

Distance Scale Model of the Solar System

For this model, start at the Sun. The Sun is the size of a golf ball, and the sizes of the planets are represented by the dots below. As you walk through the solar system, be sure to look back toward the Sun from every planet you visit. You can just begin to imagine how big our solar system is, and how small the planets really are.

Our sun is just one of billions of stars in the Milky Way Galaxy. The nearest star to the Sun is Alpha Centauri, 4.3 light-years (25,800,000,000,000 miles) away. In this model, Alpha Centauri would be another golf ball, 870 miles from the golf ball Sun.

The center of the Milky Way galaxy is 50,000 light-years (300 quadrillion miles) from the Sun. In this model, the center of the Milky Way galaxy would be 5 million miles from the “golf ball” Sun.

Maybe you'd better just walk the Solar System, for now....

