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Stargazing Through the October Night

Explore autumn constellations and celestial events in October

As the summer heat fades and the autumn breeze arrives, it is now the perfect time to stargaze under the night sky. October is an exceptional month for stargazing because the cool autumn air often lowers humidity, allowing for crisper, clearer views of the cosmos. Also, October offers a wide range of astronomical phenomena, such as Saturn at opposition and meteor showers. These events give stargazers a chance to see not only familiar constellations but also special celestial phenomena that can only be observed at certain times of the year. To make the most of October stargazing, let's take a look at some interesting facts about constellations in the October night sky, the Orionid meteor shower, the famous Pleiades star cluster, and good places for stargazing in Busan.

A Trail Left by Halley's Comet

The Orionid meteor shower, which is most active during mid-October each year, is considered to be one of the most beautiful showers of the year. According to NASA Science, the Orionids will be active from October 2 to November 7, 2026, with their peak expected on the night of October 21 and into the early hours of October 22. Under dark skies, around 10 to 20 meteors may be visible per hour. The Orionids occur as Earth passes through debris left behind by Halley's Comet. These tiny particles enter Earth's atmosphere at speeds of about 66 kilometers per second, creating the bright streaks of light known as meteors. A telescope is unnecessary, as the Orionids can be seen with the naked eye. The Orionids are best viewed after midnight, when the constellation Orion is higher in the sky. For stargazers, the peak nights in late October offer a chance to catch one of the year's most notable meteor showers. Finding a dark location away from city lights can increase the chances of seeing even faint meteors.

Meet the Seven Sisters

As the autumn sky takes center stage in October, the Pleiades is one of the famous star clusters worth looking for. Also known as the "Seven Sisters," named after the seven sisters of Greek mythology - Alcyone, Maia, Electra, Merope, Taygete, Celaeno, and Sterope - the Pleiades is an open star cluster located in the constellation Taurus. It is about 430 light-years from Earth and contains roughly 1,000 stars. Open star clusters are groups of stars that are loosely bound together by gravity and often form from the same cloud of gas and dust. Like other open clusters, the Pleiades is expected to gradually disperse over the next few hundred million years as its stars drift apart. For now, its stars form a bright, tightly clustered group that stands out in the autumn night sky. Its brightest stars can be seen with the naked eye from October through April, making the Pleiades an easy target for autumn and winter stargazing. Its distinct shape also makes the cluster relatively easy for beginners to spot and recognize in the night sky.

October Night Sky Constellations

In October, it is easy to spot the Great Square of Pegasus, a prominent pattern of stars that serves as a helpful guide for finding other celestial objects and surrounding stars. Standing out in the autumn evening sky, the body of Pegasus forms a distinctive asterism known as the Great Square. Adjacent to the constellation Pegasus lies the constellation Andromeda, home to the famous Andromeda Galaxy, our nearest large galactic neighbor. Under dark skies, the Andromeda Galaxy is visible to the naked eye as a faint, hazy patch of light.

According to astronomical guides, these autumn constellations are tied to Greek mythology. Andromeda traces the classic tale of an Aethiopian princess named Andromeda, who was rescued by the hero Perseus from a sea monster. Meanwhile, Pegasus represents the mythical winged horse born from the blood of Medusa. Observing these starry patterns not only connects modern stargazers to stories passed down through generations but also offers a clear roadmap of the universe during the October nights.



Stargazing spots in Busan

The Busan National Science Museum in Gijang is a great place for observing celestial objects and stargazing. At the observatory, visitors can observe the Sun and stars through a variety of telescopes. In addition, they can view vivid displays of numerous constellations on a large dome screen in the planetarium. The planetarium also presents seasonal constellations and astronomy videos for children. Visitors can explore a variety of astronomy exhibits in the permanent exhibition hall as well.

Another recommended place for stargazing in Busan is the Busan Civil Observatory located inside the Geumnyeonsan Youth Training Center on Hwangnyeongsan Mountain. The observatory features an astronomy club room, an education and exhibition space, and a main telescope, and operates public observation events for young people and local residents. Near the observatory, there is also a planetarium equipped with a hemispherical screen, which is suitable for youth activities related to astronomy and space science.

For those looking for places to stargaze in Busan, the Busan National Science Museum and the Busan Civil Observatory are both worth visiting.

