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Jupiter: The Giant Planet

Jupiter is the fifth planet from the Sun and the largest planet in our solar system! It's so big that more than 1,300 Earths could fit inside it. Jupiter is called a gas giant because it's mostly made of gases, like hydrogen and helium, and doesn't have a solid surface like Earth. Let's learn more about this amazing planet!

Jupiter is famous for its stripes and swirls. These colorful bands are made of clouds and gases that are moving very fast. Jupiter's atmosphere has powerful winds and huge storms that can last for hundreds of years!

One of Jupiter's most famous features is the *Great Red Spot*. This is a giant storm that's bigger than Earth! Scientists think the *Great Red Spot* has been raging for over 300 years. It looks like a big red circle on Jupiter's surface, and it spins around like a huge hurricane.



The Great Red Spot

Jupiter has 95 known moons (2023), which is more than any other planet in our solar system. The four largest moons are called the *Galilean moons* because they were discovered by the astronomer *Galileo*. These moons are:

Io - This moon has many active volcanoes, making it one of the most volcanic places in the solar system.

Europa - Europa has a smooth, icy surface, and scientists believe there might be an ocean of liquid water beneath the ice!

Ganymede - Ganymede is the largest moon in the solar system, even bigger than the planet Mercury.

Callisto - Callisto has a very old, cratered surface and is covered in ice.

Jupiter spins very fast! A day on Jupiter is only about 10 hours long, which means it spins much faster than Earth. But Jupiter takes almost 12 Earth years to complete one orbit around the Sun. This means a year on Jupiter is much longer than a year on Earth.

Did you know that Jupiter has rings? They're very faint and hard to see, unlike Saturn's bright rings. Jupiter's rings are made of tiny particles of dust.



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Because Jupiter is so far away and made of gas, scientists can't land on it. But they send space probes to learn more about it! The Juno spacecraft is currently studying Jupiter, taking pictures, and sending back information to help scientists understand more about this giant planet.

Fun Facts About Jupiter

Jupiter is the biggest planet in our solar system.

It has the strongest magnetic field of any planet, which helps protect it from space radiation.

Jupiter's huge size and many moons make it like a mini solar system!

Jupiter is a giant, colorful, and fascinating planet, full of storms, moons, and mysteries. Scientists are excited to keep learning more about this gas giant to understand what makes it so special in our solar system!

1. Describe Jupiter's most famous feature. _____

2. Compare a day and year on Jupiter with a day and year on Earth. _____

