

LOOKING FOR A NEW EARTH

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1 For thousands of years, humans the Earth. Now astronomers are exploring space, looking for new or a "new Earth" for humans to live on in the future. But what will a new Earth look like?

2 5 First of all, look for a star. That's because our own Earth orbits a star (the sun). When astronomers have found a star, they look for planets around it. In recent years, astronomers have found thousands of new planets suns. Once they
10 find a new planet, it's also important to measure the distance between the planet and the sun. That's because most planets (unlike our Earth) are too near to the star, or too far away.

3 When they find a planet in a good position,
15 astronomers look for three things: water, air, and rock. Water is important because if humans go there, they will need water to drink and to . If you can

grow plants, then the plants can produce air for humans . Finally, astronomers also look for rocks, because water is often found under rocks.

In recent years, astronomers have found a few planets that are very similar to Earth, and might be .
For example, Gliese 581g is a planet at a safe distance from the nearest star. Astronomers also think it has
25 water and rock. The average is between 31 °C and -12 °C: cold, but not colder than Antarctica or the Arctic Circle.

However, there are some differences. Gliese 581g is bigger than Earth, and a year on Gliese 581g is only 37
30 Earth days, instead of 365. And the biggest problem is the distance. Gliese 581g is from Earth.

¹breath(e) (v) /bri:ð/ to take air in through your nose or mouth
²habitable (adj) /ˈhæbɪtəbl/ good enough to live in