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Gen Z's Aversion to Promotion : Leader Phobia

Young people's perceptions of "success" and a "good workplace"

In recent years, a growing number of young workers in Korea, particularly Millennials and Generation Z, have been reluctant to seek promotions. Generation Z, commonly known as "Gen Z," generally refers to people born between 1997 and 2012. Among Gen Z workers, this phenomenon has also gained attention overseas as "Conscious Unbossing," referring to a new trend in workplace culture. This phenomenon is also emerging in universities. As fewer students run for student council positions, more universities are operating under emergency committees, while student organizations such as clubs are increasingly struggling to recruit new leaders.

Alongside these changes, the term "leader phobia" has emerged across both workplaces and universities. Leader phobia refers to the tendency to avoid promotions due to the burden of the high level of responsibility and personal sacrifice required of leaders. According to the "2025 Leadership Perception Survey of Workers in Their 20s and 30s" conducted by the College Students Research Institute of Daehak Naeil last year, among workers who were not currently in leadership positions, 36.7% said they were willing to take on a middle-management position, while 32.5% said they were not. In addition, 47.3% responded that they would not feel anxious about not taking on a leadership role at work, more than twice the 22.1% who said they would feel anxious. This suggests that promotions and leadership positions are no longer viewed as an inevitable goal.

A similar pattern is observed at universities. According to a survey by the Korea Economic Daily, 8 out of 18 major universities in Seoul had vacancies for student council president. Korea University and Yonsei University are also operating under emergency committees because no candidates ran for student council president for 2026.

Then, what are the reasons behind this phenomenon? One of the main factors is that young people's perceptions of "success" and a "good workplace" are changing. In the past, holding a high position and receiving promotions were considered important measures of success. Today, however, there is a growing emphasis on work-life balance, self-development, and professional expertise. Another major reason is the increase in workload and responsibility that comes with becoming a leader. Leaders are responsible not only for their team's performance but also for managing team members and making decisions. Some feel that the compensation does not sufficiently reflect these added responsibilities. A 2026 study in Korea also found that higher perceived job stress among organizational leaders was linked to lower interest in taking on leadership roles. This relationship was stronger among younger employees when organizational support was lacking.

Changes in the workplace environment have also played a role. As horizontal and flexible organizational cultures have spread, more people have come to value individual expertise over seniority-based promotions. The perception that management positions are necessary for career advancement is becoming weaker. In addition, as opportunities for side businesses and investments through platforms such as YouTube and blogs have expanded, some people prefer to focus on developing their own expertise rather than taking on leadership roles that require them to manage the performance of others.

The phenomenon of leader phobia should not simply be regarded as a negative characteristic of Gen Z, such as an avoidance of responsibility. Rather, it may be a sign of a shift in young people's values in response to changes in organizational environments and social structures. To address this issue, Companies should provide leaders with appropriate authority, compensation, and organizational support instead of simply placing greater responsibilities on them, and create diverse career development paths. Furthermore, this phenomenon affects not only current workers but also future ones. For university students who will soon enter the workforce, the question of "What kind of worker do I want to become?" has already begun. Whether to pursue a high salary and position or prioritize work-life balance and personal life, young people now have a wider range of choices.

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From Newspapers to TikTok

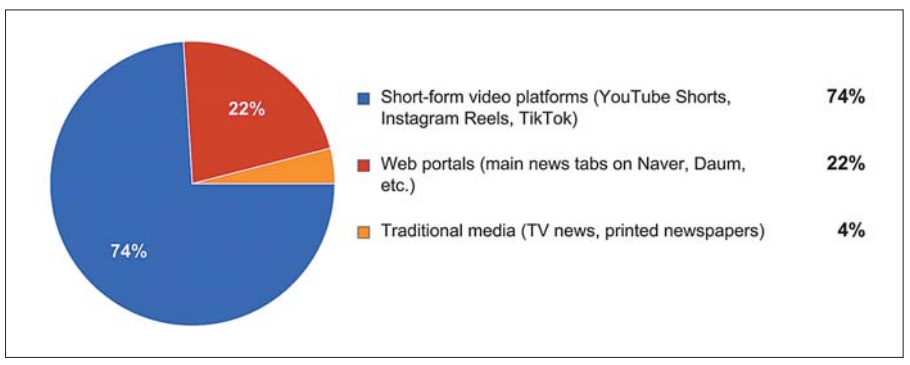
How students get their daily news today

Over time, fewer young people read newspapers or watch television news to keep up with what is happening in the world. Instead, today's young people and students often check short videos on social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, or YouTube, receiving quick updates through short clips. People now look for news on social media rather than through traditional media outlets or television. The Pukyong Herald surveyed 50 Pukyong National University students to find out how they feel about this change.

