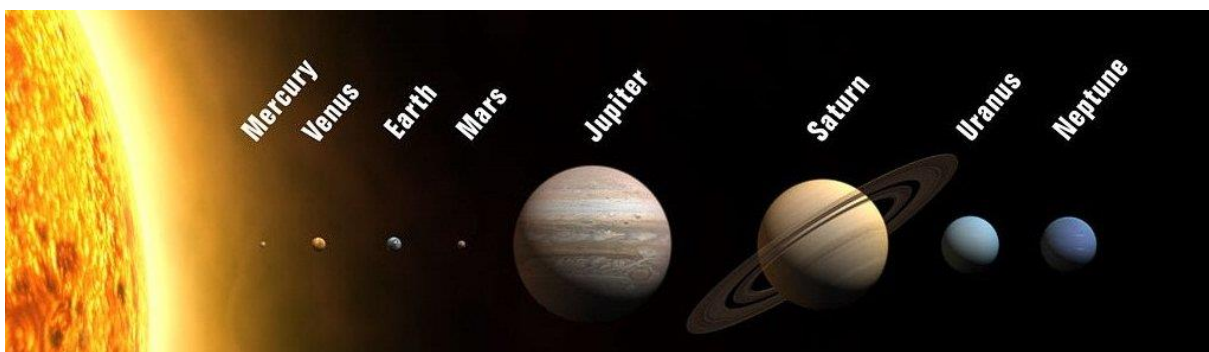


Moon Facts

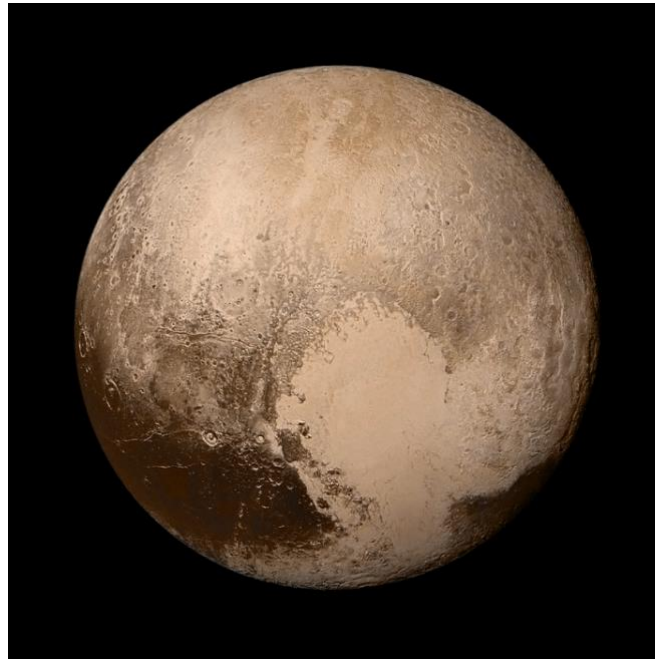


- Earth's only natural satellite.
- It orbits the Earth every 27.3 days.
- The dark side of the moon is a myth, both sides of the Moon see the same amount of sunlight, but only one face of the Moon is ever seen from Earth.
- The Moon is drifting away from the Earth, approx. 3.8cm every year.
- A person would weigh much less on the Moon as it has much weaker gravity due to its size.
- The Moon has no atmosphere meaning it is unprotected from cosmic rays, meteorites and solar winds.
- Only 12 people have ever walked on the Moon.

Size comparison of the solar system (distances not shown to scale)



