

Orionid Meteors To Shower Earth

April showers may bring May flowers,
but October brings...meteor showers!

Meteors are pieces of rock and dust that fall from comets in space. They burn up as they come closer to Earth. As meteors burn up, they leave streaks, or *showers*, of light in the sky. That's why many people call meteors *shooting stars*.

October is the best time of year to see showers from one group of meteors. The showers can be seen all month, but the peak of the showers -- the time when people will see the most meteors -- will happen around October 21.

During a meteor shower, the meteors look like they are coming from one spot in the sky. Most of this month's meteor showers come from a comet called Halley's Comet. They can be seen in sky near the constellation Orion. That's why these meteors are known as the *Orionids*. Most of the Orionid meteors are about the size of a grain of sand, but they move very fast.

This year's Orionid meteor showers should be special. The Earth and the moon are positioned in a way that should make the meteor showers easier to see than in some other years. The best spot for viewing the Orionids is in a dark place, far away from city lights and streetlights.

HOW TO FIND ORION IN THE NIGHT SKY

To watch the meteor showers, look for Orion late at night.

- If you live north of the equator, look toward the southeast.
- If you live south of the equator, look toward the northeast.



NEWS WORD BOX

meteor comet
position streak
constellation Orion
Halley's Comet

THINK ABOUT THE NEWS

Halley's Comet only passes by Earth every 76 years.
The last time it was near was in 1986.
When will we next see Halley's Comet?
How do you think our world will be different at that time?