

# Planet Information

## Planets

### **Mercury** • Second-smallest planet

- Cratered surface, similar to our moon
- Axis rotation: 59 days
- Average distance from sun: 36 million miles

### **Venus** • Dense, cloudy atmosphere

- Only planet to rotate clockwise on axis
- Rolling plains, large craters, volcanoes, deep basins
- Average distance from sun: 67 million miles

### **Earth** • Fifth-largest planet

- Only planet capable of supporting life
- Surface: 71% water
- Average distance from sun: 93 million miles

### **Mars** • Thin atmosphere, mainly carbon dioxide

- Deserts, canyons, and large volcanoes (including the largest in the solar system, Olympus Mons)
- Two satellites: Phobos and Deimos
- Average distance from sun: 142 million miles

### **Jupiter** • Largest planet

- Most prominent feature: Great Red Spot (atmospheric storm that has been raging for at least 300 years)
- Takes almost 12 years to revolve around the sun
- Average distance from sun: 483 million miles

## Planets Continued

### **Saturn** • Second-largest planet

- Most prominent feature: rings around the planet (made up of ice particles)
- At least 34 satellites
- Average distance from sun: 888 million miles

### **Uranus** • Third-largest planet

- Revolves around sun once every 84 years
- Most prominent feature: north pole that is tilted 98 degrees
- Average distance from sun: 1.8 billion miles

### **Neptune** • Fourth-largest planet

- Revolves around sun once every 165 years
- Most prominent feature was the Great Dark Spot (atmospheric storm); however, in 1994, the Hubble telescope found that the Great Dark Spot had disappeared
- Average distance from sun: 2.8 billion miles

### \* **Pluto** • Smallest planet

- Revolves around sun once every 248 years
- Eccentric orbit makes it the 8 planet from the sun at times
- Average distance from sun: 3.6 billion miles

\*Pluto was dropped from the solar system after it was determined the mass make-up was not that of a planet.