

## Why is Pluto not a planet?

**Pluto** was the 9<sup>th</sup> planet from the sun. It was also **the smallest** planet.

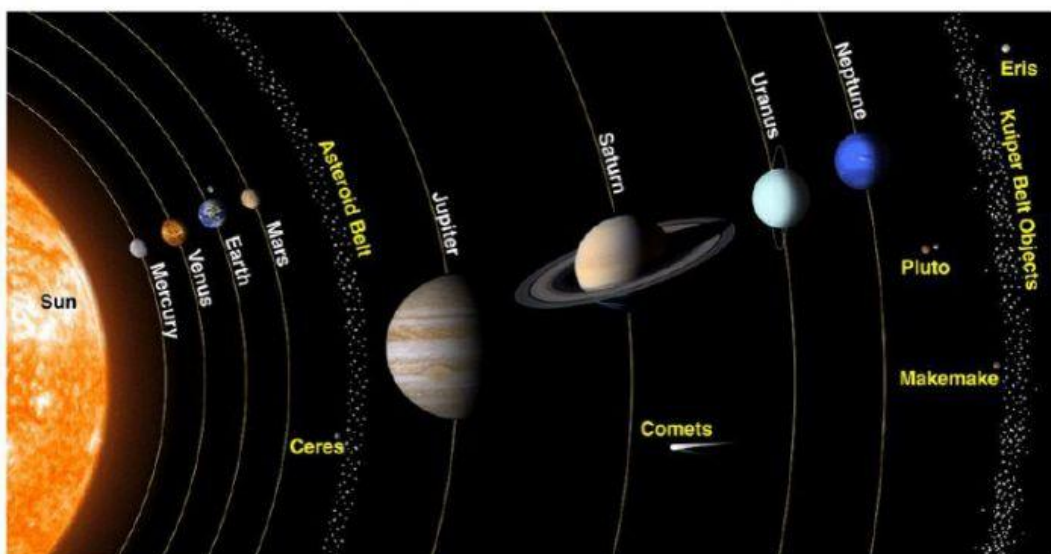
But not anymore. Poor Pluto. How did it get "kicked out" of our family of planets? And who are its "real" family members?

In 2006, Pluto was categorized as a dwarf planet with three other objects in the solar system that are about the same small size as Pluto: Ceres, Makemake and Eris. These objects are much **smaller than** the "other" planets.

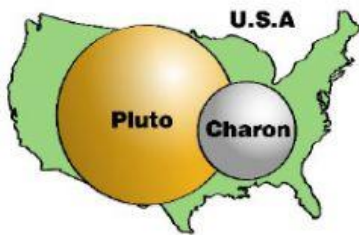


*The picture shows the sizes of dwarf planets Pluto, Ceres, Eris, and Makemake compared to Earth and Earth's moon, here called "Luna."*

Ceres orbits in the asteroid belt between Mars and Jupiter. Makemake, like Pluto, is part of the Kuiper Belt, which is a region of trillions of icy objects orbiting **farther than** Neptune. Eris' orbit is the **farthest** in the Solar System.



## Fun facts about Pluto:



- Pluto is **smaller than** the **United States**. Charon, its moon, is about half the size of Pluto. Charon is the **largest** moon in the solar system compared to the body it orbits.

- The temperature on Pluto's surface is about 400 degrees below zero Fahrenheit! It gets even **colder** as it moves farther from the sun.
- From Pluto, the sun looks like just a bright dot in the sky, the **brightest** star visible. The light from the sun is as bright on Pluto as the light from the full Moon is on Earth.

Source: <https://spaceplace.nasa.gov/ice-dwarf/en/>

## Choose the correct answers:

Pluto was considered the \_\_\_\_\_ planet until 2006.

In 2006, Pluto was categorized as a \_\_\_\_\_ .

Pluto, Ceres, Makemake and Eris are much \_\_\_\_\_ than the "other" planets.

Kuiper Belt is a region of trillions of icy objects and it's \_\_\_\_\_ than Neptune.

Eris' orbit is the \_\_\_\_\_ in the Solar System.

The Sun is the \_\_\_\_\_ star visible from Pluto.

Pluto is \_\_\_\_\_ than the United States.

