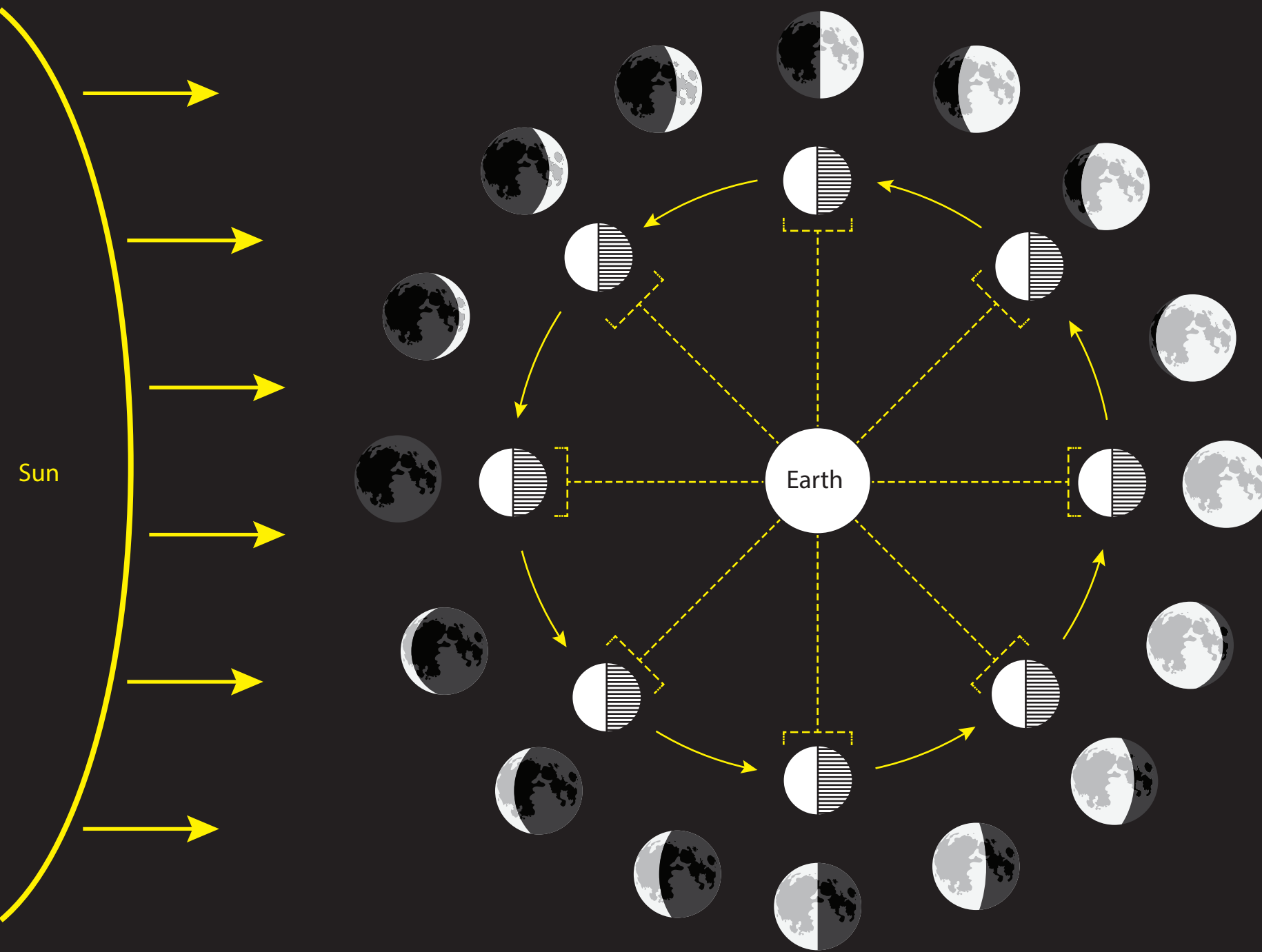


first quarter



waxing gibbous





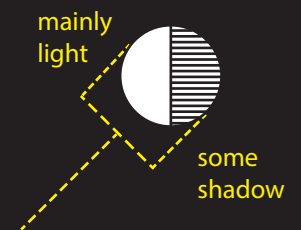
Why does the amount of reflected light we see on the Moon change throughout the month?

