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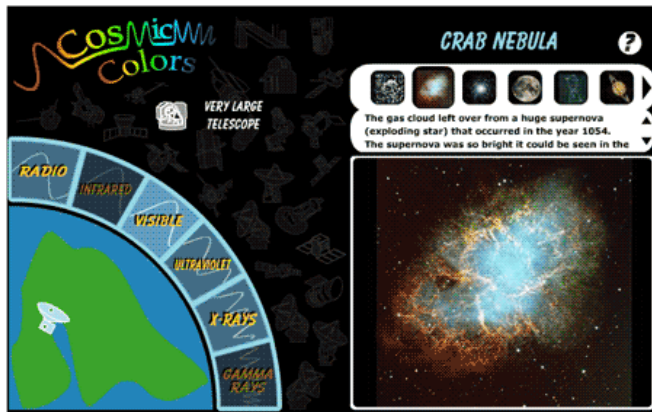
Cosmic Colors



See the Universe in all its colors with our Cosmic Colors viewer!

The "visible" images in the viewer are what we see with our unaided eyes or ordinary telescopes. The other images shown here were made by instruments that detect light our eyes cannot see. Then those images were colored so that we can see what the instrument saw.

If a "wavelength" appears darkened in the viewer for a particular object, that means we don't yet have an image of that object in that wavelength.



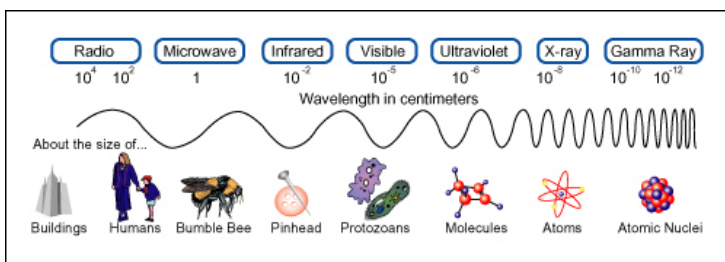
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When we look at the stars with our naked eyes, we see only a tiny part of their light. Stars, planets, galaxies, clouds of dust and gas, and other matter in space are sending out energy all the time. This energy, called **electromagnetic energy**, travels in pulses or **waves**. Like waves traveling through the ocean, they can be very long and lazy, very short and peppy, or anything in between.

Visible light is what we call the particular range of wavelengths that our eyes can see. But this light tells only a small part of the story of the stars.



To learn the rest of the story, we have had to invent new kinds of electromagnetic energy detectors and put these detectors on new kinds of **telescopes**. Optical telescopes are the oldest kind, but now we have invented new kinds. Each kind of telescope adds to our knowledge and understanding of the Universe.

information last updated more than 9 years ago

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