

The Planets in Our Solar System- Science Study Sheet

You will be expected to:

- name the eight planets and describe whether they are a terrestrial planet [rocky] or a gas giant.
- sequence the eight planets in the solar system based on their position from the sun. (Mercury is the first from the sun, Venus is the second, etc.)
- sequence the eight planets in the solar system based on size (Jupiter is the largest, Saturn is next, etc.)
- recognize and match descriptions of the planets found in these notes.

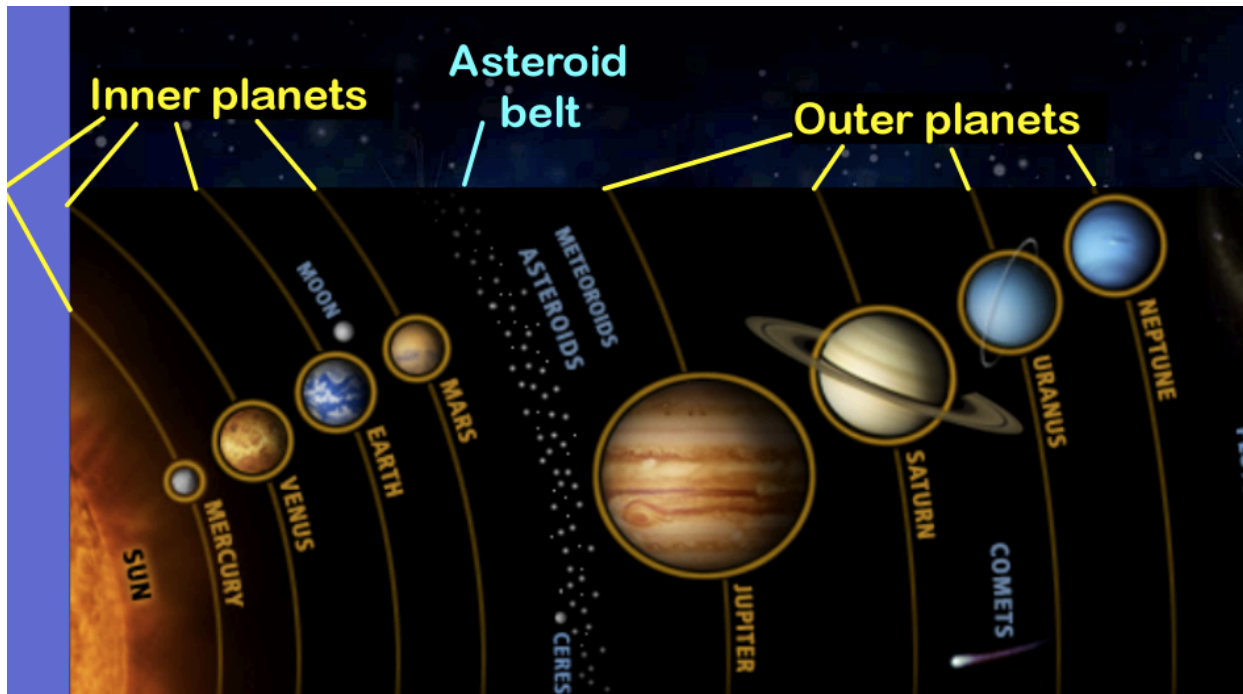
<u>Planets –</u>	<u>distance from the sun</u>	<u>smallest to largest</u>
	Mercury	Mercury
	Venus	Mars
	Earth	Venus
	Mars	Earth
	Jupiter	Neptune
	Saturn	Uranus
	Uranus	Saturn
	Neptune	Jupiter

memory help: **My Very Educated Mother Just Served Us Nachos.**

MMVENUSJ Mercury is smallest and closest.

- Our sun is the center of our solar system and eight planets, a handful of dwarf planets, 170 named moons, dust, gas, and thousands of asteroids and comets that orbit around the sun.
- The closest four planets to the sun are considered terrestrial planets [made of rock], while the most distant four are called gas giants. The terrestrial planets and the gas giants are separated by an asteroid belt.

- Mercury is closest to the sun and is a small, heavily cratered planet. Mercury looks like our moon and is the smallest planet in our solar system.
- Venus is second from the sun. It is similar to Earth in size and mass, and has a permanent blanket of clouds that trap so much heat that the temperatures on the surface of Venus are hot enough to melt lead.
- Earth is third from the sun. Earth's atmosphere, the liquid water found on Earth, and its distance from the sun, among many other factors, make Earth a haven for life.
- Mars is fourth from the sun. The atmosphere on Mars is thin and there is a vast network of canyons and riverbeds on the red planet. Scientists hypothesize that Mars once supported a wet, warm Earth-like climate.
- Jupiter is fifth from the sun. Jupiter is the largest planet in the solar system and is considered a gas giant. Jupiter has no solid surface.
- Saturn is sixth from the sun. Early scientists thought Saturn was the only planet with rings, but we now know that all four gas giants (Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune) have rings.
- Uranus is seventh from the sun. Uranus is a gas giant.
- Neptune is eighth from the sun. Neptune appears blue through telescopes and is a gas giant.



[On August 24, 2006, Pluto's status was officially changed from planet to dwarf planet. A dwarf planet has not "cleared the neighborhood" around its orbit, which means it has not become gravitationally dominant and it shares its orbital space with other bodies of a similar size.]