

Planetary Fact Cards

Mercury



1st

planet from
the Sun

46-70 million km from the
Sun

Discovered by: Assyrian astronomers

Discovery date: 1400 BC

Named after: Roman god of messengers

Temperature: -173°C (out of sunlight) to 420°C (in sunlight)

Colour: Grey

Made of: Iron and rock

Moons: 0

Days in a year: 88

Interesting Fact: There are wrinkles on the surface which are called Lobate Scarps.

Venus



2nd

planet from
the Sun

108.2 million km from the
Sun

Discovered by: Babylonian astronomers

Discovery date: 1700 BC

Named after: Roman goddess of love

Temperature: 462°C

Colour: Clouds of sulphuric acid make it look a burnt yellow colour.

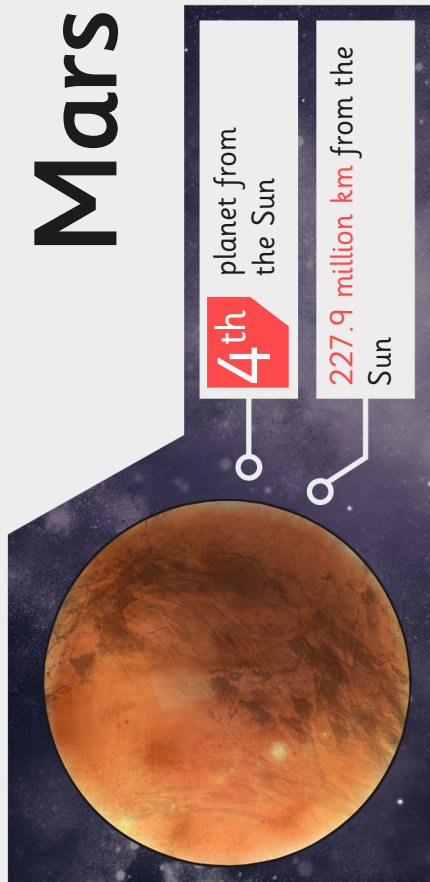
Made of: Rock

Moons: 0

Days in a year: 243

Interesting Fact: Venus rotates the opposite way to the Earth (anti-clockwise).

Mars



4th
planet from
the Sun

227.9 million km from the
Sun

Discovered by: Egyptian astronomers

Discovery date: 2000 BC

Named after: Roman god of war

Temperature: - 87°C to - 5°C

Colour: Red

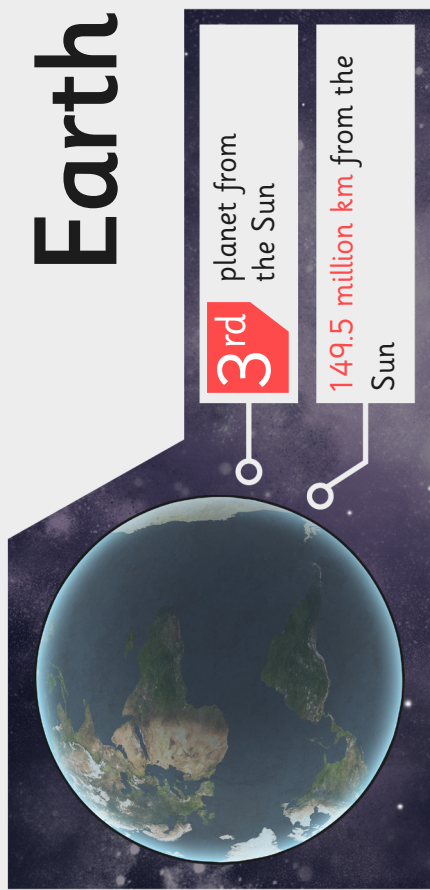
Made of: Rock (basalt)

Moons: 2; Phobos and Deimos

Days in a year: 687

Interesting Fact: Mars has the largest volcano in the solar system. Olympus Mons is 600 km wide and 21 km tall!

Earth



3rd
planet from
the Sun

149.5 million km from the
Sun

Named after:

It's not! Earth is the only planet not named after a Roman or Greek God. The word Earth comes from both English and German words, 'eor(th)e/ertha' and 'erde', which mean 'ground'.

Temperature: - 88°C to 58°C

Colour: Blue, green, white

Made of: Rock and metal

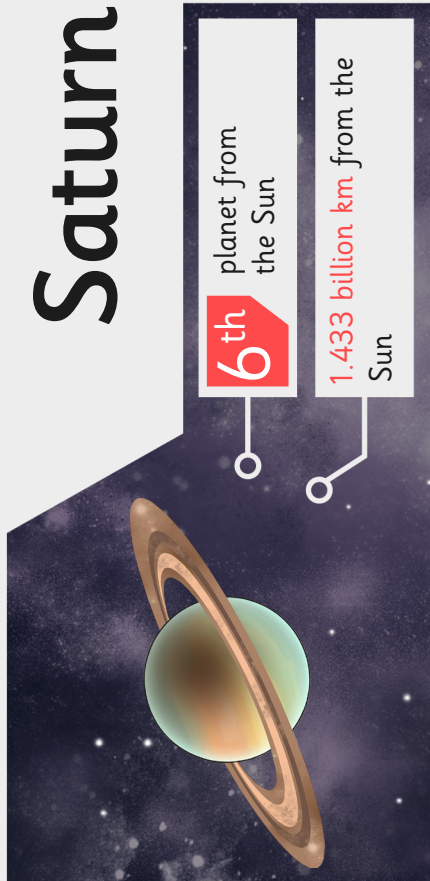
Moons: 1

Days in a year: 365.25

Interesting Fact:

The Earth is the only known planet that supports life. In order for this to happen, a planet needs to be in the 'Goldilocks zone'; which the Earth is!

