Powers of Ten

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POWERS OF TEN

Powers of Ten is a 9-minute illustration of scale. Beginning with a focus on a one-meter square, the frame of reference expands one order of magnitude (a power of ten) every ten seconds until reaching the edge of known space. It then zooms back to earth and magnifies an order of magnitude smaller every ten seconds down to the nucleus of a carbon atom.

Produced by Charles and Ray Eames, the documentary was originally released in 1968 and then re-released in 1977. The film is an adaptation of Kees Boeke’s 1957 book Cosmic View. In 1998, the Library of Congress added Powers of Ten to the United States National Film Registry.