



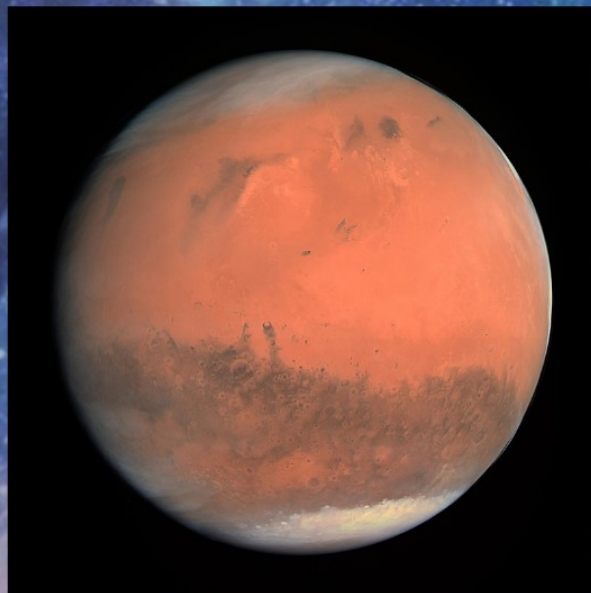
## Mars Facts

The red planet is dusty, cold world with a thin atmosphere and is home to four NASA robots. Mars is the fourth planet from the Sun and the second-smallest planet with a thin atmosphere, having the surface features reminiscent both of the impact craters of the Moon, and the valleys, deserts and polar ice caps of Earth. It is the most widely searched planet for life.

### Key Facts & Summary

- Due to its brightness and closeness to Earth, Mars has been documented for at least 4,000 years thus it is impossible to credit someone with its discovery. However, the first person to observe Mars with a telescope was Galileo Galilei in 1610.
- It is named after the Roman god of war due to its red appearance. In different cultures, Mars represents masculinity, youth and its symbol is used as the symbol for the male gender.
- Due to the effects of the iron oxide prevalent on Mars's surface, it has a reddish appearance distinctive among the astronomical bodies visible to the naked eye.
- It is a terrestrial planet with a thin atmosphere, having surface features reminiscent of both the impact craters of Earth's Moon, and the valleys, deserts and polar ice caps of Earth.
- Mars is 227.9 million km/141.6 million mi/1.5 AU away from the Sun. It takes sunlight about 13 minutes to reach Mars.
- Mars has a radius of 3,389 km or 2,105 mi being twice as small as Earth.
- The diameter of Mars is 6,779 km or 4,212 mi, slightly more than half the size of Earth.
- Mars's mass is  $6.42 \times 10^{23}$  kilograms, about 10 times less than Earth.
- The gravity on Mars is about 38% of Earth's gravity.
- One rotation/day on Mars is completed within 24.6 hours while a whole trip around the Sun or year, is completed within 687 days.
- Mars's axis of rotation is tilted 25.2 degrees similar to Earth which has an axial tilt of 23.4 degrees.
- On average, the temperature on Mars is about -60 degrees Celsius. In winter, near the poles temperatures can get down to -125 degrees C.
- Winds on Mars are strong enough to create dust storms, covering most of the planet while taking months for all the dust to settle.
- Its atmosphere is mostly composed of carbon dioxide, nitrogen and argon gases.
- Mars has the tallest volcano/mountain in the entire Solar System, named Olympus Mons at a height of 13 miles / 21 kilometers and also the biggest canyon Valles Marineris.
- Mars has two moons, Phobos and Deimos.

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