

Why is Pluto not a planet?

Pluto was the 9th planet from the sun. It was also **the smallest** planet.

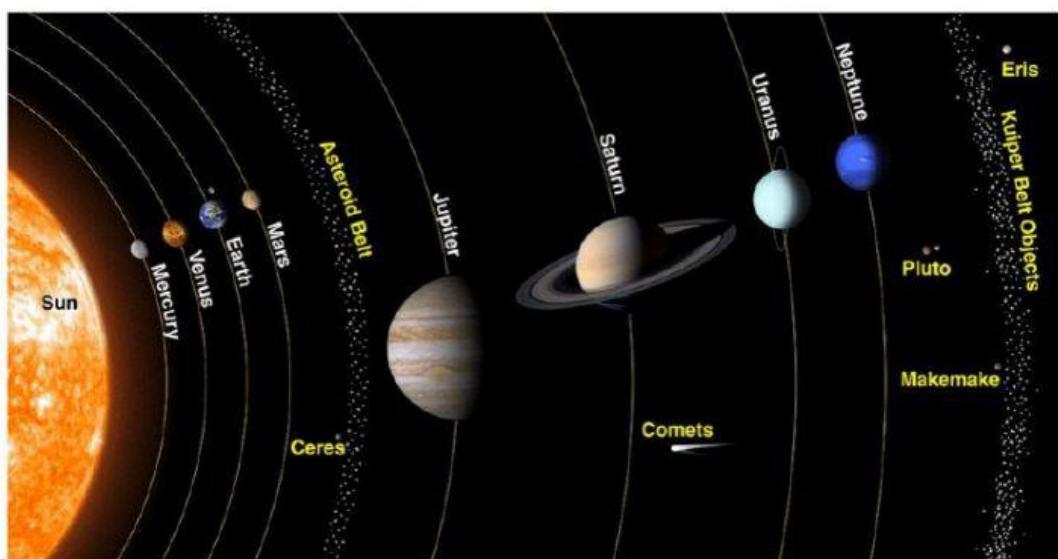
But not anymore. Poor Pluto. How did it get "kicked out" of our family of planets? And who are its "real" family members?

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.

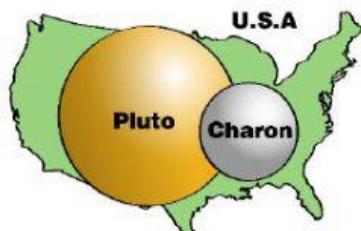


The picture shows the sizes of dwarf planets Pluto, Ceres, Eris, and Makemake compared to Earth and Earth's moon, here called "Luna."

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.

