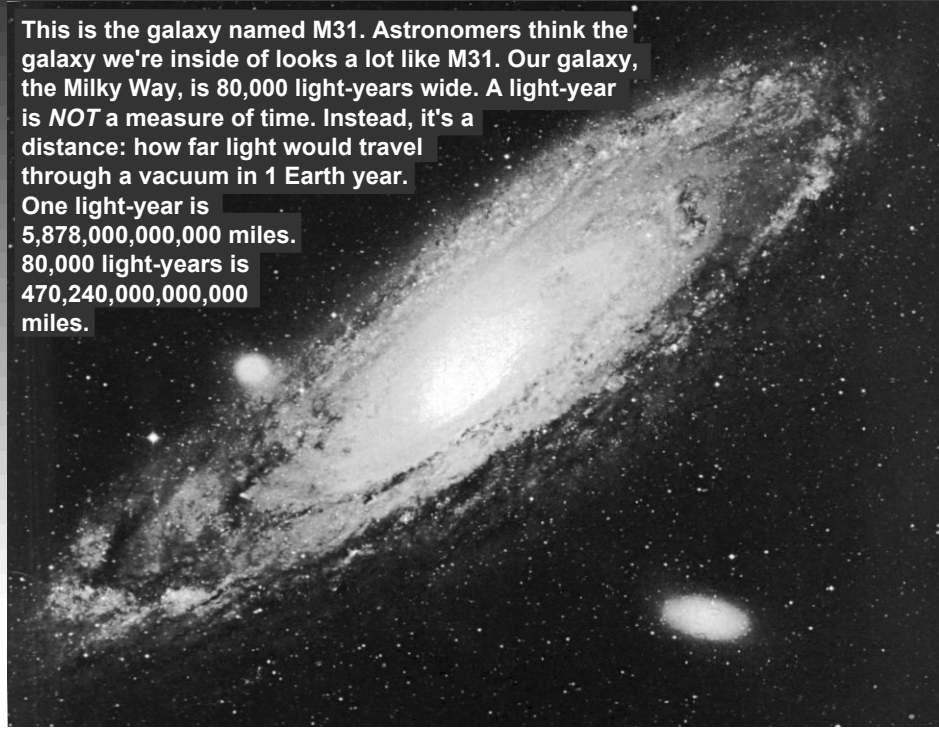


Dear Beakman,
If you traveled as fast
as the sun, how fast
would you go?
Laura Hathorn
Spokane, Washington

Beakman or Jax,
P.O. Box 30177
Kansas City, MO
64112

Dear Laura,
There's no *if* about it. You already are traveling as fast as the sun. That's because where the sun goes, the Earth goes with it.
The sun is on a long, strange trip orbiting the center of our galaxy, the Milky Way.
The trip takes 250 million years (for 1 orbit) and is really fast – 480,000 miles per hour. But that's just 1 of the speeds we're traveling.

Beakman
Beakman Place



M31 is in the constellation Andromeda (an-DROM-e-da) and is about 2,200,000 light-years from Earth.

everything's ALWAYS MOVING

It's All Relative

Your speed depends on what you are comparing your speed against. Your speed relative to the floor is 0 miles per hour when you're standing still. But since you're on the Earth, you have other speeds: your speed relative to the axis of the Earth, your speed relative to the center of the sun, and your speed relative to the center of our galaxy, the Milky Way.

Here's a way to imagine the route we take through the universe: Imagine you're climbing a spiral staircase, while you're spinning around and around. That's just about what's happening to all of us on Earth right now!

