

FUN FACTS ABOUT STARS



THE SUN IS THE CLOSEST STAR TO EARTH, BUT IT IS STILL LOCATED 4.24 LIGHT YEARS AWAY.

IT WOULD TAKE 70,000 YEARS IN OUR FASTEST SPACECRAFT TO REACH THE SUN.

THE MILKY WAY GALAXY CONTAINS AN ESTIMATED 100 –400 BILLION STARS, BUT THESE NUMBERS ARE CONSTANTLY CHANGING AS NEW STARS ARE BORN AND OLD STARS DIE OUT.

STARS APPEAR TO TWINKLE ("SCINTILLATE"), ESPECIALLY WHEN THEY ARE NEAR THE HORIZON. ONE STAR, SIRIUS, TWINKLES, SPARKLES AND FLASHES SO MUCH SOME TIMES THAT PEOPLE ACTUALLY REPORT IT AS A UFO.

ON A GOOD NIGHT, YOU CAN SEE ABOUT 19,000,000,000,000,000 MILES, EASILY. THAT'S 19 QUADRILLION MILES, THE APPROXIMATE DISTANCE TO THE BRIGHT STAR DENEUB IN CYGNUS.

EVERY STAR YOU SEE IN THE NIGHT SKY IS BIGGER AND BRIGHTER THAN OUR SUN. OF THE 5,000 OR SO STARS BRIGHTER THAN MAGNITUDE 6, ONLY A HANDFUL OF VERY FAINT STARS ARE APPROXIMATELY THE SAME SIZE AND BRIGHTNESS OF OUR SUN AND THE REST ARE ALL BIGGER AND BRIGHTER.

THE AVERAGE STAR IS BETWEEN 1 AND 10 BILLION YEARS OLD, ALTHOUGH SOME STARS ARE OLDER THAN THIS. LARGE STARS LIVE SHORTER LIVES COMPARED TO SMALLER STARS, BECAUSE LARGE STARS BURN THROUGH THEIR FUEL MUCH FASTER. GIANT STARS EXPLODE INTO A BRIGHT SUPERNOVA WHEN THEY DIE.

THERE ARE NO PICTURES SHOWING THE ENTIRE SCOPE OF THE MILKY WAY. SINCE EARTH SITS INSIDE OF THE MILKY WAY WE WOULD HAVE TO LEAVE OUR OWN SOLAR SYSTEM IN ORDER TO CAPTURE A PICTURE OF THE ENTIRE THING.

