

The **Sun** is a giant ball of plasma, powered by fusion. It has an 11 year cycle when we see more sun spots and solar flares.



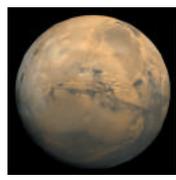
Mercury is the smallest planet in the Solar System and, along with Venus, is one of only two planets without any moons. Its day is twice the length of its year!



Venus is the hottest planet in the Solar System, over 470°C. This is because its atmosphere is made of greenhouse gases. Extreme global warming!



Earth is in the 'Goldilocks zone', meaning that it's "not too hot and not too cold" to have liquid water on the surface.



Mars is the most explored planet. Evidence suggests that it once had liquid oceans and may have supported simple life. It still has polar ice caps.



Jupiter is the first of the gas giants and is the largest planet in the Solar System. It has a storm, the great red spot, that is much bigger than the Earth.



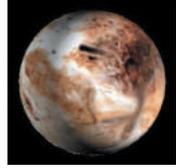
Saturn's density is less than that of water, so it would float in a large enough bath tub! Its rings are made of small bits of ice and rock.



Uranus orbits on its side – its South pole points towards the Sun. It was probably knocked over by a massive collision in its early life.



Neptune's existence was predicted by Physicists before it was discovered in 1846. It has the fastest winds in the Solar System – up to 2000km/hr.



Pluto is no longer a planet. It was renamed a dwarf planet in 2006. It would take six Plutos to make the mass of the Earth's moon.



Cassini-Huygens is a spacecraft and lander. Huygens landed on Titan, one of Saturn's moons, whilst Cassini discovered evidence of an underground ocean on Enceladus (another of Saturn's moons).



Voyager 1 is the first spacecraft to leave the Solar System, taking over 30 years to do so. It carries a gold-plated disc containing information about life on planet Earth.