Galileo

recall the main astronomical discoveries of Galileo related to the Solar System:
i   phases and apparent size of Venus
ii  relief features of the Moon
iii principal satellites of Jupiter (Callisto, Europa, Ganymede, Io)

all images on this page courtesy of NASA

   

**Galileo Galilei** (1564-1642)was the first scientist to use a refracting telescope to make important astronomical discoveries. Professor of astronomy at the university of Pisa. A supporter of Copernicus he got in trouble with the church, was convicted of heresy and lived out his life under house arrest.

His major discoveries

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| **Sunspots** | http://www.astronomygcse.co.uk/AstroGCSE/New%20Site/Topic%202/sunspots_sm.jpg | Galileo was virtually blind in his final years. I wonder why.. |
| **The Phases of Venus**   | http://www.astronomygcse.co.uk/AstroGCSE/New%20Site/Topic%202/Venus_phases.jpg | Why do you think Venus appears different sizes for these different phases? (Think about where the Earth, Venus and the Sun are)Important evidence for the heliocentric model. |
| **The relief features of the Moon**   | http://www.astronomygcse.co.uk/AstroGCSE/New%20Site/Topic%202/moon.jpg | With his telescope Galileo had fantastic view of the Moon  |
| **The principal satellites of Jupiter**   | http://www.astronomygcse.co.uk/AstroGCSE/New%20Site/Topic%202/jup-moons-03-14-05.jpg | Galileo realised that these 4 moons orbit Jupiter. Compelling evidence that not everything orbits the Earth. They are now known as the Galilean moons. |
| **The Unusual appearance of Saturn**   | http://www.astronomygcse.co.uk/AstroGCSE/New%20Site/Topic%202/3xsaturn.jpg | Galileo saw 2 objects either side of Saturn which disappeared from time to time. What he saw was Saturn's rings from different angles due to its tilt, almost disappearing at times. |
| **Resolving the Milky Way into stars** | http://www.astronomygcse.co.uk/AstroGCSE/New%20Site/Topic%202/milky.jpg | What appears just a milky cloud is actually billions of stars when seen with a telescope. |