

Planet

Mars



Mars is the fourth planet from the Sun and the second smallest planet in our Solar System.



It is often called the 'Red Planet' because it appears in the sky as an orange-red star. The colour caused the ancient Greeks and Romans to name it after their god of war. Today, thanks to visiting spacecraft, we know that the planet's appearance is due to rust in the Martian rocks.

You can see how much smaller than Earth it is...

The land area of the Earth is approximately equal to the total surface of Mars.



4,220 miles diameter



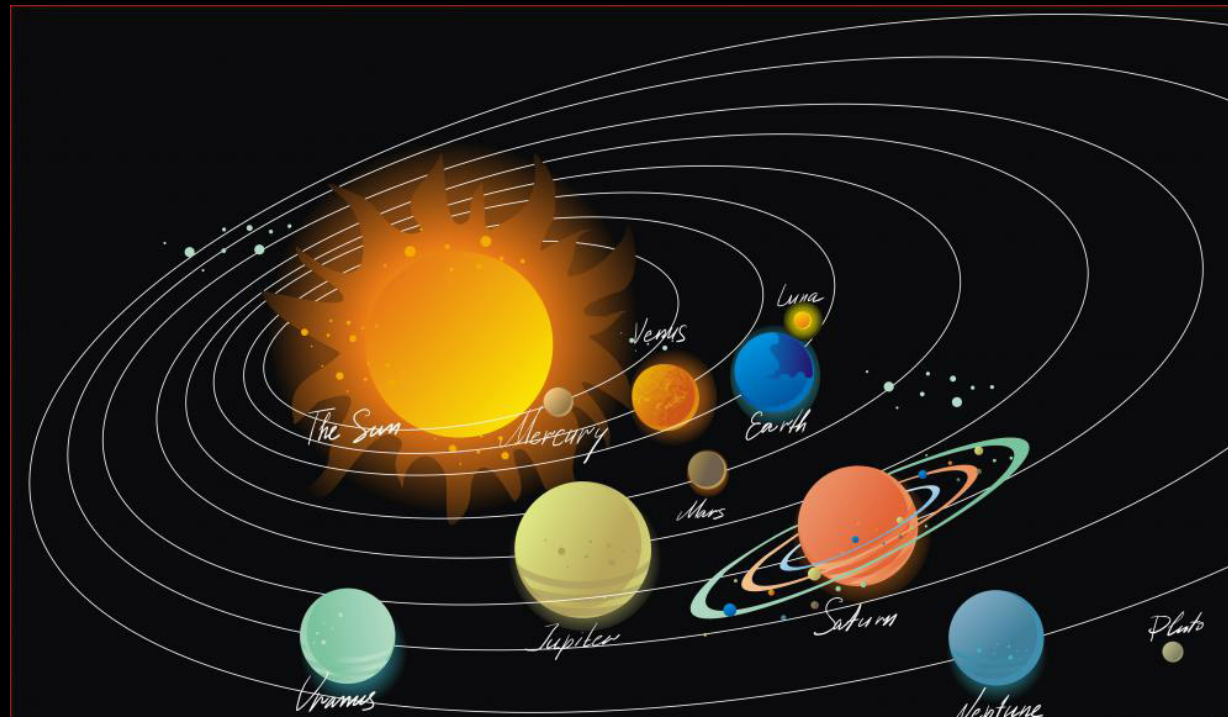
7,926 miles diameter

The land area of Africa is about the same as the total surface of the Moon.



