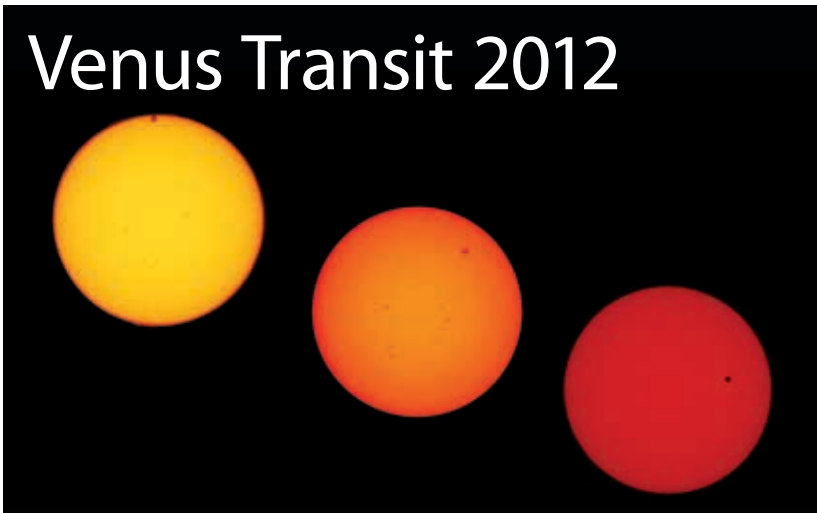
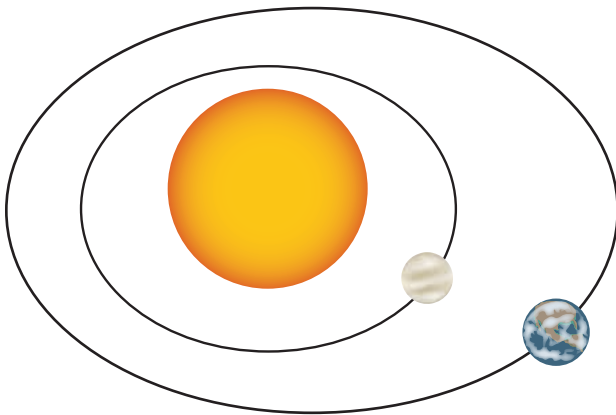


Venus Transit 2012



Venus as it moved across the sun



Test Your Transit Knowledge

1. How often does Venus transit between the Earth and the sun?

2. What do you need to wear to look at the sun safely during a transit?

3. What date did Venus transit the sun in 2012?

4. When is the next Venus transit?

Line Up!

When a planet goes between the Earth and the sun or the Earth and another planet it is called a "transit." The three planets, or two planets and the sun, make a straight line. Only two planets, Venus and Mercury, are closer than Earth to the sun. Mercury moves around the sun much faster than Venus, so it goes between the Earth and the sun every 14 to 15 years. Twice every 120 years, Venus passes between the Earth and the sun.

The first Venus transit that happened in our lifetime was June 8, 2004. The second was on June 5, 2012. The 2012 transit took 7 hours and started at 3:09pm Pacific Daylight Time. The entire transit of Venus was visible from Hawaii, Alaska, New Zealand, Japan, the Philippines, most of Australia, and parts of eastern Asia. The next time Venus passes between us and the sun will be in December of 2117.

To see the transit safely, people had to wear solar safety glasses or use #14 welder's glass. (You should never look at the sun without protecting your eyes! It can burn them, just as it burns your skin.)

Venus looked like a tiny black spot on the big, bright sun! NASA has many videos and pictures of the event and recorded the whole seven hours in Hawaii.

