



SpaceX Launch Sends Astronauts to ISS

Why did the rocket launch from Florida?

- Florida is on the east coast of the USA. When rockets launch, they can go east over the Atlantic ocean and get boost from the Earth's spin.
- Being close to the equator where the Earth's spin is faster also helps the rocket reach high speeds.

A new era of spaceflight is underway. On Saturday, NASA and SpaceX launched astronauts from the USA for the first time in almost a decade.

The astronauts aboard SpaceX's Crew Dragon spacecraft, Bob Behnken and Doug Hurley, gathered speeds to almost 17 000mph. They were then ready to meet up with the International Space Station (ISS).

They will remain on the ISS to carry out scientific research. They will do this for between one and four months.

After their mission, the astronauts will climb back aboard the Crew Dragon spacecraft. It will **undock** from the space station and splash down in the ocean not far from where they took off.

Saturday's launch from Florida is a huge step for future space exploration.

It is the first time a **commercial company** has sent humans into orbit using its own rocket.

This is also a big step in the journey towards **space tourism**. According to the SpaceX website, it "lays the groundwork for future missions to the Moon, Mars, and beyond".

Humans have never set foot on Mars and there have only ever been six manned missions to the Moon. The last of these was Apollo 17 all the way back in 1972.

The success of this launch makes further projects more possible. NASA plan to return

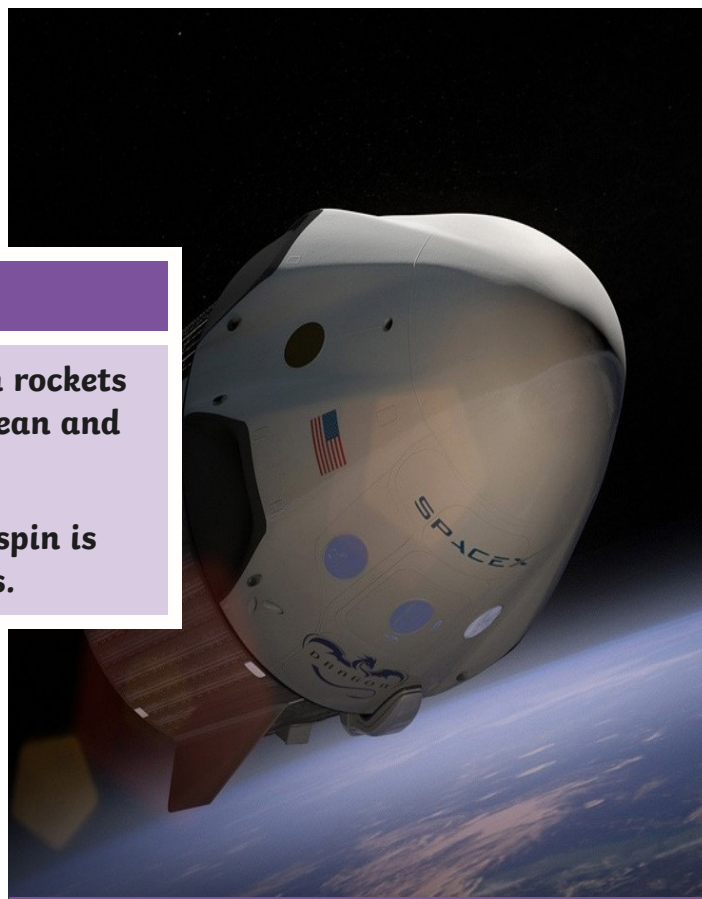


Illustration: A SpaceX spacecraft.

people to the Moon by 2024 as part of the Artemis programme.

The Artemis programme is developing brand-new spacesuits, rockets, spacecraft and even an **outpost**. The outpost will allow astronauts and supplies to be transported to the Moon's surface. According to NASA's website, it will also act "as a staging point for deep space exploration".

With so many plans being made for future exploration of space, who knows where we could travel in the future?

Glossary

undock	Detach from another craft in space.
commercial company	A company that is organised to make money.
space tourism	Travelling into space for fun.
outpost	A distant settlement or place.

Questions

1. According to the article, to what speed were the astronauts being accelerated?

- approximately 1700mph
- approximately 17 000mph
- approximately 17 0000mph
- approximately 17 00000mph

2. Locate an example from the article of why Florida is used as a location to launch rockets from.

3. "Saturday's launch from Florida is a huge step for future space exploration." What is meant by the phrase '**huge step**'?

- The astronauts will take a big step when they get to space.
- A spacecraft has large steps in it.
- This is the start of many more journeys into space.
- Getting into space is really difficult.

4. How do you think the astronauts will be feeling?

5. Locate two examples of new technologies being developed as part of the Artemis programme.

1.

2.

6. Write an alternate headline, of no more than 8 words, which sums up the key information in the article.