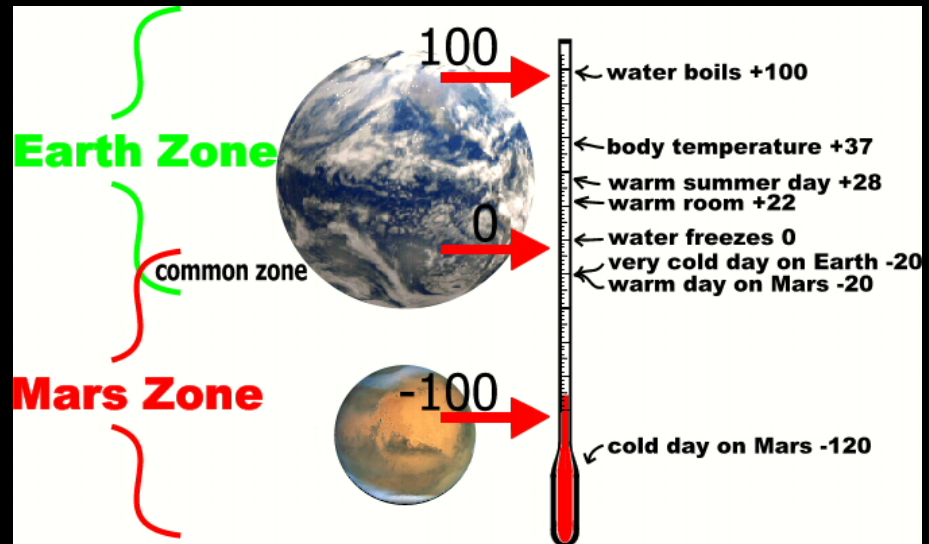
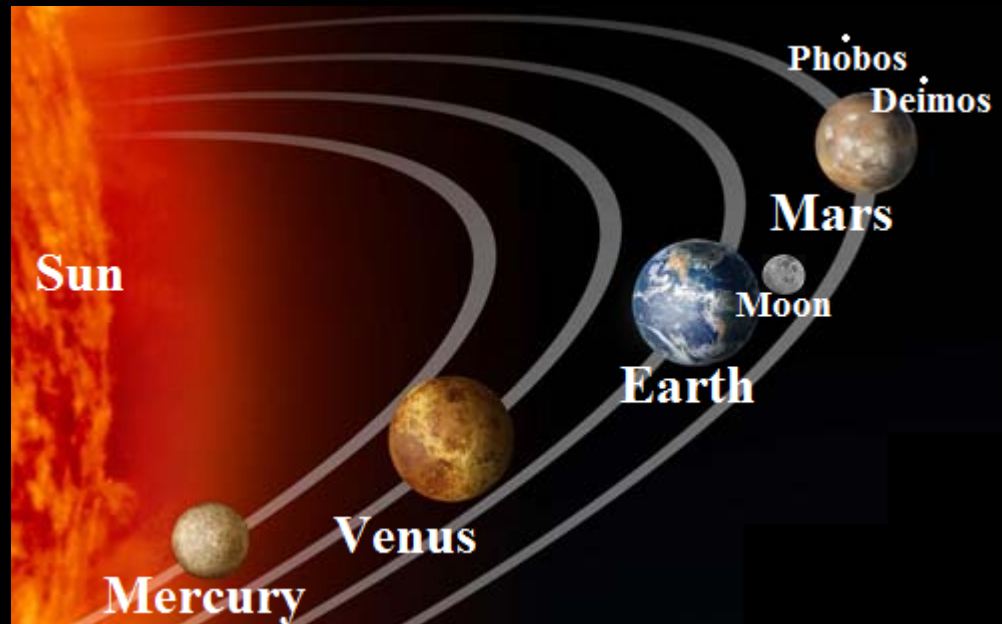
Mars was the Roman god of war and agriculture. It may not seem like these two things go together, but they do. Mars protected those who fought for their communities, and stayed home to raise crops for food. In Greek, Mars was known as Ares.

Mars rotates at about the same rate as the Earth, so one day on Mars lasts about 24 hours.



For Mars to travel around the Sun it takes more time than here on Earth as one year is 686 days.

Mars is colder than Earth. The temperature on Mars is typically about -63°C . However on the equator of Mars it may occasionally reach temperatures of up to 30 -40°C .



How much would you weigh on Mars?

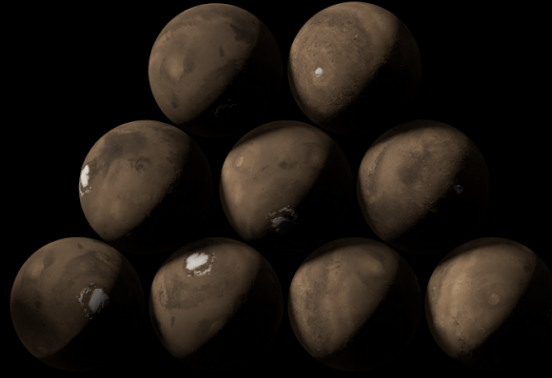
Planetary Size Comparison

(and also moons and other rocks)



Earth

Diameter 12,742 km



Mars

Diameter 6,779 km

1 Earth mass = 9x Mars

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Mars is smaller than the Earth so if you weighed 70 pounds on the Earth, you would weigh about 27 pounds on Mars.

Mars has two moons, their names are Deimos and Phobos.



Phobos
size 20 x 28 km



Deimos
size 12 x 16 km

Phobos and Deimos are more like asteroids than Earth's moon. Both are tiny — the larger, Phobos, is only 14 miles across, while the smaller, Deimos, is only 8 miles, making them some of the smallest moons in our solar system.

