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Gigantic 'potentially hazardous asteroid' due to speed past Earth this week

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A huge asteroid three times as long as a football field is set to speed by Earth on Thursday. The "potentially hazardous asteroid" is projected to whizz by our planet at over 25,400 mph (40,800 kph).

Asteroid '2008 KV2' is estimated to measure 1,082 feet (330 meters) across and will be just 4.2 million miles (6.7 million kilometers) from Earth when it flies by.

The gigantic space rock is considered a Near Earth Object (NEO) and the center at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) for studying such close encounters considers [2008 KV2](#) to be a "potentially hazardous asteroid" because of its size and its relative proximity to our planet, passing within 0.045 astronomical units (AU) of Earth. One AU is about the distance between the Earth and the Sun.

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As indicated in its name, the asteroid was first discovered in 2008 and scientists began to calculate how often to expect it to come near our planet. It orbits the Sun, like Earth, but doesn't always get so close. It's expected to pass Earth again in 2021.