Pluto Facts

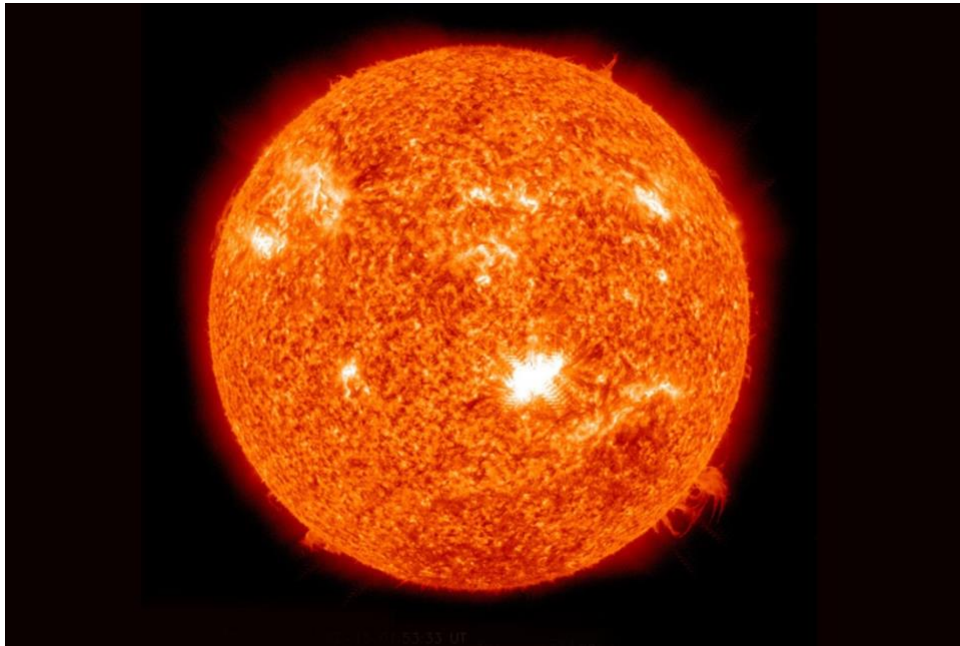


- Discovered in 1930, Pluto was once classified as the 9th planet .
- Pluto was downgraded to a **dwarf planet** in 2006 (76 years after discovery) when the definition of a planet was changed.
- One orbit of the Sun takes 248 Earth years. From its discovery to its reclassification, Pluto had completed less than one third of an orbit around the Sun.
- Pluto is named after the Greek god of the underworld. The name was proposed by an eleven year old school girl called Venetia Burney from Oxford, England.
- Pluto has 5 moons but is smaller than a number of moons in our solar system – Ganymede, Titan, Callisto, Io, Europa, Triton and our own Moon are all larger.

