

# A Walk Through Our Solar System

Our solar system contains a G-type yellow/white dwarf star, eight planets and their moons, several groups of asteroids and billions of meteoroids. It is surrounded by a shell of icy objects called the Oort Cloud.

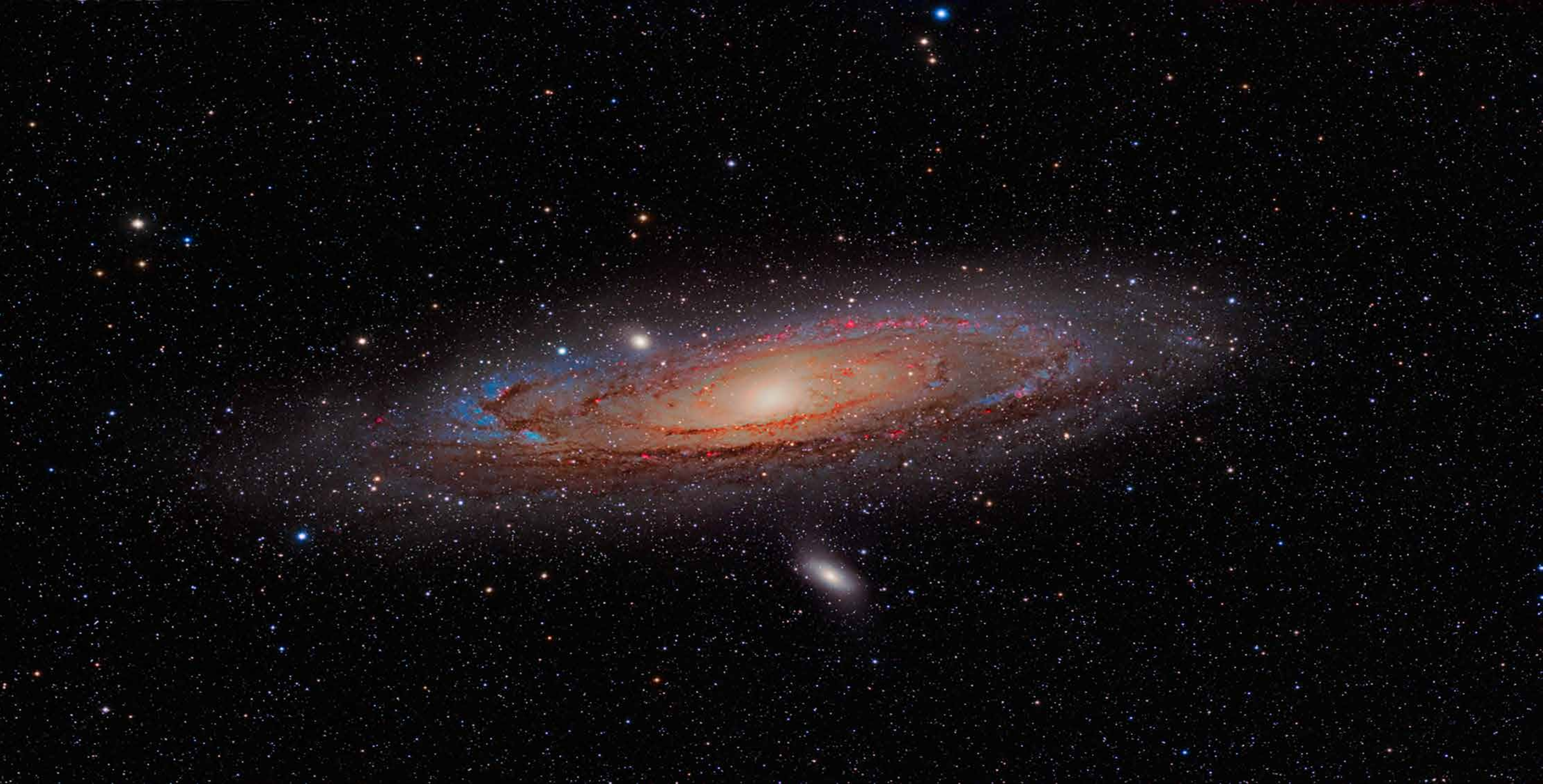
Together with about 200 billion other star systems, we are part of the barred spiral galaxy called the Milky Way. Located approximately two thirds of the way toward the edge of the galaxy, it takes our solar system 225 million years to orbit the galaxy center.

The Milky Way is the second largest galaxy in our Local Group, a collection of galaxies about 10 million light years across. A light year is the distance light travels in one year - about 6 trillion miles. Another member of the Local Group, the Andromeda galaxy, is the farthest object we can see in the night sky with the naked eye at about 2.2 million light years away.

This trail is set up so that the distance between exhibit panels is proportional to the planet or object’s place in the Solar System. This quarter mile (0.4 km) trail is 10 billion times smaller than the solar system. Each step you take scales to about 2 million miles (3.2 million km), enough to circle the Earth 76 times.