The Sun's light shines on the side of the Moon that is closest to it.



The Moon's position in relation to the Earth determines how much of the light we can see.

Use the dotted lines in the diagram to get an idea of the proportion of light and dark you will see at different phases.

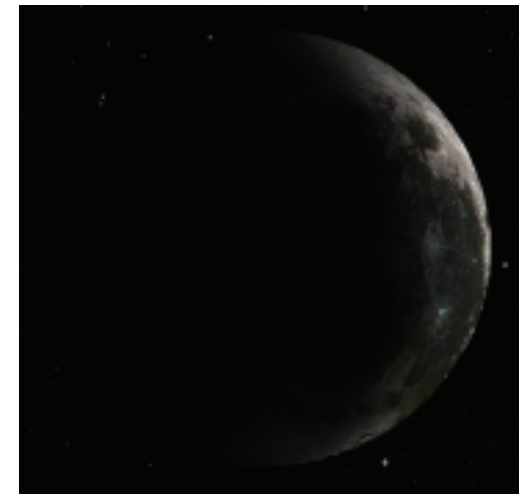


Interestingly, if you are standing in the Southern Hemisphere, your view of the moon will be inverted.

When the Northern Hemisphere sees a waxing crescent you will also see a waxing crescent but the image of the Moon will look reversed. The image has turned 180 degrees (upside down.)



Northern Hemisphere



Southern Hemisphere



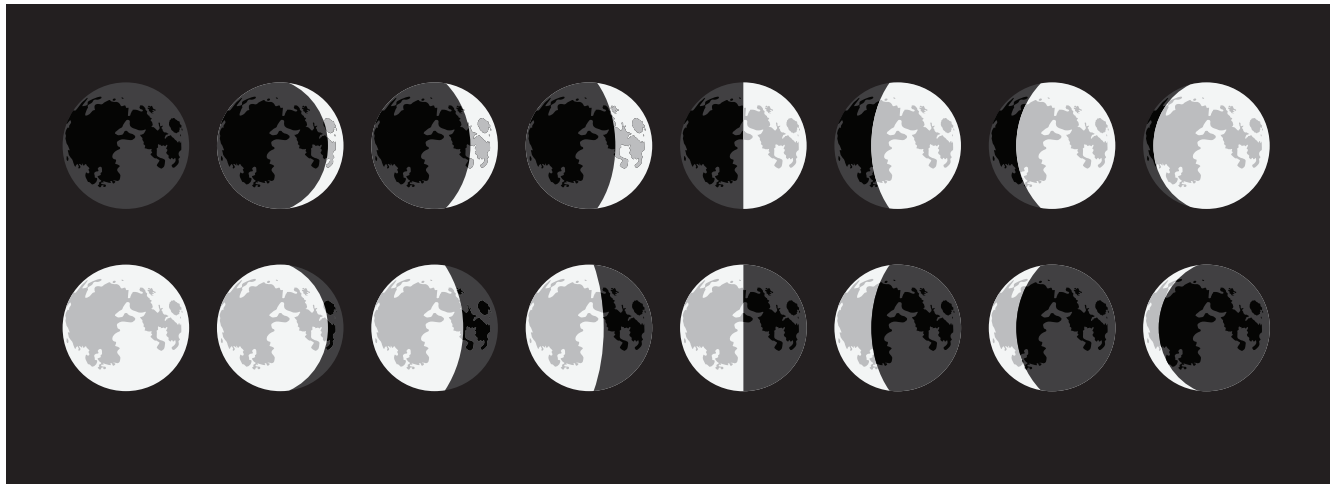
People in the Northern Hemisphere see this orientation of the Moon.

People in the Southern Hemisphere see this orientation of the Moon.



Which Hemisphere Do You View The Moon From?

Your perspective changes, depending on the hemisphere you are viewing the Moon from. If you view the Moon from the Southern Hemisphere you are upside down compared to the view from the Northern Hemisphere!



In the Northern Hemisphere the sunlit part of the moon moves from right to left.



In the Southern Hemisphere the sunlit part of the moon moves from left to right.

