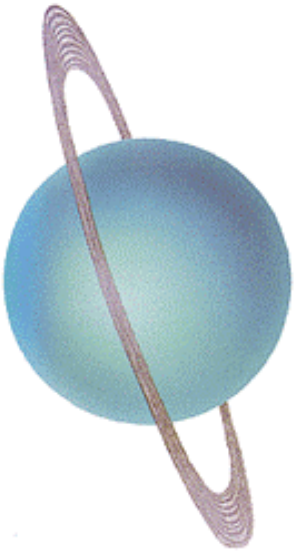
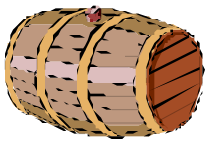
Planet Uranus



This seventh planet from the Sun is so distant that it takes 84 years to complete an orbit around the Sun. The summers are illuminated by continuous sunlight, while the winters are wrapped in everlasting darkness; each season lasts a total of 42 years.

Uranus gets its blue-green colour from the methane gas lying over the cloud layers (methane absorbs red light and reflects blue light).



Uranus may be the strangest planet in our neighborhood because it rotates on its side, in other words, the planet moves around the Sun like a barrel rolling along on its side. This odd configuration maybe the result of an encounter with a comet that knocked the planet sideways millions of years ago. Because of this odd fact, Uranus' polar regions receive more energy from the Sun than its equatorial regions. If Earth were like this it would mean that the North and South poles receive more light from the sun than

the equator. Nevertheless, Uranus is hotter at its equator that at its poles. The temperature differences between the summer and winter sides of the planet are not that great. Near the cloud tops, the temperature is -197°C.

The Uranian rings were the first after Saturn's to be discovered. This was of considerable importance since we now know that rings are a common feature of planets, not a peculiarity of Saturn.

How heavy would you be on Uranus?

If you weigh 34 kg (75 lb) on Earth, you would weigh 27 kg (59 lb) on Uranus. To calculate your weight, all you have to do is multiply your weight (pounds or kilos) by 0.795.

How old would you be on Uranus?

If you were born on January 1, 1990 would be 5062 days or barely one year old on Uranus.