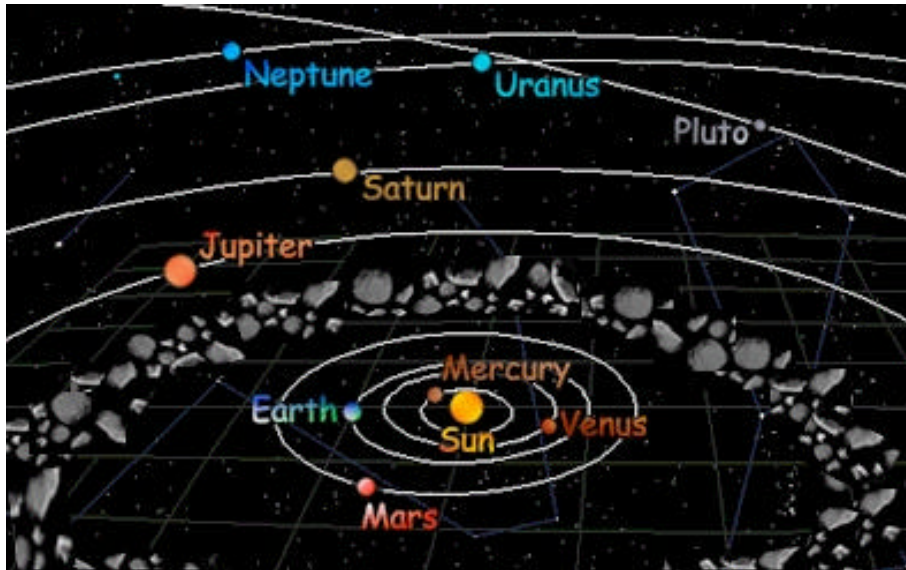


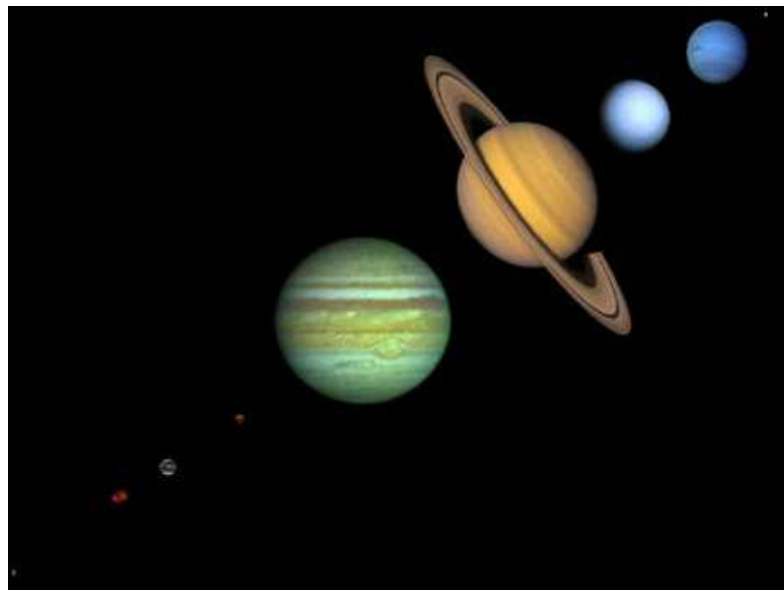
The Solar System



In our solar system, nine planets circle around our Sun. The Sun sits in the middle while the planets travel in circular paths (called orbits) around

it. These nine planets travel in the same direction (counter-clockwise looking down from the Sun's north pole). The picture on the left shows the different paths and positions of each planet.

The picture on the right shows the relative sizes of the nine planets in the Solar System.



The solar system is made up of two parts:

The inner solar system contains Mercury, Venus, Earth and Mars. These four planets are closest to the Sun.

The outer solar system contains Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune and Pluto.

The inner planets are separated from the outer planets by the Asteroid Belt.