**Earth Facts**

Earth is the third planet from the Sun and the fifth largest planet in the Solar system with the highest density. It is currently the only known location where life is present.

**Key Facts & Summary**

* The realization that Earth is a planet, and a planet among many others was established “fairly” recently, in the 17th century – this realization came through by the combined forces of ancient philosophers, mathematicians, and astronomers.
* Plato correctly deduced that the Earth is spherical, but this idea would take root and be proven much later.
* Earth is estimated to have formed around 4.5 billion years ago – almost one-third of the age of the universe – through accretion from the solar nebula.
* It is the fifth-largest planet in the Solar System, being the largest of the terrestrial planets.
* Around 71% of the surface is covered by water and 29% by land.
* The water is 3% fresh and 97% salted. Of that 3% freshwater, over 2% is frozen in ice sheets and glaciers meaning that less than 1% is freshwater found in lakes, rivers, and the underground.
* In regards to land, the continent of Asia covers about 30% of the land, having around 60% of the world’s population.
* The atmosphere of Earth is composed of roughly 78% nitrogen, 21% oxygen, 0.97% argon and carbon dioxide and about 0.04% other gases and water vapor. The mixture of gases is commonly known as air.
* The thickness of the atmosphere is about 60 miles / 96 kilometers.
* The atmosphere of Earth is divided into 6 layers: troposphere, stratosphere, mesosphere, thermosphere, exosphere, and ionosphere.
* The highest temperatures on Earth can reach up to more than 110 degrees Fahrenheit / 48 degrees Celsius, and the lowest around -126 degrees Fahrenheit / -88 degrees Celsius, maybe even lower.

**Did you know?**

* The average salinity of Earth’s oceans is about 35 grams of salt per kilogram of seawater – 3.5% salt.
* The continents of Earth move at the same rate as human fingernails grow.
* If space were a vacuum, Earth’s magnetic field would extend to infinity.
* Earth has a lot fewer craters than the surface of most other planets.This is because the planet has lots of volcanoes and earthquakes which cause the highs and lows of the surface to sink or be worn down over time.
* Around 1,300,000 Earth’s could fit into the Sun.
* The Sun will eventually turn into a red giant and engulf Earth.
* The first picture taken of Earth from outer space was conducted by the Apollo 17 team. The original picture portrayed Earth upside-down. The image was later edited.
* If 7 billion people were to jump at the same time, a magnitude 4 to 8 earthquake would ensue.
* Light pollution prevents one third of Earth’s population from seeing the Milky Way galaxy in the night sky.
* The Moon has been visited by over 100 space probes.
* The rocks brought back by the Apollo 11 team from the moon are still studied to this day.