Size comparison

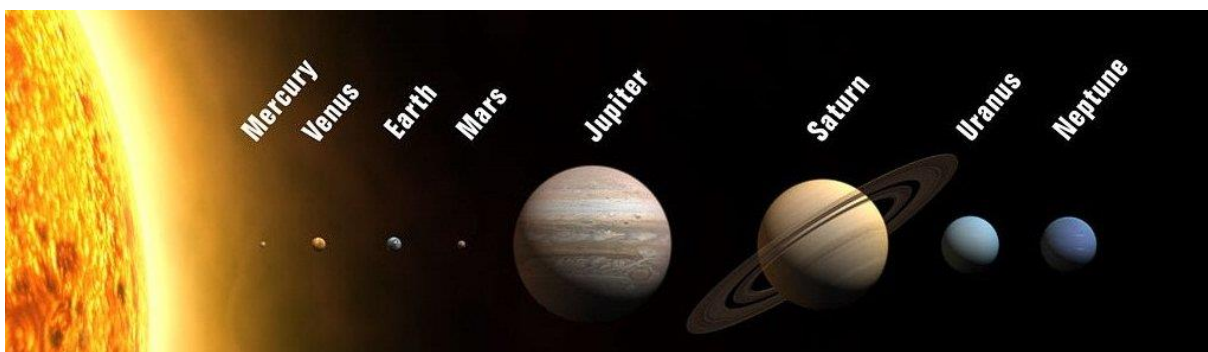


Sun Facts

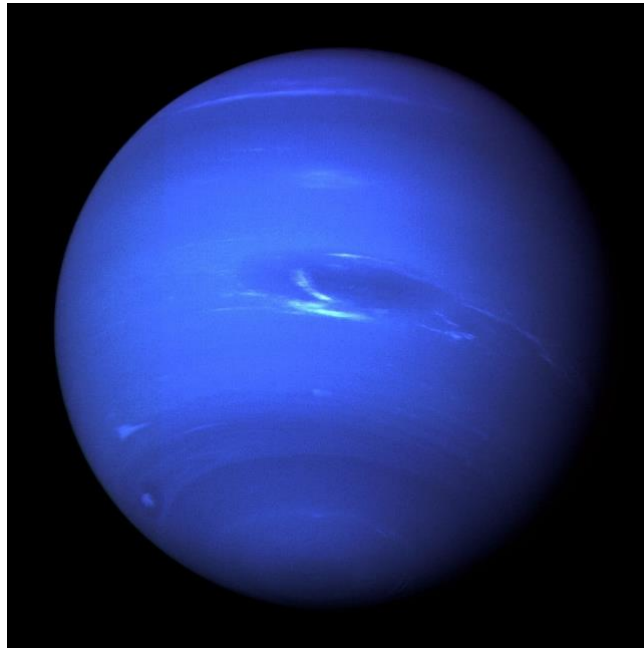


- Age: 4.6 billion years (middle aged)
- Type of star: Yellow dwarf
- Diameter: 1,392,684 km
- Circumference (at equator): 4,370,005.6 km
- Mass: 1,990,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 kgs
(1.99×10^{30} or 333,060 Earths)
- Surface Temperature: 5,500°C
- Core Temperature: 15 million°C
- Composed of mainly hydrogen (70%) and helium (28%)
- One million Earths could fit inside the Sun
- The Sun contains 99.86% of the mass in the Solar System
- Light from the Sun takes eight minutes to reach Earth

Size comparison of the solar system (distances not shown to scale)

