

Star Fun Facts

Sun

- Yellow dwarf (or main sequence) star
- 93 million miles from Earth
- The sun is 109 times wide than the earth and 330,000 times as massive. Over one million Earths could fit inside the sun.
- The Sun will one day (in about 5 billions years) inflate into a red giant, and then turn into a white dwarf.
- The sun takes 225-250 million years to orbit around the center of the Milky Way galaxy once.

Sirius

- Main sequence white star—1 to 2 times the mass of the sun
- 8.7 light years from Earth
- Dog Star—Dog Days of Summer: once thought to contribute to the Sun's heat and the heat of summer.

Pollux

- Orange Giant star, 8.8 times the diameter of the sun
- 34 light years away
- Has a large planet over 2 times the size of Jupiter orbiting it, one of the nearest 760 extra-solar planets discovered (in 2006).

Arcturus

- Orange Giant star
- 37 light years away
- 1933 Chicago World's Fair used it as a symbol since the light seen from the star then had left the star about the time of the previous Chicago World's Fair in 1893.

Rigel

- Blue supergiant star—consuming hydrogen at an enormous rate. Live fast and die young
- Approximately 800 light years away
- Orion Nebula is twice as far from Earth as Rigel

Aldebaran

- Orange giant star
- 65 light years away
- Eye of Taurus the Bull
- Older and redder than the sun

Betelgeuse

- Red Supergiant star
- About 600 light years away
- Will likely explode within a million years
- If placed where the Sun is, it would extend beyond the orbit of Jupiter
- Expected to crash into a wall of interstellar dust in the next few thousand years

Antares

- Red Supergiant star
- About 600 light years away
- Opposite side of sky from Betelgeuse—Orion fought the scorpion, placed on opposite end of the sky so they wouldn't fight again
- "Not Mars"

Bellatrix

- Six times the radius of the sun
- One of the stars used in celestial navigation
- 240 light years away
- Hot blue giant star

Regulus

- Means "little king" in Latin
- At least 70 lya
- Four-star system. Regulus A is about 3.5 times the mass of the sun