

Louisiana PASS



Photograph of planet Earth courtesy of NASA.

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[EO News: NASA Olympics Blue Marble Release; February 6, 2002](#)

For more information about Earth as a planet, click on this link:

[Stardate Productions \(University of Texas McDonald Observatory\)](#)

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Earth

Even though you live on Earth, how much do you actually know about it as a planet? Did you know that the seasons exist because the earth spins on a tilted axis? Or that Earth is the fifth largest planet in our solar system? Like many of the other planets, Earth has a thin rock crust. Well, thin is a relative term—it averages four miles thick! The crust is separated into what we call “plates” that move around very slowly. This movement is what causes earthquakes and volcanoes.

The most unique thing about Earth is, as you may have guessed, life. No other planet in the solar system is capable of sustaining it. The atmosphere surrounding Earth keeps the surface relatively warm, allowing water to exist in liquid form, and there certainly is a lot of it! Nearly three-quarters of Earth’s surface is covered with water, even on a sunny day!

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