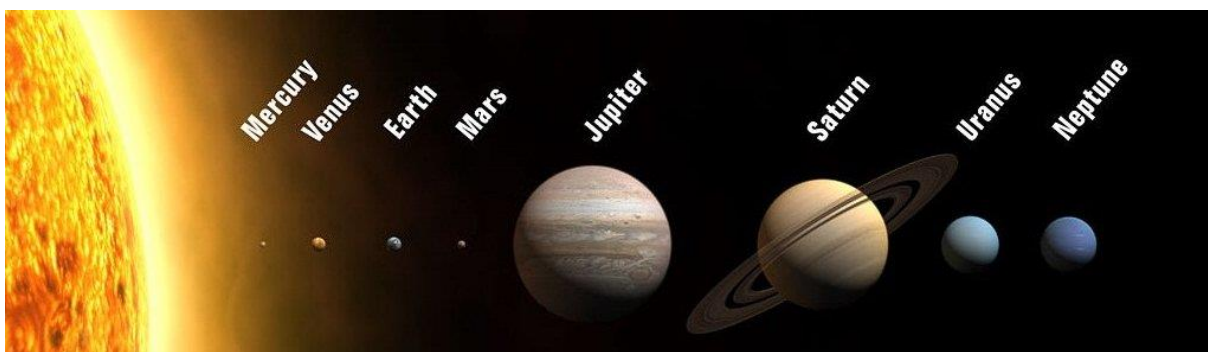


Neptune Facts

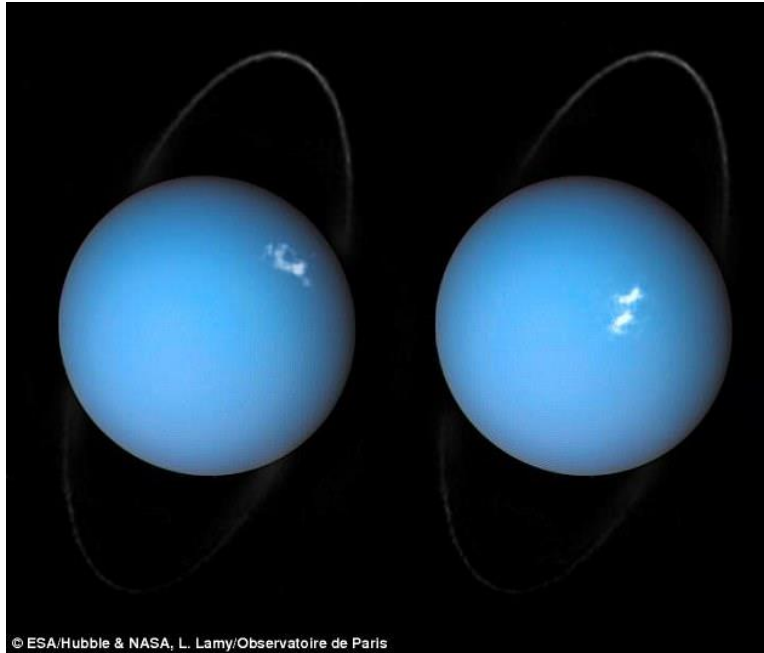


- Neptune is the 8th planet from the Sun
- It was discovered on 23 September 1846
- Neptune is the smallest of the gas giants and is made up of hydrogen, helium and methane gases. The inner core is made of rock. The methane gas in the atmosphere absorbs red light which is why it looks blue.
- Large storms and high speed winds travel across the planet at up to 600 metres per second.
- It takes Neptune 164.8 Earth years to orbit the Sun just once
- Neptune has 14 moons
- Only one spacecraft has flown past Neptune – Voyager 2 in 1989
- Neptune has a very thin collection of rings made of dust and ice

Size comparison of the solar system (distances not shown to scale)



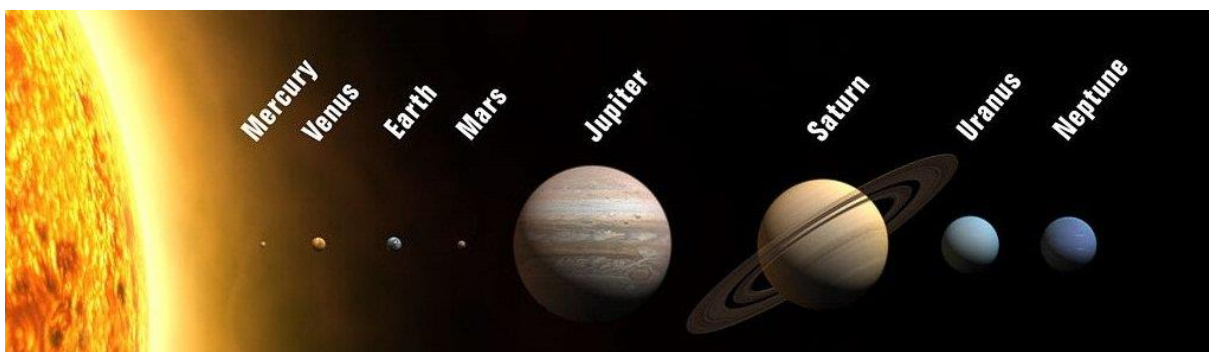
Uranus Facts



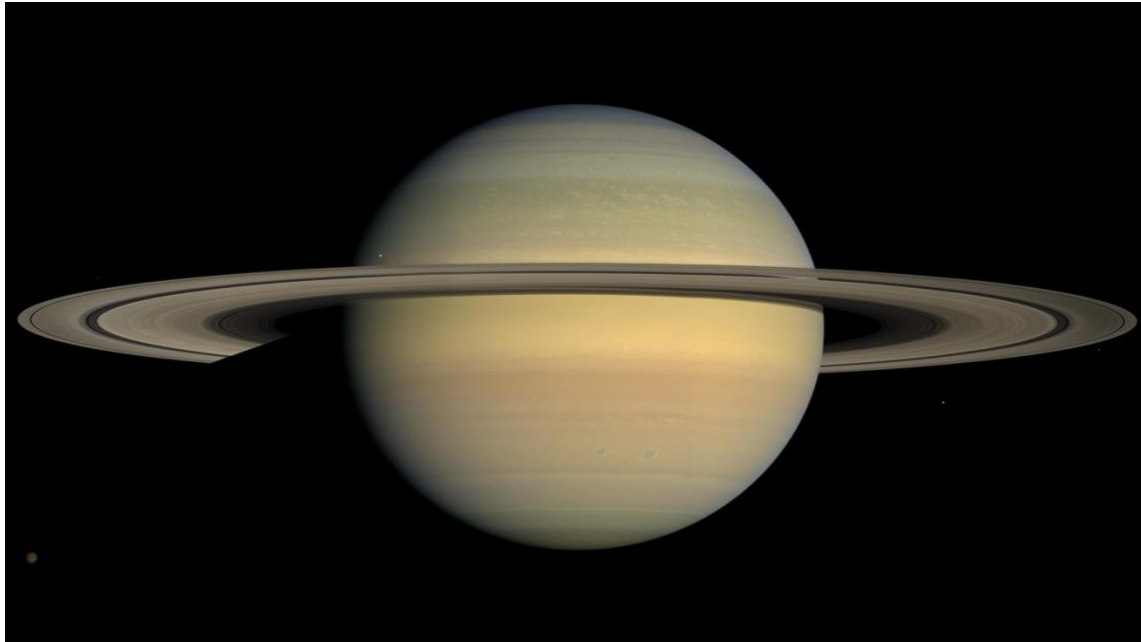
© ESA/Hubble & NASA, L. Lamy/Observatoire de Paris

