

# Detecting an asteroid the size of an olympic swimming pool, topping the list of Earth collision risk

Called 2023 DW, the asteroid is about the same size as a standard Olympic swimming pool.

Valentine's Day 2046 can be memorable for a number of reasons. Not only can you get a lovely card from your wife, lover or an unidentified 'fan', but you'll also get the chance to witness the moment a massive asteroid slams into Earth and causing widespread destruction.

Hopefully the second scenario won't happen as international astronomers have just found a 49-metre-wide 'space rock' that is calculated to have a 1/625 chance of colliding with their planet. us in a few decades.

Called 2023 DW, the asteroid about the size of a standard Olympic swimming pool is currently topping the European Space Agency's Risk List, as the only asteroid Most have a rating of '1' on the Turin scale, which is used to classify the collision risk of near-Earth objects.

**Asteroid watch**

**2023 DW**

- Expected to be closest to Earth on Valentines Day in 2046, less than 0.05 AU\* (7.5 million km)
- Current distance from Earth: 0.15 AU
- Current velocity relative to the Sun: 24.66 km/s
- Time to complete one solar orbit: 271 days

Average est. diameter: 50.3 m

\*Astronomical Unit: 149,597,871 km, or roughly the distance between the Earth and the Sun

**Potential impact**

1 in 1,584 chance it could hit the Earth, according to current calculations

Calculations are expected to be revised with data updates

If an asteroid larger than 25 m but smaller than 1 km were to hit Earth, it would "likely cause local damage to the impact area": NASA

A similar-sized asteroid in 1908 caused the Tunguska event flattening 80 million trees across 2,150 sq km of Siberia

AFP

However, experts also reassured that 2023 DW only had a 'very small chance' of impacting our planet. Since 2023 DW was only discovered a few days ago, scientists are continuing to conduct in-depth analyzes to more precisely define the asteroid's characteristics.

Even if later analyzes show an increased risk of 2023 DW colliding with Earth, it would also be a golden opportunity for NASA to deploy its asteroid deflection system. The technology was tested last year with great

success, successfully intercepting a distant asteroid, with the impact force being strong enough to change its course permanently.

To date, hundreds of thousands of asteroids have been discovered inside the solar system, with a rate of about 5000 asteroids per month. This number is expected to continue to increase because the development of modern science and technology makes it easier and simpler to detect asteroids passing by the Earth, can even be done by satellites. non-specialist researchers.

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