

The Sojourner Rover on Mars

Olympus Mons,
largest volcano in the Solar System

Mars Global Surveyor above Mars

Martian Topography

The table is covered with pictures from planetary exploration. See what has been discovered all over the Solar System. Copies of all pictures and posters can be obtained by contacting NASA, the Planetary Sciences department, or me.

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Exploring Mars

Scientists study the planets to test ideas on how the Earth works and to discover how planets form and evolve. For \$1 per week, you see benefits such as improved predictions of hurricanes, new technology that improves your everyday life, and the inspiration of exploring beyond our Earth.

I have been studying the Martian upper atmosphere to learn about the whole Martian atmosphere and climate. Measurements of density, pressure, and temperature between altitudes of 60 to 100 miles have been made during all Martian seasons and over nearly all the planet by the Mars Global Surveyor spacecraft.

These studies have shown how the atmosphere is affected by the seasons, by the underlying mountains and valleys, and by the time of day. They have also shown large day to day variations at the same place and time of day – weather in the upper atmosphere.

Other U of A scientists are also exploring Mars, some taking pictures from landers and others chemically analyzing the soil. They will be in the news on December 3rd when Mars Polar Lander arrives on Mars.

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