- Uranus is the 7th planet from the Sun
- Discovered on 13 March 1781 by William Herschel
- It has 27 moons named after characters created by William Shakespeare and Alexander Pope
- It is tilted on its side and rotates in the opposite direction to most of the other planets in our solar system
- It takes 84 Earth years for it to orbit the Sun once
- Uranus is covered by a cloud of methane that hides the storms taking place below.
- Uranus has two sets of very thin rings
- Only one spacecraft has ever flown past Uranus – Voyager 2 in 1986

Size comparison of the solar system (distances not shown to scale)

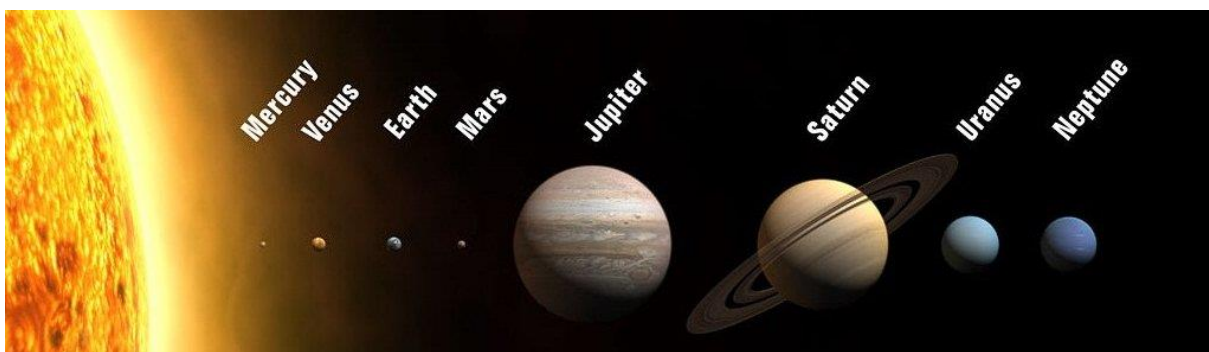


Saturn Facts



- A Saturn is the 6th planet from the Sun
- It is the most distant planet that is visible to the naked eye
- It has 62 moons
- Saturn orbits the Earth every 29.4 Earth years
- It has an oval shaped storm similar to Jupiter's
- Saturn has a hexagonal shape of clouds at the north pole
- It is made mostly of hydrogen
- Saturn's rings are made mostly of ice and dust. The rings stretch more than 120,700km from the planet, but they are only about 20 metres thick.
- Four spacecraft have visited Saturn – Pioneer 11, Voyager 1 and 2 and Cassini Huygens

Size comparison of the solar system (distances not shown to scale)