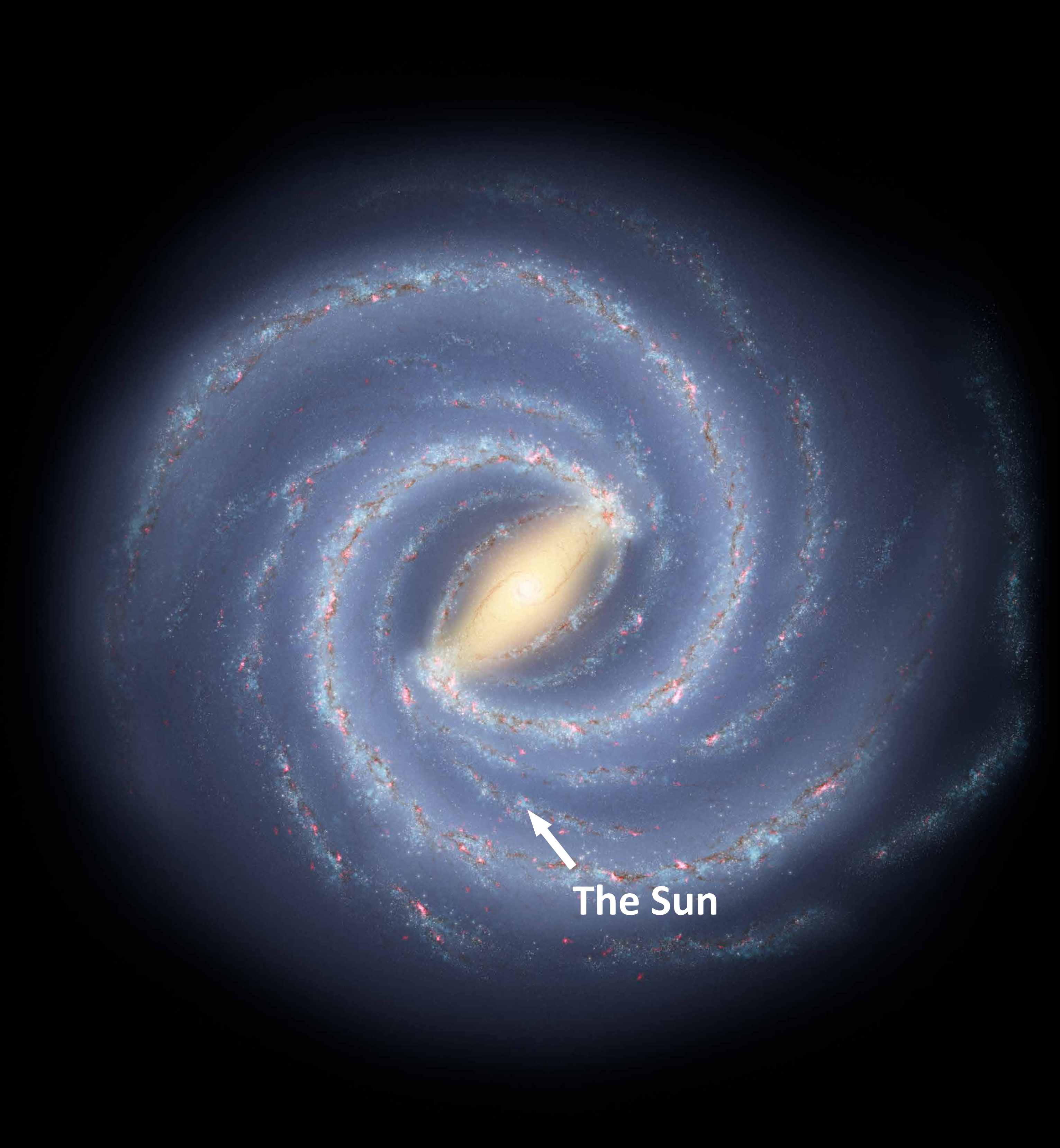
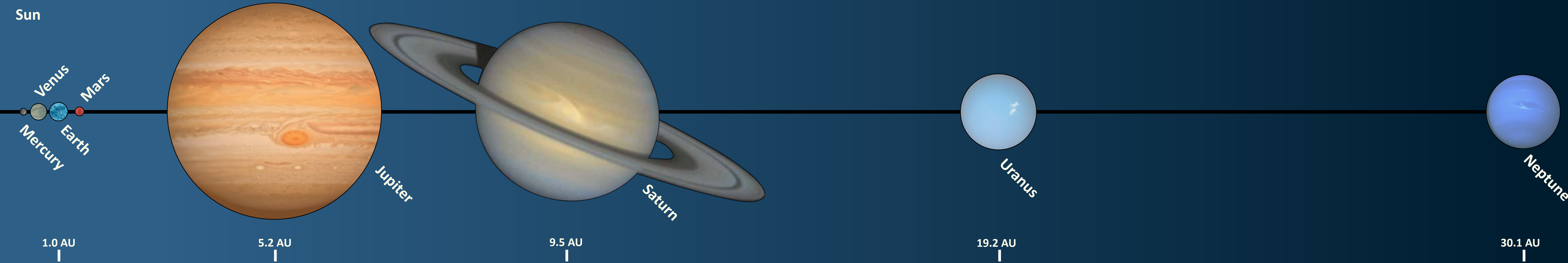
Walk through this scale model and visualize the magnitude of our Solar System.

The Andromeda Galaxy



You will see this visual model along the trail. Keep in mind that while the planet sizes are to scale, the distances in this drawing are not.

AU - Astronomical Unit is the distance from the Earth to the Sun - about 93 million miles (150 million km.)



This artist’s rendering shows a view of our own Milky Way Galaxy and its central bar as it might appear if viewed from above. An arrow indicates the location of our Sun.

To learn more about the New Jersey Astronomical Association, scan this QR code.

