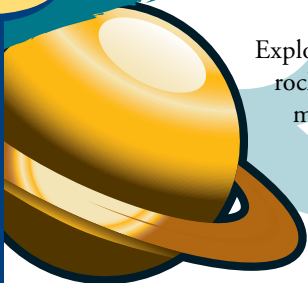




## How can we find out if aliens exist?



Exploring space with astronauts, rockets, and robots is one of the main ways to investigate whether life exists on other planets. So far, Earth is the only place in the entire universe where we know there is life. Scientists have been studying our solar system and there are no giant cities of Martians or little green men near the planet Earth. There may

be intelligent life out there, but if it exists, it would probably be in a distant solar system.

Yet there might be tiny life forms in our own solar system that we haven't found yet, like bacteria or little bugs. Astronauts want to go looking for the possibility of these tiny aliens on other planets. To get a sense of how far they would have to travel, make a model of our solar system using the directions below.

### Did-you-know?

It would take a car traveling 40 miles per hour 180 years to reach the sun.

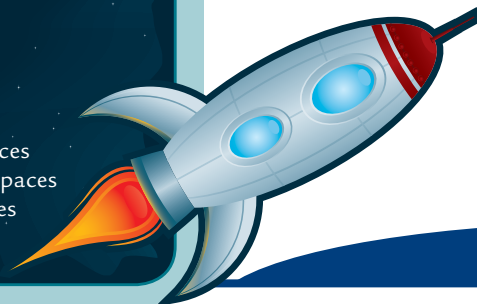
Learn about opportunities to participate in upcoming science activities and events at MSU by visiting [Montana.edu/outreach](http://Montana.edu/outreach)

### Make a Model of the Solar System

Bring an adult and go outside. Make a marker for the Sun and each planet. You can use rocks or sticks, or if there is snow, squirt food coloring in the snow. Set down a marker for the Sun then walk the number of paces to the next planet and mark where it should be. Keep going until you reach Pluto. Imagine how long it would take to send a space mission to another solar system.

- ..... Sun to Mercury **6** paces
- ..... Mercury to Venus **5** paces
- ..... Venus to Earth **4** paces
- ..... Earth to Mars **8** paces
- ..... Mars to Jupiter **55** paces
- ..... Jupiter to Saturn **65** paces
- ..... Saturn to Uranus **144** paces
- ..... Uranus to Neptune **163** paces
- ..... Neptune to Pluto **142** paces

Information courtesy of [www.NASA.gov](http://www.NASA.gov)



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