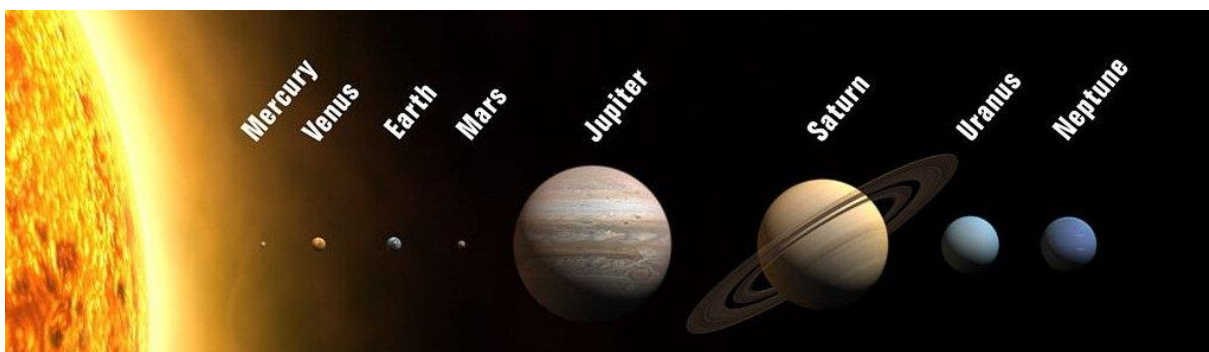


Jupiter Facts

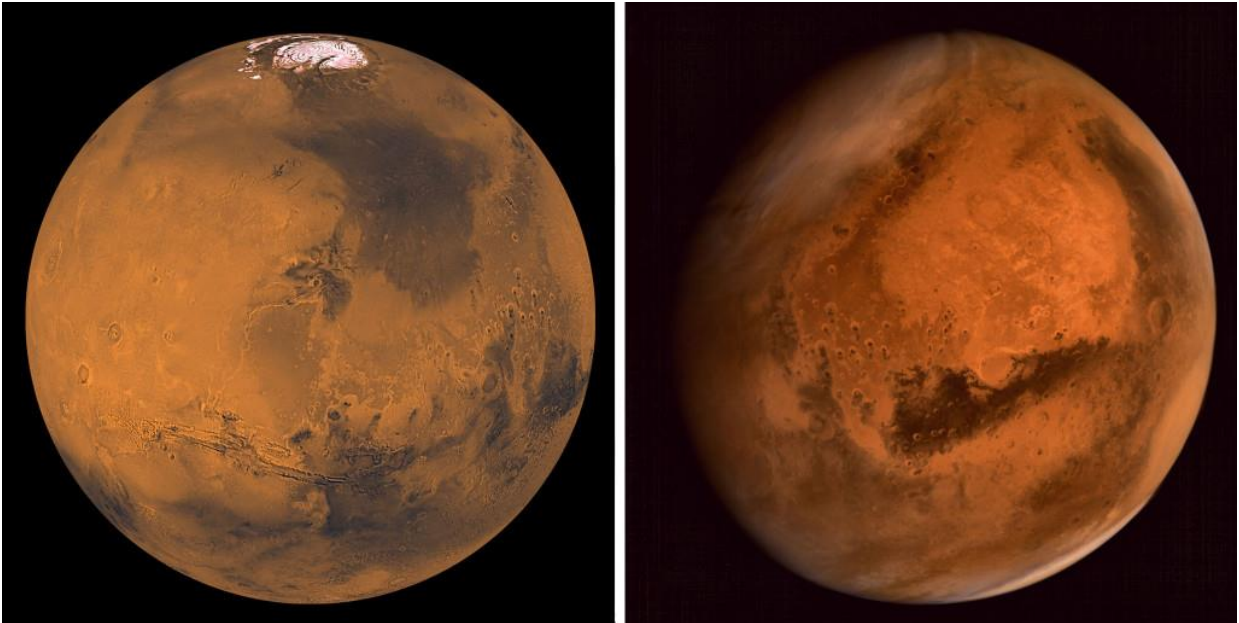


- Jupiter is the 5th planet from the Sun
- It is a gas giant and is 2.5 times more massive than all the other planets in the solar system combined
- It has 67 moons and 4 rings
- Jupiter orbits the sun every 11.8 Earth years
- The great red spot is a huge storm which has been raging for at least 350 years
- Below Jupiter's massive atmosphere there is a core of ice, rock and metals
- Jupiter has the largest moon in the solar system – Ganymede
- Eight spacecraft have visited Jupiter – Pioneer 10 and 11, Voyager 1 and 2, Galileo, Cassini, Ulysses and New Horizons

