

Commonly Asked Moon Questions with Answers

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The Moon is an astronomical body that orbits planet Earth and is Earth's only permanent natural satellite. It is the fifth-largest natural satellite in the Solar System.

How big is the Moon?

The Moon is about a quarter of the size of Earth and measure 3476 kilometers wide. The moon is Earth's only natural satellite and is held in orbit by the pull of Earth's gravity. It takes the moon about four weeks to complete one orbit of the Earth. Our word 'month', which means a period of about four weeks, comes from the word 'Moon'.



Why is the moon covered in craters?

The Moon's atmosphere is very thin and gives no protection against rocks from space that smash into the surface. These impacts create large dips called craters. Some craters are huge and were made by rocks as big as mountains. Most of the Moon's surface is covered in dust. There are also parts called 'seas' that are not water but dried lava that poured from volcanoes long ago.

What are the Moon's phases?

The different shapes that Moon appears to take throughout the month are called the phases of the moon. When we see the whole Moon, we call it a Full Moon. When we cannot see the Moon at all, we call it a New Moon. When we can see only a thin sliver of the Moon, we call it a crescent Moon. The Moon doesn't change shape we just see different parts of it when it is in different stages of its orbit around Earth.

Did you know? The full moon occurs when the moon is on the opposite side of Earth from the sun, so that its face is fully illuminated by the sun's light.

Who was the first person on the moon?

American astronaut Neil Armstrong was the first person on the Moon. As he left his landing craft on 21 July 1969, he said, “That's one small step for man but one giant leap for mankind”. He and fellow astronaut Edwin 'Buzz' Aldrin collected soil samples and took photos. The Moon's weak gravity meant it was easy to move around, but they had to wear spacesuits because there is no air there and the Sun light is very harsh.

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