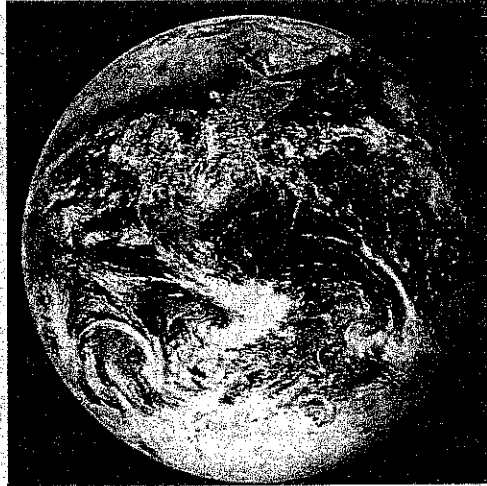


Earth systems

Unit 3 Planet Earth



Third rock from the Sun

The planets of our solar system formed about 4.6 billion years ago. Earth is the third closest planet to the Sun – it's about 150 million km away. It takes a year (365 days) for the Earth to go around the Sun. The Earth spins on its own axis. It takes 24 hours (1 day) for the Earth to rotate once on its axis.

The Earth measures 12 800 km wide at the equator. It has a crust of solid rock and a core of liquid rock. About 70% of the surface is covered in water – which is why the Earth looks blue from space. The temperature ranges from +55 °C to -80 °C (average 20 °C).

Activity – Earth numbers

Fill in the data on planet Earth.

Age:	
Number of moons:	
Distance from Sun:	
Surface % water:	
Time to orbit Sun:	
Time to rotate:	
Diameter at equator:	

Perfect for life

Earth is different from the other planets in the solar system. It is the only planet that has exactly the right conditions for life. Millions of species of plants and animals thrive on Earth. There's plenty of liquid water to drink, and breathable oxygen in the atmosphere.

Earth is a comfortable distance from the Sun. The temperature extremes are not too hot or too cold.

- Any closer to the Sun and we would cook. Temperatures on Venus reach 460 °C.
- If Earth was further from the Sun, it would be more like Mars, where all the water is frozen.