Size comparison of the solar system (distances not shown to scale)

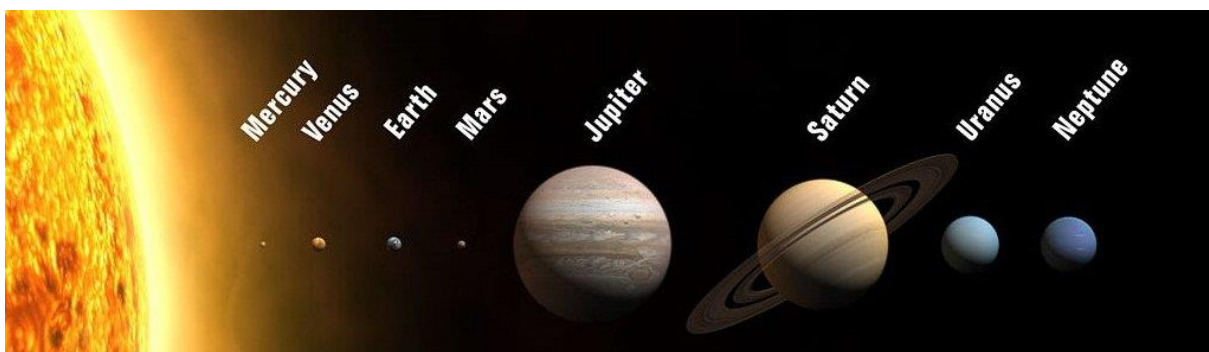


Mars Facts



- Mars is the 4th planet from the Sun
- It is the 2nd smallest planet in the solar system
- It is referred to as the 'Red Planet' due its reddish appearance
- Mars has a thin atmosphere which is mostly carbon dioxide
- It has 2 moons, Phobos and Deimos
- It takes its name from the Roman god of war
- Mars is home to the tallest mountain in the solar system (21km high) called Olympus Mons
- Mars has the largest dust storms in the solar system, these can last for months and cover the entire planet
- In 20-40 million years, Mars' largest moon will be torn apart by gravitational forces leaving Mars with a ring

Size comparison of the solar system (distances not shown to scale)

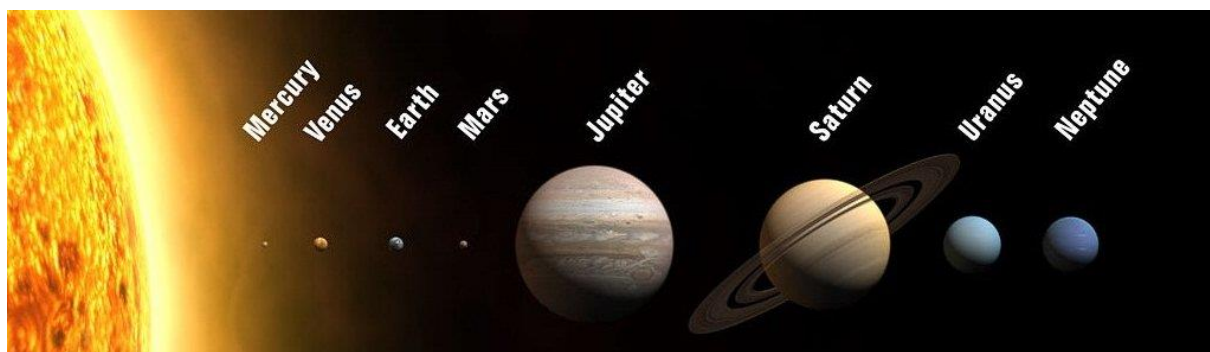


Earth Facts



- Earth is the 3rd planet from the Sun
- It is the largest of the rocky planets
- It is the only planet in our solar system not to be named after a Greek or Roman god or goddess
- Earth was formed approx. 4.5 billion years ago and is the only planet known to support life
- Earth was once thought to be the centre of the Universe
- Earth has a powerful magnetic field caused by the nickel-iron core of the planet. This protects us from solar winds
- It has only one moon and no rings
- Earth's rotation is gradually slowing at about 17 milliseconds per hundred years.