In the survey, 74% responded that they get news through short-form platforms such as Instagram and TikTok. Meanwhile, only 4% preferred reading printed newspapers or watching television news, showing a huge gap. This suggests that students depend far more on digital platforms than on traditional news sources. Students choose social media for news because of its convenience, including quick summaries (68%) and algorithm-based personalized recommendations (30%). One student said, "Reading printed newspapers takes a lot of time, but short videos are easy to watch during short breaks, so I often watch them." This reflects university students' preference for fast and convenient ways to get information during their busy daily lives. Unlike long-form media, which demands significant time and attention, short videos provide key information quickly and fit well into short breaks.

In the past, people had to buy newspapers or watch television at fixed broadcast times. Today, however, news pops up naturally on screens while users scroll through social media. Finding news has changed from active searching to daily exposure. Students do more than just read articles now. They check other people's views in comment sections, express their own thoughts, share fun posts with peers, and discuss topics together.

Yet this shift brings clear problems. One of the biggest issues is that information can become oversimplified. Short clips lasting around one to three minutes often lack important background information, causing people to miss key details. Furthermore, misinformation and exaggerated stories can spread quickly across social networks. In fact, 38% of respondents said, "When news on social media or short-form content seems sensational or suspicious, I check the original source and compare it with reports from other media outlets," suggesting that some students are cautious rather than blindly trusting such content. Algorithms pose another challenge. Social media apps keep suggesting videos based on topics that users have watched and liked before. As a result, students repeatedly see only viewpoints that match their interests, missing chances to encounter opposing views. This cycle can easily lead to biased perspectives and make it harder to judge social issues fairly.



▲A graph showing students' preferred news platforms

Getting news through social media is now a major trend that is unlikely to disappear. In this environment, young people need critical media literacy skills to verify information for themselves rather than accept news blindly. Algorithm-based platforms constantly deliver personalized content, making it easy to miss opposing viewpoints. To handle this environment safely, students should compare different sources before making conclusions. At the same time, traditional news organizations should move beyond conventional methods and try to deliver trustworthy news in clear, simple ways to connect more closely with young people.

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PKNU to Establish Two New Colleges in 2027

Expanding global and AI education

Pukyong National University (PKNU) is preparing to launch two new colleges, the Global Innovation College and the AX Innovation College, in 2027. The Global Innovation College will focus on international students, while the AX Innovation College will specialize in applying artificial intelligence (AI) across various fields such as marine and fisheries, biotechnology, and smart logistics.

The Global Innovation College will be PKNU's first college designed specifically for international students. The college plans to admit 400 international students each year across its seven departments: the Department of Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence, the Department of Tourism and Hospitality Management, the Department of Logistics and SCM, the Department of Global Media Communication, the Department of K-Culture, the Department of Technology Management, and the Department of Global Urban Sustainability and Engineering. The college will offer courses in both English and Korean, and each year, new students at the Global Innovation College will initially enter the College of Global and Interdisciplinary Studies before they select one of the seven departments. Students who meet the necessary requirements will also be able to transfer to other departments within the university.

Along with the new academic programs, PKNU plans to expand services for international students, including additional administrative support, changes to scholarship programs, mentoring, and assistance with employment and settling in Korea. The Global Innovation College is being established as PKNU's international student population continues to grow. According to the university, over 1,700 international students from 63 countries were enrolled as of April 2026. The university hopes to eventually increase this number to around 3,000.

The second new college, the AX Innovation College, will have a different focus. It will combine AI with fields such as marine and fisheries, biotechnology, smart logistics, energy, and manufacturing, and the college aims to give students opportunities to apply AI to practical problems in these fields. Three new academic units will be created under the AX Innovation College: the AX Sustainable Convergence Department, the AI Convergence Systems Engineering Department, and the AXIC School of Interdisciplinary Studies.



▲The emblem of Pukyong National University

The AX Sustainable Convergence Department will use project-based learning to explore social and industrial problems, while the AI Convergence Systems Engineering Department will cover areas such as machine learning, generative AI, data science, and cloud computing. The AXIC School of Interdisciplinary Studies will allow students to explore different fields before designing an academic path based on their interests and career goals. Unlike the Global Innovation College, which plans to admit 400 international students each year, the AX Innovation College will admit 38 students in total in 2027. Alongside the launch of the new colleges, PKNU's overall undergraduate admission quota will increase by 20 students, from 3,338 to 3,358 in 2027. The increase reflects the creation of new departments and adjustments to the university's enrollment structure.

