

# Solar System Exploration

## Planets

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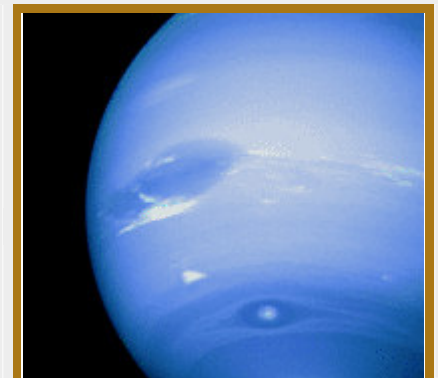
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## Neptune:

The eighth planet from the Sun, Neptune was the first planet located through mathematical predictions rather than through regular observations of the sky. (Galileo had recorded it as a fixed star during observations with his small telescope in 1612 and 1613.) When Uranus didn't travel exactly as astronomers expected it to, a French mathematician, Urbain Joseph Le Verrier, proposed the position and mass of another as yet unknown planet that could cause the observed changes to Uranus' orbit. After being ignored by French astronomers, Le Verrier sent his predictions to Johann Gottfried Galle at the Berlin Observatory, who found Neptune on his first night of searching in 1846. Seventeen days later, its largest moon, Triton, was also discovered.



*Voyager 2 captured this convergence of atmospheric features on Neptune.*

Nearly 4.5 billion kilometers (2.8 billion miles) from the Sun, Neptune orbits the Sun once every 165 years. It is invisible to the naked eye because of its extreme distance from Earth. Interestingly, due to Pluto's unusual elliptical orbit, Neptune is actually the farthest planet from the Sun for a 20-year period out of every 248 Earth years.

[Read More About Neptune](#)

### Just the Facts

**Metric** | [English](#) | [Scientific Notation](#)

**Distance from the Sun:** 4,498,252,900 km

**Equatorial Radius:** 24,764 km

**Volume:** 62,526,000,000,000 km<sup>3</sup>

### Resources

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- [Missions to Neptune](#)
- [NASA Planetary Photojournal: Neptune](#)
- [The Nine Planets](#)
- [Compare Neptune to other Planets/Moons](#)

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**Mass:** 102,440,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 kg

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