Size comparison of the solar system (distances not shown to scale)

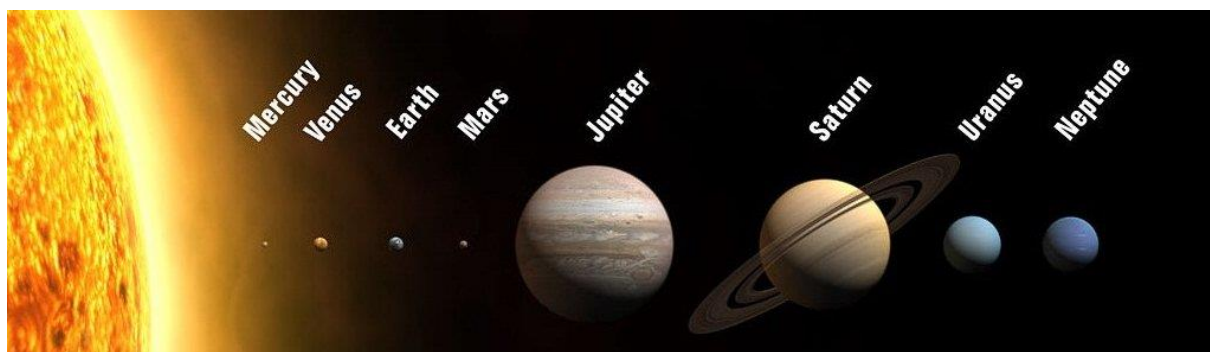


Venus Facts

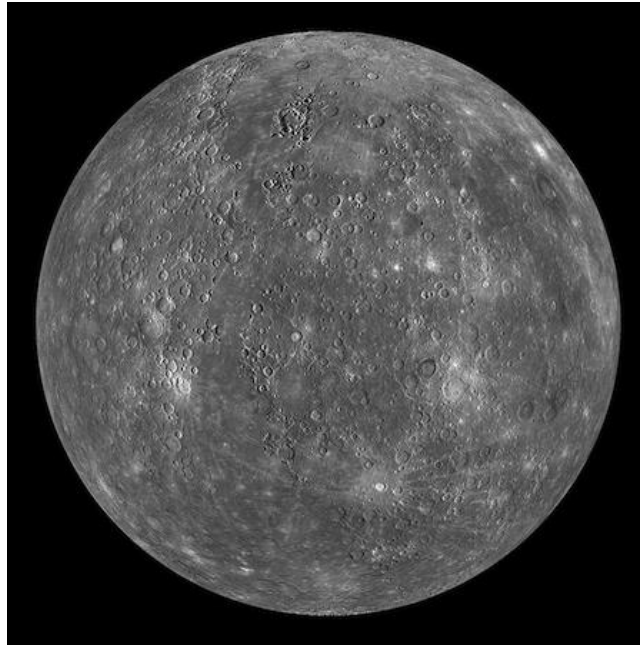


- Venus is the 2nd planet from the Sun
- It is the second brightest object in the night sky after the Moon
- Venus is named after the Roman goddess of love and beauty
- It takes 225 Earth days for Venus to orbit the Sun
- A day on Venus takes 117 Earth days
- Venus does not have any moons or rings and spins in the opposite direction to the Sun and most of the other planets
- Venus is the hottest planet in our solar system averaging 462°C on the surface
- It is often referred to as Earth's sister planet due to their similar size and mass
- The surface of Venus is covered by a layer of sulfuric acid clouds

Size comparison of the solar system (distances not shown to scale)



Mercury Facts



- A year on Mercury is just 88 days long and it will rotate 1.5 times
- Mercury is the smallest planet in the solar system
- Mercury is the second densest planet in our solar system
- Mercury has a wrinkled surface
- Mercury has a molten core which makes up 42% of its volume.
- Mercury is only the second hottest planet, even though it is closest to the sun.
- Mercury has the most craters of all the planets in our solar system.
- Only two spacecraft have ever visited Mercury – Mariner 10 and Messenger
- Mercury is named after the Roman messenger to the Gods

Size comparison of the solar system (distances not shown to scale)