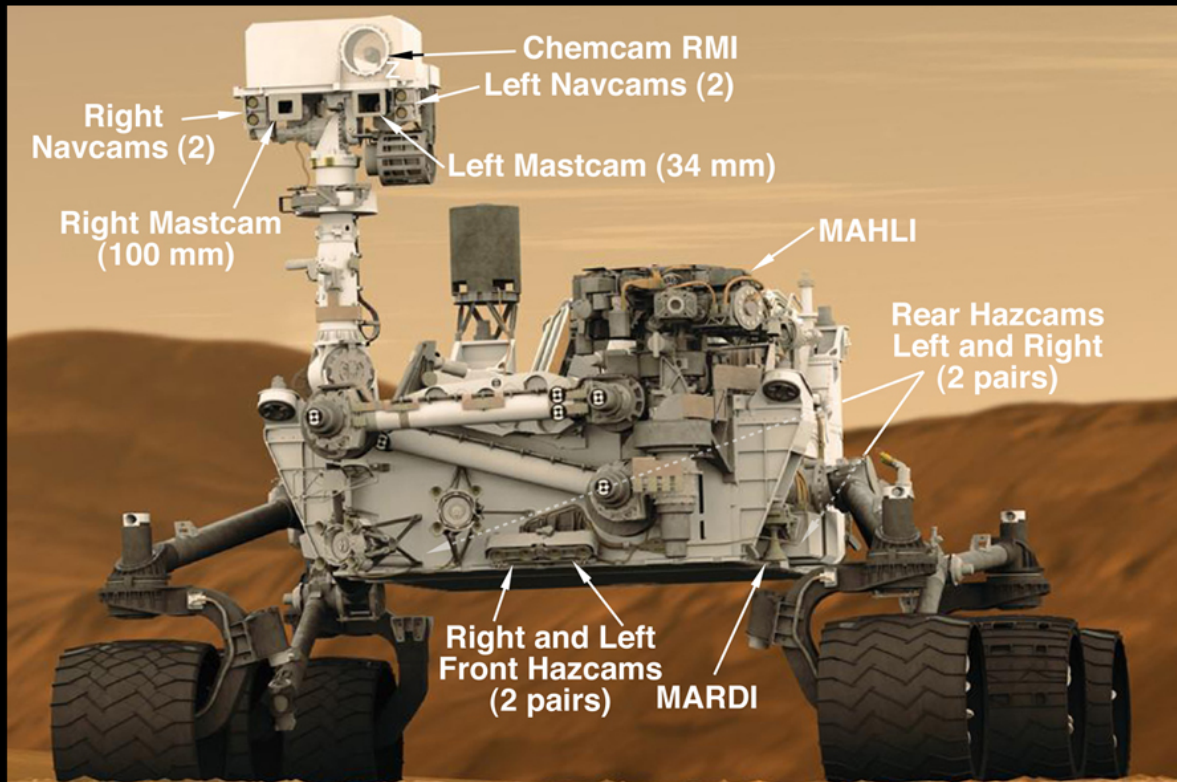


Earth.



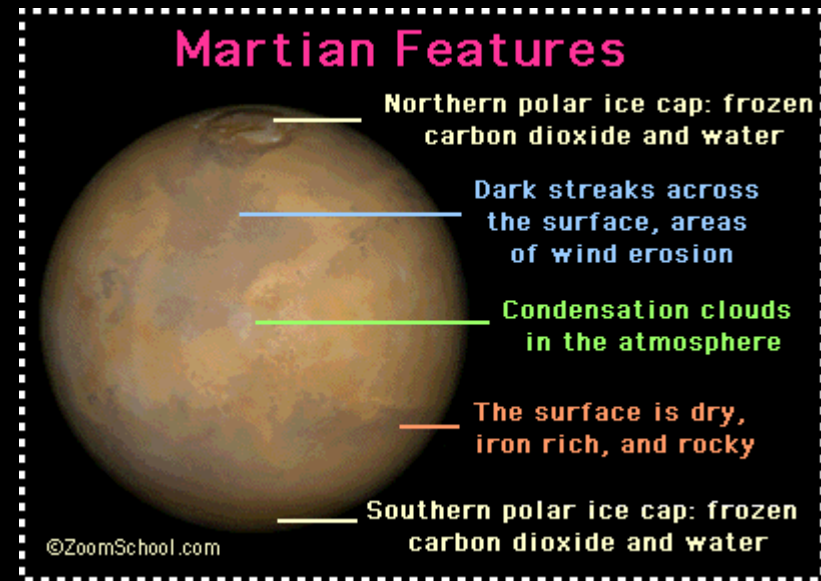
Mars is home to the tallest mountain in our solar system Olympus Mons, a shield volcano, is 21km high and 600km in diameter. Despite having formed over billions of years, evidence from volcanic lava flows is so recent many scientists believe it could still be active.

Mars Curiosity Rover



On August 5, 2012, at 10:23 p.m. The Mars Curiosity rover landed on Mars. This was an amazing feat considering that Curiosity is about the size of a car!

