

# The planet

The brightest and largest object in our night sky, the Moon makes Earth a more livable planet by moderating our home planet's wobble on its axis, leading to a relatively stable climate. It also causes tides, creating a rhythm that has guided humans for thousands of years.

The planet is nearly as big around as Earth - 7,521 miles (12,104 kilometers) across, versus 7,926 miles (12,756 kilometers) for Earth. From Earth, Venus is the brightest object in the night sky after our own Moon.

Jupiter is the fifth planet from our Sun and is, by far, the largest planet in the solar system - more than twice as massive as all the other planets combined. Jupiter's stripes and swirls are actually cold, windy clouds of ammonia and water, floating in an atmosphere of hydrogen and helium.

While Earth is only the fifth largest planet in the solar system, it is the only world in our solar system with liquid water on the surface. Just slightly larger than nearby Venus, Earth is the biggest of the four planets closest to the Sun, all of which are made of rock and metal.

Our solar system consists of our star, the Sun, and everything bound to it by gravity - the planets Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune; dwarf planets such as Pluto; dozens of moons; and millions of asteroids, comets, and meteoroids.

The Sun is a 4.5 billion-year-old yellow dwarf star - a hot glowing ball of hydrogen and helium - at the center of our solar system. It's about 93 million miles (150 million kilometers) from Earth and it's our solar system's only star. Without the Sun's energy, life ...

Everyone knows that Earth, Mars and Jupiter are planets. But both Pluto and Ceres were once considered planets until new discoveries triggered scientific debate about how to best describe them--a vigorous debate that continues to this day. The ...

Mars is one of the easiest planets to spot in the night sky - it looks like a bright red point of light. Despite being inhospitable to humans, robotic explorers - like NASA's new Perseverance rover - are serving as pathfinders to eventually get humans to the surface of the Red Planet.

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