



Dark, cold, and whipped by supersonic winds, ice giant Neptune is the eighth and most distant planet in our solar system. More than 30 times as far from the Sun as Earth, Neptune is the only planet in our solar system not visible to the naked eye.



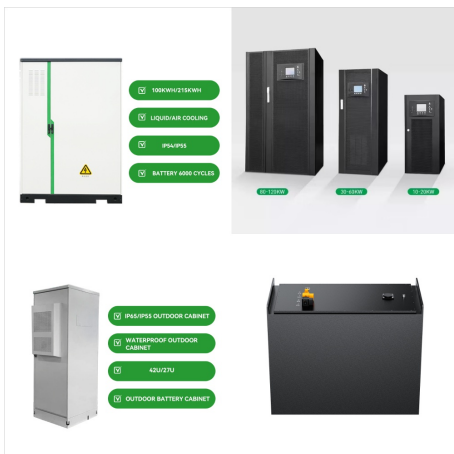
Dwarf planet Pluto is a member of a group of objects that orbit in a disc-like zone beyond the orbit of Neptune called the Kuiper Belt. This distant realm is populated with thousands of miniature icy worlds, which formed early in the history of our solar system about 4.5 billion years ago.



The Sun is the largest object in our solar system. Its diameter is about 865,000 miles (1.4 million kilometers). Its gravity holds the solar system together, keeping everything from the biggest planets to the smallest bits of debris in orbit around it.



Our solar system consists of our star, the Sun, and everything bound to it by gravity ??? the planets Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune; dwarf planets such as Pluto; dozens of moons; and millions of asteroids, comets, and meteoroids.



The Moon makes a complete orbit around Earth in 27 Earth days and rotates or spins at that same rate, or in that same amount of time. Because Earth is moving as well ??? rotating on its axis as it orbits the Sun ??? from our perspective, the Moon appears to orbit us every 29 days.



Key Points. . Saturn's moon Enceladus is a small, icy body, but Cassini revealed this ocean world to be one of the solar system's most scientifically interesting destinations. . Cassini discovered that geyser-like jets spew water vapor and ice particles from an underground ocean beneath the icy crust of Enceladus. .



When the solar system settled into its current layout about 4.5 billion years ago, Earth formed when gravity pulled swirling gas and dust in to become the third planet from the Sun. Like its fellow terrestrial planets, Earth has a central core, a rocky mantle, and a solid crust.



The first known interstellar object to visit our solar system, 1I/2017 U1 "Oumuamua, was discovered Oct. 19, 2017 by the University of Hawaii's Pan-STARRS1 telescope, funded by NASA's Near-Earth Object Observations (NEOO) Program, which finds and tracks asteroids and comets in Earth's neighborhood. While originally classified as a comet