With both colleges scheduled to open in 2027, PKNU is expanding in two different directions: international education and student support through the Global Innovation College, and AI-based interdisciplinary education through the AX Innovation College.

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News

Are Squish Toys Really Safe?

In recent years, squishy toys have become popular for stress relief. However, concerns about their safety have recently emerged after harmful substances were found in some squishy products. This raises questions about whether squishy toys used for stress relief are actually safe.


▲Squishy toys at Dongmyo Market

Squishy toys are soft toys that slowly return to their original shape after being pressed. Their soft texture helps people relax and relieve stress, attracting both children and adults. On social media, videos of people buying and showing off squishy toys often appear on Reels or Shorts, and shopping for distinctive squishies in places like Dongmyo has also become a trend.

However, there are also safety concerns. According to a survey released by the National Agency for Technology and Standards on September 16, harmful substances exceeding safety standards were found in 9 of 76 tactile toys, including squishies. Of the 39 tactile toys labeled for ages 14 and older, 7 contained excessive amounts of phthalate plasticizers or boron, or banned preservatives. Phthalate plasticizers are chemicals that make plastics softer and more flexible. They can be absorbed through the skin after long-term contact and may affect the endocrine system. In children, they could interfere with growth and reproductive function. Excessive exposure to boron can also affect reproduction and development.

People love squishy toys for their texture and stress-relieving effects. However, safety should also be considered. Before buying squishy toys, check for KC certification, the recommended age, and any warnings on the packaging. In the future, safety may become as important as fun and convenience when choosing squishy toys.

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Sports

Fall Baseball: Past and Present

When the regular season ends, fall baseball begins in the Korea Baseball Organization (KBO) League. Fall baseball refers to the postseason, where the top teams compete for the championship. Reaching it is an important achievement for teams and an exciting time for fans.

Fall baseball began with the launch of Korean professional baseball in 1982. At the time, the regular-season winner and the winners of the first and second halves faced each other in the Korean Series. As the league format and the number of teams changed over time, the postseason also changed several times.

Today, the top five teams from the regular season advance to the postseason. The fourth- and fifth-place teams first face each other in the Wild Card Series, followed by the Semi Playoffs and the Playoffs, before the Korean Series determines the champion. Despite these changes, the basic idea of using regular season results to determine the final champion has remained the same.

Unlike the regular season, every postseason game can directly affect whether a team advances to the next round or ends its season. This creates a more intense atmosphere among fans. Once the postseason begins, more fans attend games, and the cheering becomes intense as their teams get closer to winning the championship. For these reasons, the postseason can bring a different level of excitement than the regular season. These factors make fall baseball an important part of Korean professional baseball.

As the 2026 postseason begins, the race is heating up. KT ranked first with a winning percentage of 0.642, followed by Samsung, LG, KIA, and Doosan in the postseason spots. This year's postseason began with the Wild Card Series on October 9. The KBO announced that total attendance for the 2026 regular season had surpassed 12 million as of October 5, reflecting strong interest in Korean professional baseball.

Fall baseball has long been important to Korean professional baseball. The competition for the championship and fans' support make it more than the end of the season.

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Part-Time Jobs vs. Academics

How International students in Korea balance their books and bills

For many international students in Korea, university life involves more than attending classes and completing assignments. Some students also take on part-time jobs to become financially independent or connect with people in their local communities. However, working while studying can also bring challenges. The Pukyong Herald interviewed two PKNU students from Myanmar, about their experiences balancing part-time work and university life in Korea.

Victor Htinn Htinn

Q : What made you decide to get a part-time job while studying?

Victor : I decided to take a part-time job because I wanted to gain practical work experience while studying. I also wanted to become more financially independent by covering my own living expenses.

Q. What part-time job do you currently have, and how long have you been working there?

Victor : I'm currently working at a chicken restaurant, and I have been working there for almost two years, for around 24 hours per week. Working at the restaurant has helped me become familiar with the responsibilities that come with having a job while studying. Since I have been there for quite a long time, I have also become more comfortable with my work and daily responsibilities.

Q : How do you usually balance your classes, assignments, exams, and work schedule?

Victor : Balancing my studies and part-time job is generally manageable because I work only three days a week. I also make use of the time between classes whenever possible. However, it can be a little more challenging during exam periods, when I need to spend more time preparing, so I try to plan my schedule in advance and prioritize my studies.

Q : What advice would you give to another university student who is considering getting a part-time job?

Victor : I would recommend finding a trustworthy employer and making sure that your salary is paid properly and on time. It is also important to make sure that your part-time job does not interfere with your academic responsibilities. Finally, if you are an international student, you should report your employment to the appropriate authorities and follow the proper legal procedures when starting a part-time job.

