



ROYAL
OBSERVATORY
GREENWICH

Mercury

Solar System



Holiday



Solar System Holiday



Mercury

The temperature on Mercury swings from very hot during the daytime to very cold at night time. This is because it does not have an atmosphere to trap the heat on the planet after the sun sets. In the daytime, Mercury can reach temperatures of 430°C and at night time it plunges to -180°C. Having no atmosphere also means that Mercury does not experience weather of any kind. It also doesn't have seasons either — imagine that!

A day on Mercury lasts as long as 59 Earth days. This sounds strange to us because if we could go to this planet, we would get sunlight for roughly a month followed by another month of darkness — a very long day indeed.

A year on Mercury on the other hand is very short — only 88 Earth days long! The Sun would look three times as big on Mercury as it does on Earth because Mercury is a lot closer to the Sun.

Mercury looks very similar to our Moon. It is slightly bigger but both are made up of grey rock with lots of craters that are made by meteorites hitting their surfaces. If you could touch the surface it would feel very rough.

It is the smallest planet in our Solar System and you can fit 16 Mercurys inside the Earth!

Type of object	Planet
How many can you fit inside the Earth?	16
Number of moons	0
What is it made of?	Rock
Main colour	Grey
How long is a year?	88 Earth days
How long is a day?	59 Earth days
Does it have seasons?	No
Minimum temperature (°C)	-173
Maximum temperature (°C)	427

