



Planet

Mercury



Mercury, the planet closest to the Sun, is the second smallest planet in the solar system, Pluto being the smallest. If **Earth** were the size of a baseball **Mercury** would be a golf ball.



Because **Mercury** is so close to the Sun, temperatures, during the day, can reach a scorching 425°C... hum! You could bake a cake at this temperature! And since this planet has hardly any atmosphere to keep in the heat, temperatures at night can drop to a frigid 183°C below zero! Because of its very thin atmosphere, humans would not be able to live on **Mercury**.



Another Mercurian peculiarity, is the planet's strange orbit and rotation path; **Mercury** rotates three times in two of its years. What this means is that the sun rises, gradually getting bigger as it moves toward the zenith (highest point in the sky), then the sun stops, briefly reverse its course, stops again, and resumes its path towards the horizon while appearing to get smaller.





Mercury circles the Sun every 88 days, speeding through space at nearly 50 kilometres per second; a car travels 50 kilometres per hour in most city streets, so you can imagine how fast **Mercury** is rotating!

How heavy would you be on Mercury?

If you weigh 34 kg (75 lb) on **Earth**, you would weigh 9 kg (21 lb) on **Mercury**. To calculate your weight, all you have to do is multiply your weight (kilos or pounds) by 0.284.



How old would you be on Mercury?

Can you guess how old you would be on **Mercury** if you are 10 years old here on **Earth**? **You would be 48 years old!**