Jm June Rwe Aung

Q : What made you decide to get a part-time job while studying?

June : As an international student, I wanted to reduce the financial burden on my parents while studying abroad and take more responsibility for my own expenses. Additionally, working in a local environment allowed me to interact with people outside the university and experience another side of life in Korea.

Q : What part-time job do you currently have, and how long have you been working there?

June : I have been working at a local restaurant for almost three years now. Staying at the same workplace for such a long period has allowed me to become familiar with the job and gain more experience over time.

Q : How many hours do you usually work per week?

June : I typically work more than 15 hours each week. I have to consider my university schedule when deciding when I can work, so I organize my working hours around my classes and other academic responsibilities.

Q : How do you usually balance your classes, assignments, exams, and work schedule?

June : Careful scheduling is key. I strictly plan my work shifts around my free hours, making sure my work commitments never conflict with or disrupt my schoolwork. This helps me make sure that I have enough time for assignments and exam preparation while still fulfilling my responsibilities at work.

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Science

Why Do We Procrastinate?

The hidden reasons behind our tendency to put things off

Do you ever put off studying because of a sudden urge to clean your room or spend time on your phone because you do not want to take a shower? Many tend to think that people delay their tasks because they are lazy. However, procrastination is not simply a result of laziness but also a psychological process. This article will examine the psychological factors that cause procrastination and present ways to help overcome it.

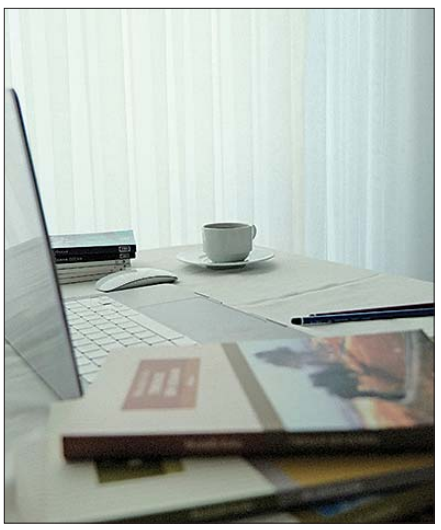
People often hesitate to start a task when they feel pressure to perform well. In particular, this hesitation and the fear of failure can grow when they believe they must meet others' expectations and produce high-quality results. A thesis from the Ajou University Graduate School examined the relationship between socially prescribed perfectionism and academic procrastination. The results suggested that fear of failure played an important role in this relationship. In other words, the more people feel that others expect them to meet high standards, the greater their fear of failure may become. People fear the consequences of failure rather than failure itself. This psychological pressure can lead to delays in academic work. In these situations, procrastination is not simply about finding a task unpleasant. Rather, it can occur as a way of avoiding failure or falling short of expectations.

Besides pressure, emotional regulation and impulsivity can also affect procrastination. When people have difficulty regulating their emotions, they may want to turn their attention to something fun or interesting instead of tolerating the unpleasant feelings that arise when a task feels boring or stressful. In addition, people with high impulsivity may tend to choose immediate pleasure over a task they have to complete. In both cases, they postpone their tasks by choosing what they want to do at that moment rather than finishing the work.

These three factors - pressure, emotional regulation, and impulsivity involve delaying tasks to reduce negative feelings in the moment. However, the unfinished work still remains, so the pressure can grow over time and lead to negative effects. Even after understanding these reasons, it may still be difficult to stop procrastinating right away. Therefore, making a task feel less overwhelming can be an effective way to manage procrastination.

If you feel pressured to finish a task all at once, breaking it into smaller parts is a good way to make it feel more manageable. As you complete each part one by one, you will find that the entire task is finished before you realize it. Some people also delay starting a task because they worry that their work may not be perfect. In this case, remind yourself that you can gradually improve your work as you edit it and eventually create something you are satisfied with. Also, setting a short time limit can reduce the pressure and make it easier to get started.

As mentioned earlier, procrastination is not simply a result of laziness. If you find yourself putting off a task, rather than blaming yourself for being lazy, think about what may be causing the delay and how you can overcome it. Understanding the reason behind procrastination can help you reduce it. Now, as exam season approaches, students can be easily pushed toward procrastination. We hope everyone takes their preparation step by step and achieves the results they deserve. Believe in your steady efforts, and approach your upcoming exam with confidence. We are cheering for you all the way - you have got this, so go smash that exam!



▲A laptop and books (Photo : Pexels)

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