

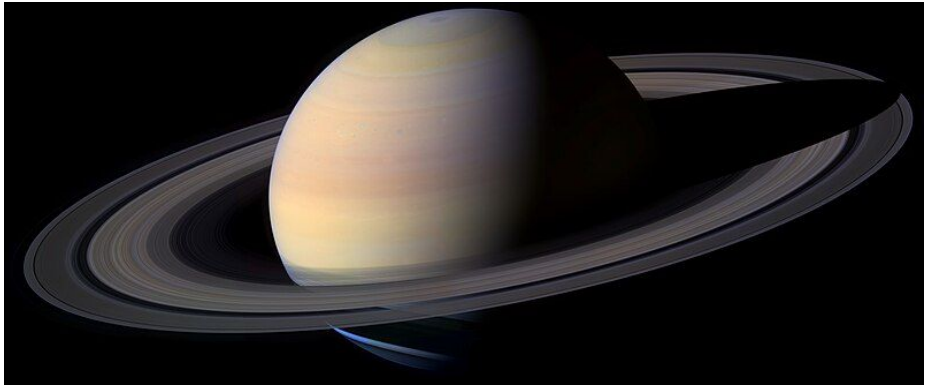


Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Saturn: The Planet with Rings

Saturn is the sixth planet from the Sun and is known for its beautiful, shining rings! Saturn is a gas giant, like Jupiter, and is mostly made up of gases like hydrogen and helium. This makes Saturn very light for its size—it could even float in water if you could find a big enough ocean!

One of the most amazing things about Saturn is its rings. These rings are made of pieces of ice, rock, and dust that orbit around Saturn. The rings look solid from far away, but if you looked up close, you'd see they're made of millions of tiny particles. Some pieces are as small as grains of sand, while others are as large as houses!



Saturn and its rings

Saturn's rings are divided into different parts, and they're named by letters, like the A ring, B ring, and C ring. Scientists believe the rings might have come from pieces of comets, asteroids, or moons that broke apart.

Saturn spins very quickly! A day on Saturn is only about 10 and a half hours long. That's less than half of a day on Earth. However, because Saturn is farther from the Sun, it takes about 29 and a half Earth years to complete one orbit around the Sun. This means that one year on Saturn is very, very long!

Saturn has over 140 moons (2024), which is more than any other planet! Some of its most famous moons include:

**Titan** - Titan is Saturn's largest moon and has a thick atmosphere. It's so large that it's even bigger than the planet Mercury! Scientists think Titan may have lakes and rivers made of liquid methane.

**Enceladus** - This moon is icy and bright, and it has geysers that shoot water vapor and ice into space. Scientists are very curious about Enceladus because it may have a warm, salty ocean beneath its icy surface.



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Since Saturn is very far away, scientists use special spacecraft to learn more about it. The Cassini spacecraft studied Saturn for over 13 years, taking pictures and gathering information. Cassini showed us what the rings and moons look like and sent back exciting discoveries about Saturn's atmosphere.

Saturn has very fast winds, which can blow at over 1,000 miles per hour! Its atmosphere is full of gases like hydrogen and helium, with beautiful bands of yellow, brown, and white clouds. Like Jupiter, Saturn has storms, but they're not as large as Jupiter's Great Red Spot.

### Fun Facts About Saturn

Saturn is the second-largest planet in our solar system.

It's the only planet that has rings we can easily see with a telescope.

If you could stand on Saturn (though you can't because it's made of gas), you would weigh more because of its strong gravity!

1. What creates Saturn's rings? \_\_\_\_\_

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2. Why are scientists interested in Enceladus? \_\_\_\_\_

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3. Why does Saturn take longer than Earth to orbit the Sun? \_\_\_\_\_

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