

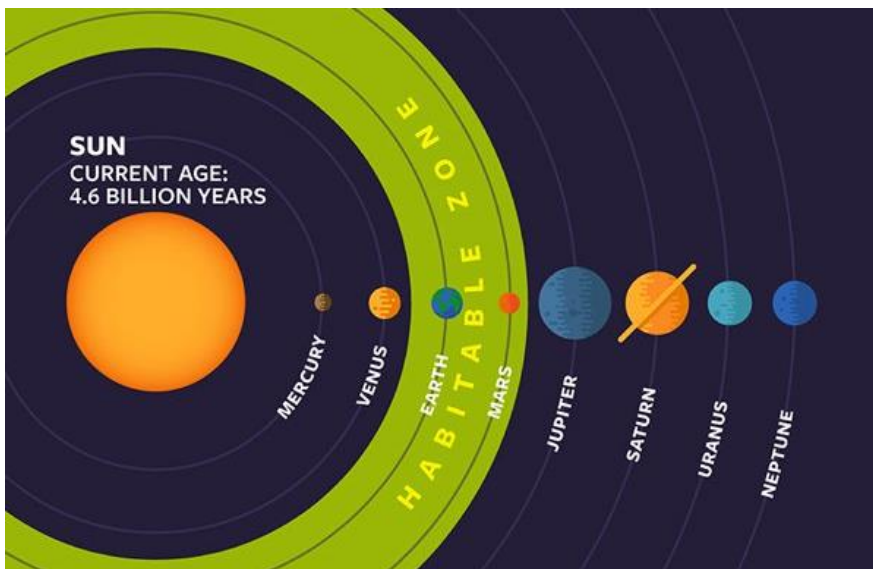
Sol's Major Satellites

Try It Out

Take a planet for a spin with this not-to-scale model of the Solar System. Trouble remembering the order of the planets? Just remember this: My Very Educated Mother Just Served Us Nachos. (Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune.)

What's going on?

You've probably heard of satellites before. But they're more than just the machines orbiting earth. A **satellite** is any object orbiting another object of larger size. That includes the moon, which orbits the Earth, and the planets are satellites of the sun. You could also say that the Solar System orbits around the center of the Milky Way galaxy.



The "Goldilocks Zone" of the Solar System (Image: NASA)

What's the big deal?

Our orbital position in the Solar System allows for liquid water on the surface of the planet. If Earth were much farther away it would be too cold, and water would remain frozen. Much closer, and water would boil. Earth has been deemed to be in the "Goldilocks zone." Our continual stable orbit around the sun has allowed life to flourish.

Wonder While You Walk...

There has been evidence of liquid water in places outside the Goldilocks Zone. How is that possible? What would it take to support life outside of the Goldilocks Zone?



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