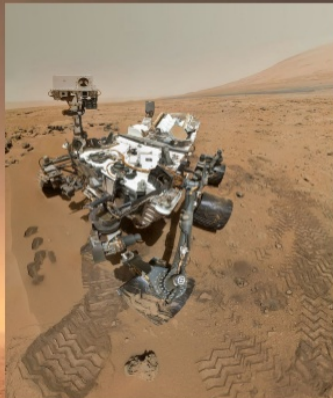
Spacecraft pictures show there are craters, small rounded hills and valleys on Mars. There is no sign of any life – plants or intelligent Martians – on the planet. We now know that Mars is a very cold, dry planet, where liquid water cannot exist on the surface.



Curiosity Rover

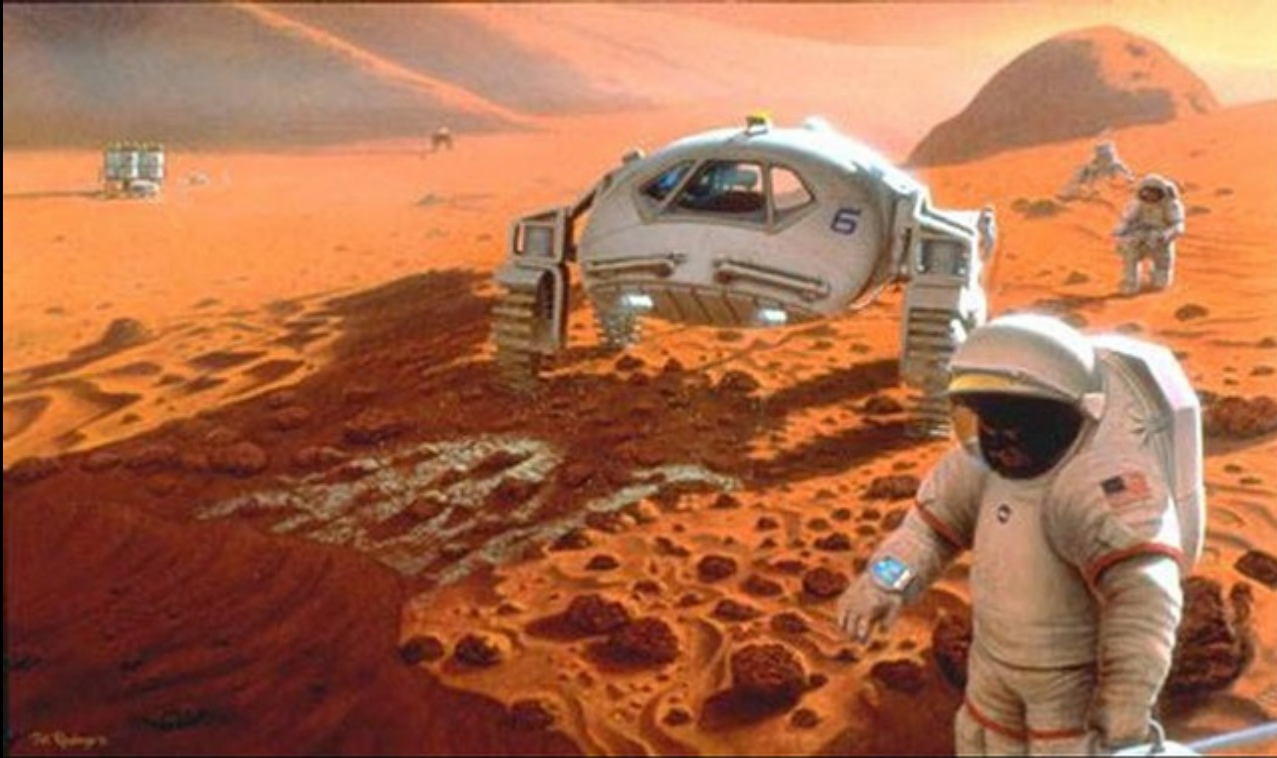
Curiosity is a car-sized robotic rover exploring Gale Crater on Mars as part of NASA's Mars Science Laboratory mission (MSL).

Curiosity was launched from **Cape Canaveral** on November 26, 2011, at 10:02. It landed on in Gale Crater on Mars August 6, 2012,



However, there are large areas of water ice at the polar caps. There is also a lot of ice in the frozen ground – much like the areas of northern Canada and

You would need to wear a spacesuit if you visited Mars. The climate is hostile to life as we know it. Temperatures on Mars can dip down to make the planet extremely cold.



However, the biggest issue for humans on Mars is the lack of an atmosphere. The atmosphere of Mars is less than 1% the thickness of Earth's atmosphere. Furthermore, it's mainly made up of carbon dioxide (95%) – this is poisonous for us humans to breathe.

Goodbye!

