

# New Yorkers marvel at 'Manhattanhenge' sunset

12 July 2012

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New Yorkers gathered at dusk to witness "Manhattanhenge" -- a rare alignment of the sun with the east-west street grid in which it appears to set between skyscrapers.

Dozens of people gathered shortly before 8:30 pm Wednesday (0030 GMT Thursday) at the corner of 14th and Sixth Avenue, taking pictures of the huge red sun at the foot of the urban canyon formed by the buildings.

Manhattanhenge occurs twice during the [Northern Hemisphere's](#) summer -- in May and July -- and a partial Manhattanhenge is expected on Thursday. The phenomenon also occurs in winter but is often obscured by inclement weather.

The name Manhattanhenge alludes to [Stonehenge](#), the prehistoric circle of large stones in southern Britain.

The sun crosses the central axis of Stonehenge during the summer and winter solstices, leading historians to theorize that the monument was used as an [astronomical observatory](#).

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APA citation: New Yorkers marvel at 'Manhattanhenge' sunset (2012, July 12) retrieved 21 September 2019 from <https://phys.org/news/2012-07-yorkers-marvel-manhattanhenge-sunset.html>

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