

Venus planet solar system

A planet is a celestial body that (a) is in orbit around the Sun, (b) has sufficient mass for its self-gravity to overcome rigid body forces so that it assumes a hydrostatic equilibrium (nearly round) shape, and (c) has cleared the neighbourhood around its orbit.

The Sun is the largest object in our solar system. Its diameter is about 865,000 miles (1.4 million kilometers). Its gravity holds the solar system together, keeping everything from the biggest planets to the smallest bits of debris in orbit around it.

It's a cloud-swaddled planet named for a love goddess, often called Earth's twin. But pull up a bit closer, and Venus turns hellish. Our nearest planetary neighbor, the second planet from the Sun, has a surface hot enough to melt lead. The atmosphere is so thick that, from the surface, the Sun is just a smear of light.

Our solar system consists of our star, the Sun, and everything bound to it by gravity - the planets Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune; dwarf planets such as Pluto; dozens of moons; and millions of asteroids, comets, and meteoroids.

By studying neighboring dust rings at Mercury, Venus and Earth, where dust traces out the enduring effects of gravity in the solar system, scientists can develop techniques for reading between the dust rings both near and far.

While Earth is only the fifth largest planet in the solar system, it is the only world in our solar system with liquid water on the surface. Just slightly larger than nearby Venus, Earth is the biggest of the four planets closest to the Sun, all of which are made of rock and metal.

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