



The Moon Illusion

Have you ever noticed that the Moon appears to be a whole lot closer to you when it rises?

It's gigantic!

Why does it get smaller when it gets farther up in the sky?

It doesn't, actually! It's an optical illusion that the Moon changes size. It appears bigger when it's closer to the horizon because your eyes can compare it to the things on Earth that are close to it. When it moves higher into the sky, your eyes lose that perspective and then the Moon looks smaller.

Don't believe it?

Stand on your head and look at the Moon when it's close to the horizon. If you can't stand on your head, just stick your arm straight out in front of you. Extend your pinkie and measure the Moon with it. Wait until the Moon is well above the horizon and do it again. See? The Moon is the same size.

