



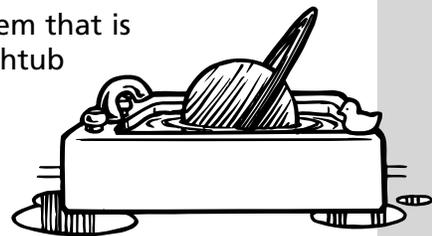
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- To understand and protect our home planet
- To explore the Universe and search for life
- To inspire the next generation of explorers

as only NASA can.

Did you know? 12 EXTREME space facts!

Better stick with a rubber ducky: Saturn is the only planet in our Solar System that is less dense than water. It could float in a bathtub if anybody could build a bathtub big enough.



How big is our galaxy? If the Solar System, from the Sun all the way out to Pluto, were shrunk to the size of a U.S. quarter, the Milky Way would be the size of North America.



Air Martian! The gravity on Mars is approximately one-third that on Earth. Yes, chances are you'd be able to dunk the basketball on a Martian court.

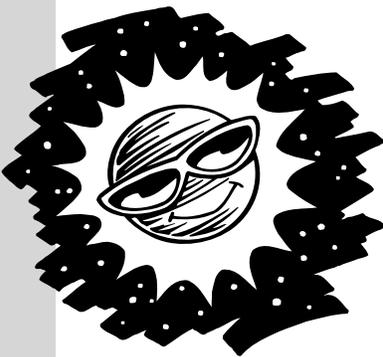
Zippy comet: On its latest loop around the Sun, comet Hale-Bopp released some 250 tons of gas and dust per second. That's about 50 times more than most comets produce.

It's a small world after all: More than 1,300 Earths would fit into Jupiter's vast sphere.

Forget the socks, bring a hat: If you could stand at the Martian equator, the temperature at your feet would be like a warm spring day, but at your head it would be freezing cold!



Grandest Canyon: The largest canyon system in the Solar System is Valles Marineris on Mars. It's more than 4,000 kilometers (3,000 miles) long -- enough to stretch from California to New York. It is nine times as long and four times as deep as our own Grand Canyon!

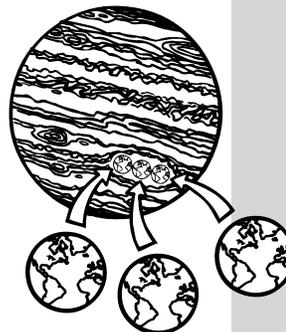


Sizzling Venus: The average temperature on Venus is more than 480 degrees Celsius (900° Fahrenheit) -- hotter than a self-cleaning oven.

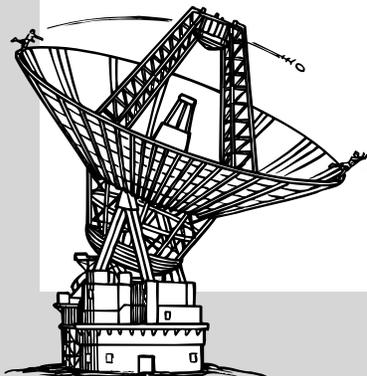
Tiny, very tiny: The radio signal that a spacecraft uses to contact Earth has no more power than a refrigerator light bulb. And by the time the signal has traveled across space, the signal is only one-billionth of one-billionth of one watt!

Deep freeze: Pluto is the coldest planet in the Solar System. It is way past freezing! Scientists estimate that Pluto's temperature is approximately minus 233 degrees Centigrade (about minus 378° Fahrenheit).

Super duper hurricane: The Great Red Spot on Jupiter is a hurricane-like storm system so large that almost three Earths could fit across it. And it's at least four centuries old! Astronomers first saw it in the early 1600s, shortly after the invention of the telescope.



Big, way big: To detect those tiny signals, the Deep Space Network uses antennas with diameters of up to 70 meters (230 feet). That's almost as big as a football field.



To learn many more cool facts about the Solar System, visit:
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