How fast is light?

Light whizzes from Earth to the Moon and back in about 2.5 seconds—that’s only 768,000 km (480,000 miles).

The distances between stars and galaxies are much greater, so scientists measure them in light-years. One light-year equals the distance light travels in one year—almost 9.5 trillion km (6 trillion miles).

Distances within our Solar System are measured in smaller increments. A light-minute is 18 million km (about 11 million miles); a light-hour is 1.08 billion km (almost 700 million miles).