

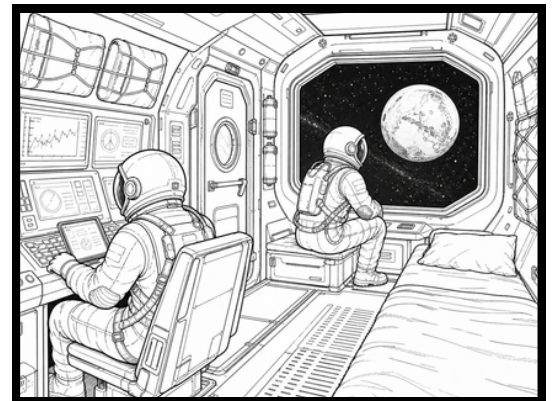
# Should Humans Live on Mars?



For many years, Mars has captured human imagination. Its rusty red surface, enormous volcanoes and dry river valleys have made scientists wonder whether life once existed there. Today, Mars is no longer just a distant planet in the night sky. It has become one of the most serious possibilities for future human exploration.

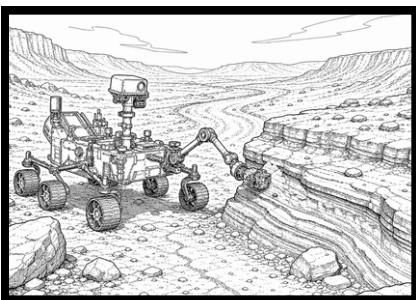
Mars is often described as the most Earth-like planet in our Solar System. It has seasons, polar ice caps and a day that is only slightly longer than a day on Earth. These similarities make Mars an interesting target for scientists who want to understand whether humans could one day survive beyond our own planet. However, calling Mars “Earth-like” can be misleading. The planet is still extremely hostile.

The atmosphere on Mars is very thin and is mostly made up of carbon dioxide. Humans would not be able to breathe without special equipment. Temperatures can fall far below freezing, and the planet is exposed to dangerous radiation from the Sun because it does not have a strong magnetic field like Earth. Even a simple walk outside would require a protective spacesuit.



Despite these challenges, some scientists believe that sending humans to Mars could lead to major discoveries. Robotic rovers have already found evidence that liquid water may once have flowed across the Martian surface. If Mars once had water, it may also have had the right conditions for life. Finding even tiny signs of ancient life would be one of the most important scientific discoveries in history.

Supporters of Mars exploration also argue that humans need to think about the long-term future of our species. Earth faces problems such as climate change, natural disasters and the possibility of future asteroid impacts. Some people believe that building settlements on another planet could help protect humanity if Earth ever became seriously threatened.



However, critics argue that this way of thinking is dangerous. They believe humans should focus on solving problems on Earth before trying to live somewhere else. A mission to Mars would cost billions of pounds, and some people argue that this money could be spent on healthcare, education, poverty or protecting the environment. They also worry that humans may damage Mars before fully understanding it.