Saturn



Discovered by: Assyrian astronomers

Discovery date: 800 BC

Named after: Roman god of many things including time and wealth

Temperature: -139°C

Colour: Mostly yellowish brown

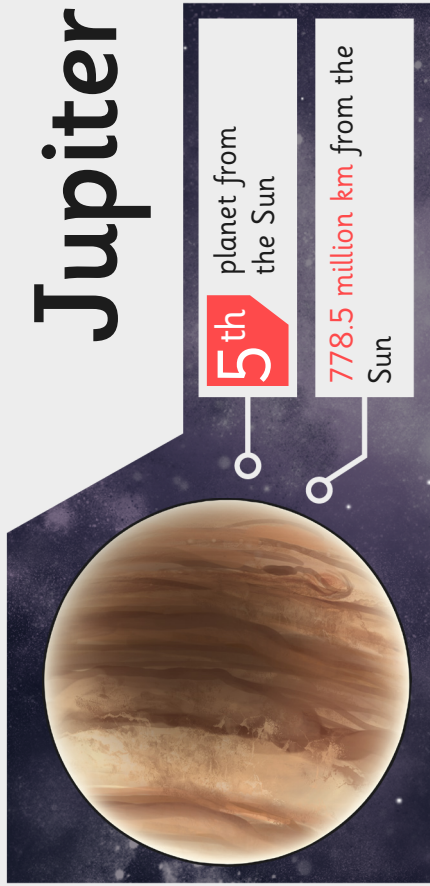
Made of: Gas (mainly hydrogen and helium)

Moons: 62; including Titan, Rhea and Enceladus

Days in a year: 10756

Interesting Fact: Saturn's rings are made up of ice and rocks. The exact number of rings is still debated and there is no firm answer yet!

Jupiter



Discovered by: Babylonian astronomers

Discovery date: 800 - 700 BC

Named after: King of the Roman gods

Temperature: -87°C to -5°C

Colour: White, orange, red, brown and yellow

Made of: Gas (mainly hydrogen and helium)

Moons: 67; including Io, Europa and Callisto

Days in a year: 4333

Interesting Fact: Days are shorter in Jupiter – it takes 9 hours and 55 minutes to turn on its axis while it takes Earth 24 hours.

Uranus



Discovered by: William Herschel

Discovery date: March 31st, 1781

Named after: Greek god of the sky

Temperature: - 197°C

Colour: blue - green

Made of: Ices (like water, ammonia and methane)

Moons: 27; including Oberon and Titania

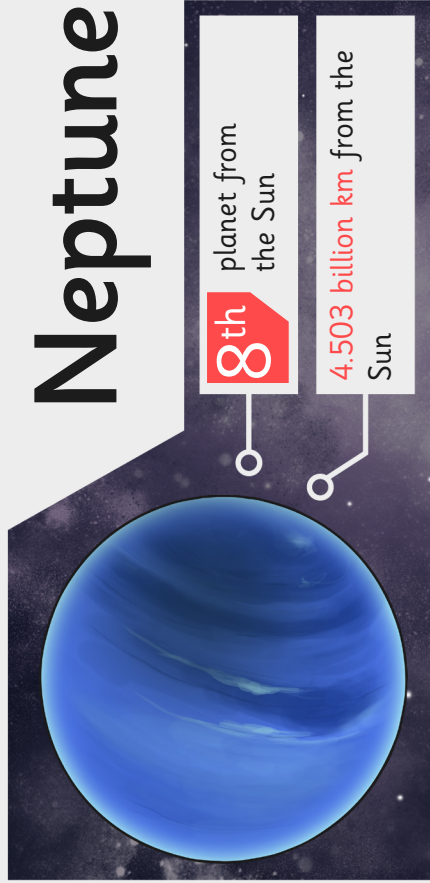
Days in a year: 30687

Interesting Fact: Uranus is tilted 98° so it rotates in the opposite direction to the other planets in the solar system.

7th planet from the Sun

2.877 billion km from the Sun

Neptune



Discovered by: Urbain Le Verrier and Johann Galle

Discovery date: September 23rd, 1846

Named after: Roman god of the seas

Temperature: - 201°C

Colour: Blue

Made of: Gas (mainly hydrogen and helium)

Moons: 14; including Triton

Days in a year: 60190

Interesting Fact: The Great Dark Spot was the name of storm on Neptune – it lasted 5 years!

8th planet from the Sun

4.503 billion km from the Sun