

THE INNER SOLAR SYSTEM

The **inner** solar system is the name of the terrestrial planets and asteroid belt. Terrestrial is just a fancy way of saying **rocky**. Like the Earth, terrestrial planets have a core of **iron and rock**.

At the center of the solar system is the Sun. The Sun is a big **ball** of hydrogen **powered** by nuclear reactions. Massive explosions are going on all of the time inside the Sun. It's what makes the light every day and keeps our planet warm. Light **zips** from the Sun to us in about eight minutes. The Sun is the most **massive thing** in our solar system. It is so big you **could** fit about a million Earths **inside** of it! Closest to the Sun is the planet Mercury.

You could **squeeze** about eighteen Mercury's **inside** of Earth. It is made of **mostly rock**, but it has a **huge iron** core and it generates a big **magnetic** field. Speedy little Mercury sails around the sun in only eighty-eight days. Mercury was the **messenger** of the gods in Roman **mythology**, known for his **speed**.

Second in line comes Venus, which is sometimes called Earth's twin. It's about the **same size** as Earth, but that's where the similarities **end**.

Venus is always covered in thick clouds full of **sulfuric acid**. They **whip** around the planet at more than two **hundred twenty mph**. Violent winds **shoot** sand made of **silicate** around Venus's very dry, arid surface. The temperature averages nine hundred degrees, and the **pressure's** **ninety** times that on Earth. It takes two hundred and twenty four days to orbit the sun. Like Mercury, Venus was also **named** after a Roman Goddess, the Goddess of love.

You know what planet is next. You live on it! **Yup**, the Earth is number three. We have a rocky **iron** core at the center of our planet. We have liquid water, and our air is made of **mostly** nitrogen and oxygen. It **takes** three **hundred** and sixty-five days for us to **circle** the sun. We only have one moon. Next to us in is Mars. Mars also has a **core** of rock and **iron**. It is a little more than **half** the **size** of Earth. The most **distinct** feature about Mars is its red color. Dust **rich** in **iron** oxide covers the planet. It's **sort** of like the planet is rusting. White caps at the poles are water, **forever** frozen because of the colder temperatures further from the Sun. The only place the temperature rises above freezing is at the equator, or the **middle** of the planet. Mars has two moons, **Deimos** and **Phobos** but they are much **smaller** than our **own** moon. It takes **nearly twice** as long for Mars to **circle** the sun at almost 684 days.



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Tab 1 world's Largest Seal

- freezing = Congelacion
- Largest = Grande
- Length = largo
- Weigh = Pesar
- Size = Talla
- females = hembras
- Proboscis = Proboscide
- Smaller = Pequeño
- blubber = grasa
- Keeps = mantiene
- southern = Sur
- seals = focas
- clumsy = torpe
- graceful = agraciada
- squid = Calamar
- Various = Varios
- Able = Capaz
- stay = Permanecer

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Inglés

The last part of the inner solar system is called the Asteroid Belt. It's the line between the inner rocky planets and the outer gaseous planets. Unlike the rest of the Inner Solar System, the Asteroid Belt isn't a planet at all. It is a bunch of large rocky chunks, mostly meteoroids. There's also a dwarf planet named Ceres in the asteroid belt. The rest aren't very large.

The Earth is the only planet that we know of with life on it, but universe is a big place. Much of our solar system is still a mystery, there is still plenty to explore.

1 Select the correct answer.

Which of these statements is true?

- a. Venus orbits the sun more quickly than Mercury.
- b. Mercury orbits the sun more slowly than Mars.
- c. Earth orbits the sun more quickly than Venus.
- d. Mars orbits the sun more slowly than Earth.

2 What types of gas make up the majority of Earth's atmosphere?

nitrogen and oxygen

3 According to the text, where would you find water on Mars?

I would find water on Mars in the white caps at the poles

4 How long does it take for light to travel from the sun to Earth?

Sunlight takes eight minutes to reach the earth

5 Which of the following would be the most appropriate nickname for Venus?

- a. the cold desert planet
- b. the first inner planet
- c. the windy planet
- d. the triple mooned planet