**Mars**[Astronomical symbol of Mars](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Mars_symbol.svg)

**Date of discovery:** Prehistoric

**Distance from the Sun:** 227,936,640 km.

**Period of Revolution around the Sun:** 686.98Earth days

**Period of Rotation:** 24.6 Earth hours = 1.026 Earth day

**Volume:** 1.6318x1011 km.3 (0.151 Earths)

**Mass:** 6.42x1023 kg. (0.107 Earths)

**Density:** 3.934g/cm.3

**Diameter:** 6,794 km.

**Mean Surface Temperature:** -227K (13.8 oC or 56.93 oF)

**Satellite:** 2

* The fourth planet from the Sun and the seventh largest.
* Greek: Ares, the god of war.
* Sometimes referred to as the **Red Planet**. The surface of Mars is much colder than Earth.
* The average surface temperature on Mars is about 218K (-55oC or -67oF).
* Has the most highly varied and interesting terrain of any of the terrestrial planets (**Olympus Mons, Tharsis, Valles Marines, Hellas Planitia**).
* Much of the Martian surface is very old and cratered.
* Its southern hemisphere consists of plains which are much younger, lower in elevation and have a much more complex history.
* Mars’ relatively low density compared to the other terrestrial planets indicates that its core probably contains a relatively large fraction of sulfur in addition to iron.
* Mars appears to lack active plate tectonics at present; there is no evidence of recent horizontal motion of the surface such as the folded mountains so common on Earth.
* There is no evidence of current volcanic eruption.
* There is very clear evidence of erosion in many places on Mars including large floods and small river systems.
* Mars has a very thin atmosphere composed mostly of the tiny amount of remaining carbon dioxide (95.3%), plus nitrogen (2.7%), argon (1.6%) and traces of oxygen (0.15%) and water (1.03%).
* The average pressure on the surface of Mars is only about 7 milllibars.