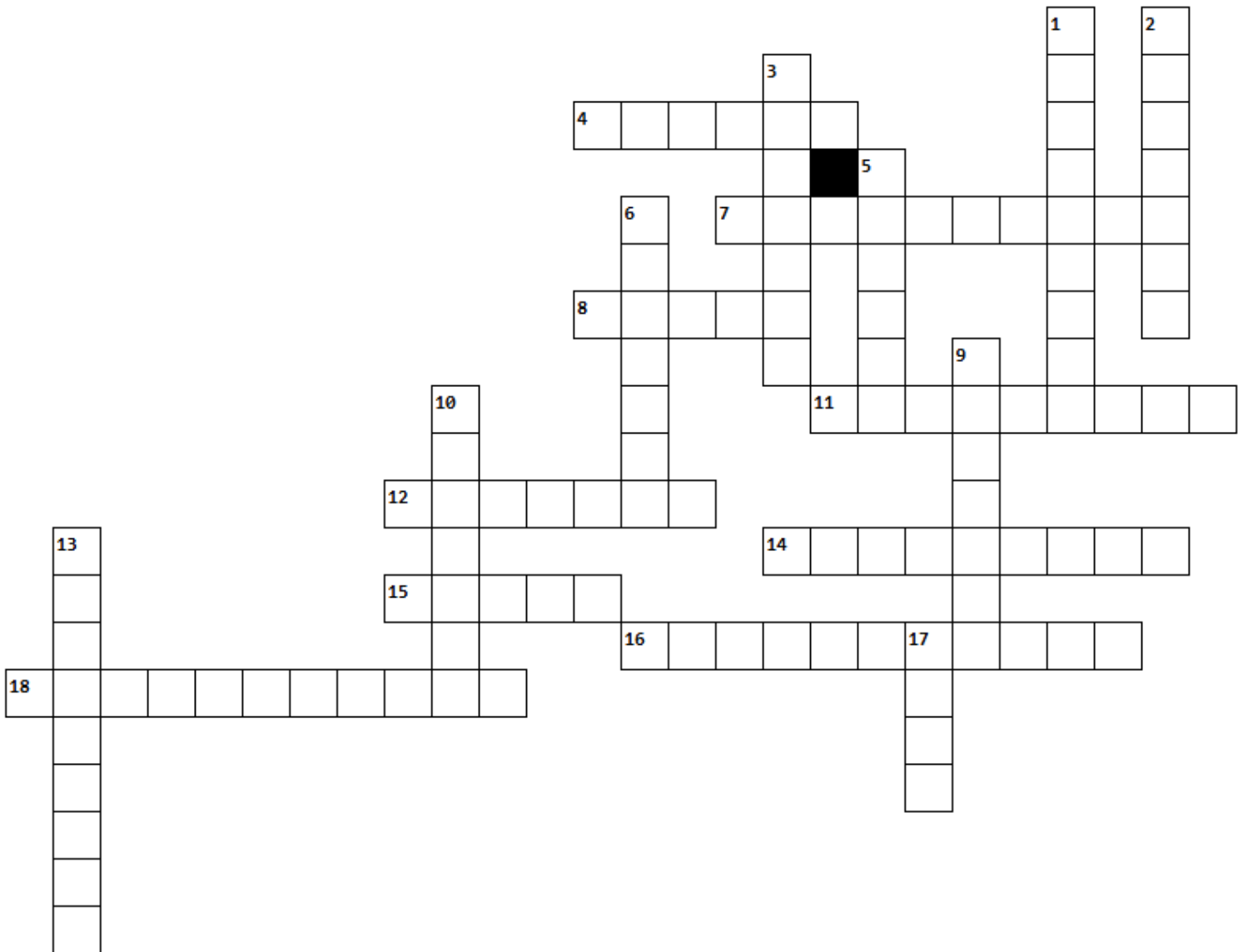
There are also serious questions about the people who would travel there. A journey to Mars could take around seven months, depending on the position of the planets. Astronauts would have to live in a small spacecraft for a long time, far away from family, friends and help from Earth. Once they arrived, they would face isolation, danger and the pressure of surviving in an environment where one mistake could be fatal.

For now, Mars remains a place of possibility rather than a place to call home. It offers excitement, mystery and scientific promise, but it also presents enormous risks. The question is not only whether humans can live on Mars. It is whether they should.

# Comprehension Crossword



Use the 'Should Humans Live on Mars' text to answer the below crossword. You will need to use your retrieval skills to find the answers!



## Across

4. Find the gas that mostly makes up the atmosphere on Mars.
7. Find the word for the layer of gases around Mars.
8. Find the word that means deadly or causing death.
11. Find the word that describes being cut off or alone.
12. Find the word that shows Mars offers scientific hope for the future.
14. Find one physical feature of Mars mentioned in paragraph 1. Mars has enormous \_\_\_\_\_.
15. Find what may once have flowed across the Martian surface.
16. Find the word used for places humans might build on another planet.
18. Find the word that describes what some scientists believe Mars exploration could lead to.

## Down

1. Find what humans would need for a simple walk outside on Mars.
2. Find another physical feature of Mars. Mars has dry river \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Find and copy the word that means Mars is harsh or dangerous to live in.
5. Find the machines that have already explored Mars.
6. Find one way Mars is similar to Earth. Mars has \_\_\_\_\_.
9. Find one problem on Earth mentioned in the text.
10. Find and copy the word that describes Mars' "rusty red" appearance.
13. Find what Mars is exposed to from the Sun.
17. Find the planet that the text is mainly about.

