The solar system

The solar system consists of the Sun, with planets and smaller objects such as asteroids and comets in orbit around it.

The planets

There are eight planets in the solar system. Starting with Mercury, which is the closest to the Sun, the planets are:

Mercury
Venus
Earth
Mars
Jupiter
Saturn
Uranus
Neptune

The rocky planets

Mercury, Venus, Earth and Mars are known as the **rocky planets** as they are made of rocks and metals and have a solid surface.

The gas planets

The gas planets are further away from the sun and are much larger than the rocky planets.The four gas planets are: Jupiter, Saturn, Neptune and Uranus.

The sun

All the planets in our solar system orbit the sun. The sun is a **star** not a planet. The sun is roughly 1,300,000 times bigger than the Earth! As well as the planets there are other things which can be found in our solar system such as:

Dwarf Planets

There are hundreds of dwarf planets in the solar system including Ceres (the only dwarf planet in the asteroid belt). Before it was reclassified it as a dwarf planet in 2006, Pluto was counted as the ninth planet in the solar system.

Moons

Moons are natural satellites that orbit a planet. Many planets have moons, and some planets have many moons - Saturn has more than 50. The Earth has just one moon - the Moon.

Asteroids

Asteroids small objects, which are made of metals and rocky material. There are large numbers of asteroids orbiting the Sun in the asteroid belt between Mars and Jupiter. There are also many in a region beyond Neptune called the Kuiper Belt.

Comets

Comets are similar to asteroids, but are made of rocky material, dust and ice.

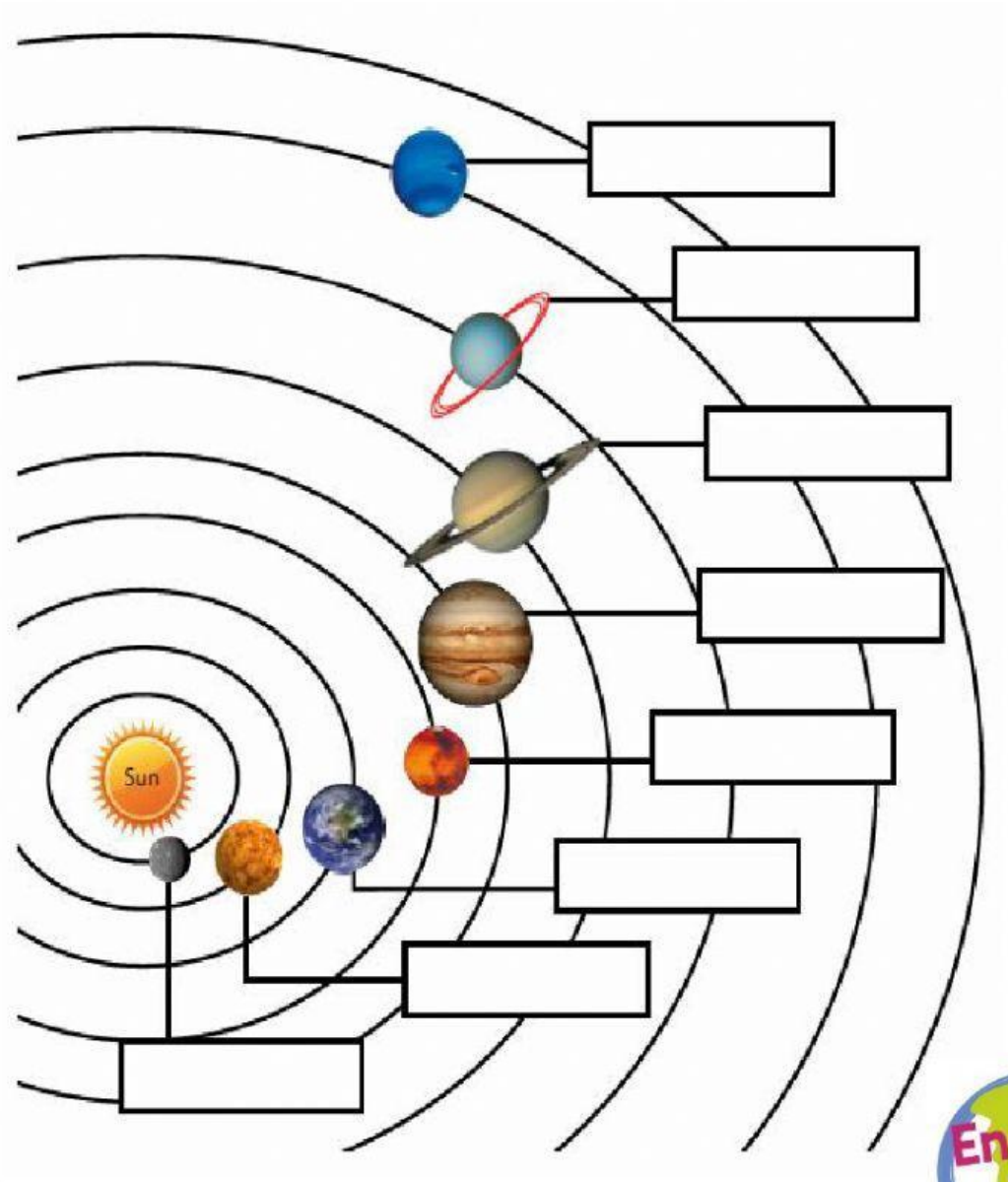
- What does the solar system consist of?
- How many planets are there in the solar system?
- How many planets were there before 2006?
- Which planet is closest to the sun?
- Which planet is furthest from the sun?
- What's the biggest star in the solar system?
- What are the rocky planets made of?
- Which planet is a dwarf planet?
- Which planet has many moons?
- Where can we find asteroids? In the Belt.
- What are comets made of?

Remember: An easy sentence to remember the order of the planets:

My **V**ery **E**nergetic **M**other **J**ust **S**at **U**nder **N**eptune

- Our Galaxy is called
- is known for its beautiful rings surrounding it.
- How long is a year in Mercury?
- is known as the red planet.
- What's the largest planet?
- Which planet is the hottest?
- Which planet is called the Ice Giant?
- Which planet has the shortest day?
- Which planet is very cold?
- How many dwarf planets are there in the solar system?

Identity the planets and write their names



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