

First Contact

Inspired by

Sir Patrick Moore

1923 – 2012

Best known as presenter of *The Sky at Night* from 1957 - 2012



Aliens will not inhabit a star; they need a planet. In our solar system the only rocky planets are Earth, Venus and Mars.

Venus has an atmosphere of carbon dioxide and methane which would soon poison any life form.

Mars has icy polar regions which might cover water that could support primitive life. There is no intelligent life on Mars however as we would know of it by now.

Therefore, in our search for *intelligent* alien life we must look to other planetary systems beyond our solar system. The best way to transmit communication over the vast distances required here is via radio waves because they travel at the speed of light.

Morse code is most suitable as it's simple and easily transmitted via radio waves. It is comprised of dots and dashes and Sir Patrick Moore suggested that something similar to the following message could be used to search for intelligent alien life.

Each 'o' represents a 'dot' and each '-' represents a 'dash'.

Your task is to discover why Sir Patrick Moore recommends that we send this message in our search for intelligent alien life.

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