
Glossary of Terms

Asteroid

Asteroids are a class of small Solar System bodies in orbit around the Sun.

Asteroid Belt

The asteroid belt is the region of the Solar System located roughly between the orbits of the planets Mars and Jupiter. It is occupied by numerous irregularly shaped bodies called asteroids or minor planets.

Comets

A comet is an icy small Solar System body that, when close enough to the Sun, displays a visible coma (a thin, fuzzy, temporary atmosphere) and sometimes also a tail.

Conservation of Energy

The principal of conservation of energy states that energy cannot be created or destroyed but can only be converted from one form to another.

Craters

In the broadest sense, the term impact crater can be applied to any depression, natural or manmade, resulting from the high velocity impact of a projectile with a larger body. In most common usage, the term is used for the approximately circular depression in the surface of a planet, moon or other solid body in the Solar System, formed by a high speed impact of a smaller body with the surface

Density

The density of a body is defined as its mass per unit volume. Its symbol is ρ (rho) and the most common units are kg/m^3 and g/cm^3 .

Elliptical Orbit

An elliptical orbit is the revolving of one object around another in an oval-shaped path called an ellipse. The planets in the solar system orbit the sun in elliptical orbits. Many satellites orbit the Earth in elliptical orbits as does the moon.

Gravitational Forces

The force of attraction between all masses in the universe; especially the attraction of the earth's mass for bodies near its surface

Impactors

An impactor refers to a large meteoroid, asteroid, comet, or other celestial object which causes an impact event.

Kinetic Energy

This is the energy that a body has due to its motion. The kinetic energy of a body of mass m moving with a speed v is given by $E_k = \frac{1}{2} mv^2$

Near Earth Asteroids

A near-Earth object (NEO) is a Solar System object whose orbit brings it into close proximity with the Earth

Orbit

The curved path of a celestial object or spacecraft around a star, planet, or moon, esp. a periodic elliptical revolution

Planet

A body that orbits the sun

Porous

When referring to a rock or other materials porous refers to the material having minute holes through which liquid or air may pass.

Projectile

A projectile is any object projected into space (empty or not) by the exertion of a force.

Solar System

The Solar System is made up of all the planets that orbit our Sun. In addition to planets, the Solar System also consists of moons, comets, asteroids, minor planets, and dust and gas.

Velocity

Velocity is the rate of change of displacement with respect to time.

Volume

Volume is the quantity of three-dimensional space enclosed by some closed boundary, for example, the space that a substance (solid, liquid, gas, or plasma) or shape occupies or contains.