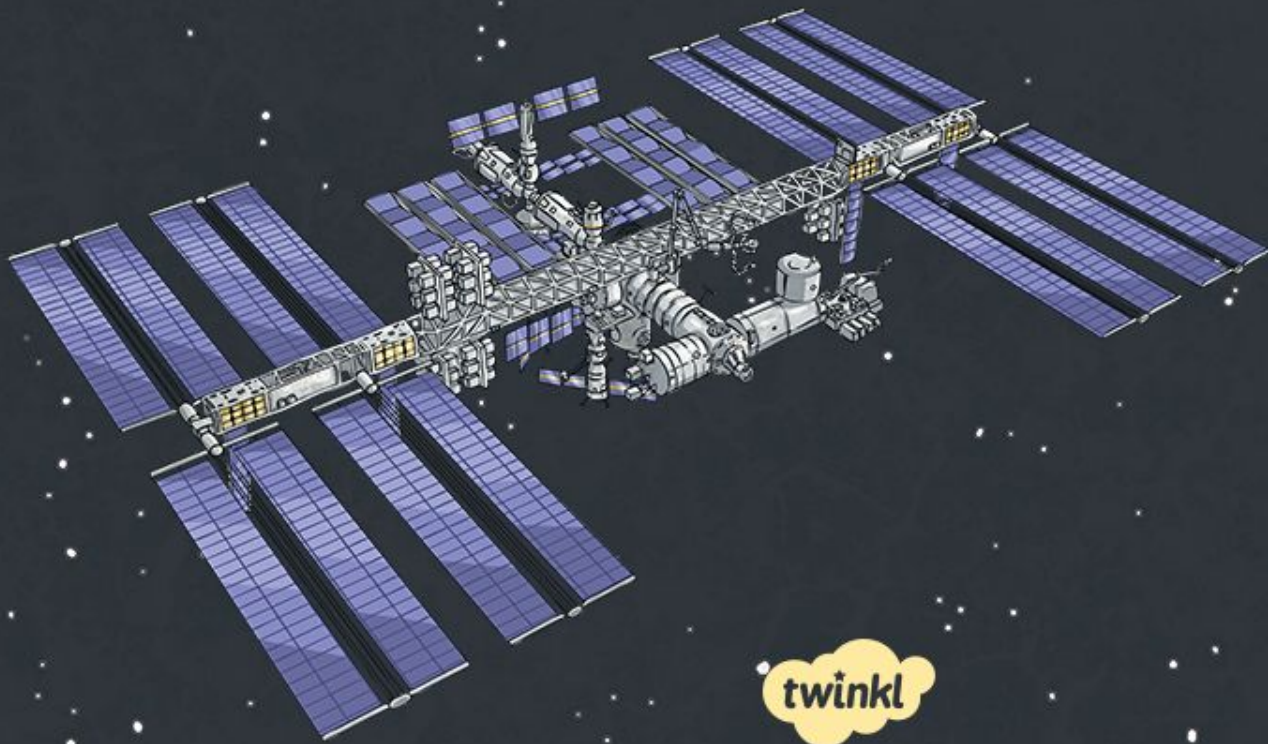


20 Years on the International Space Station





2020 is a landmark year for the International Space Station, marking the 20th year of continuous human occupation.

Did You Know?

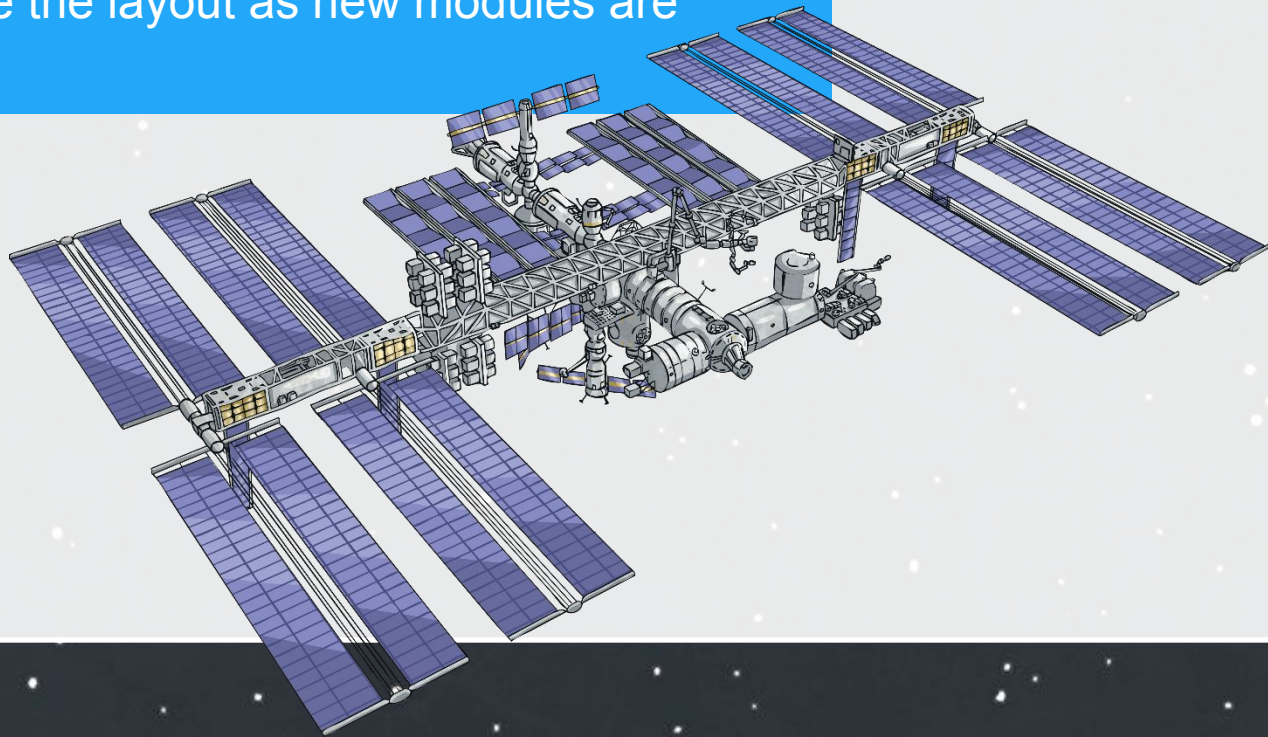
The main modules of the space station were launched into space on 42 different space flights. 37 of those flights were on the Space Shuttle from the USA and 5 of the flights were on the Russian Proton/Soyuz rockets.

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The space station took 11 years to build. It was constructed by putting together different complete modules that were built on Earth and then launched into space. Once in space, astronauts and cosmonauts spent hundreds of hours joining the different parts to give us the 109 meters of the space station we know today. Because the ISS is built from these different modules, the crew of the space station can reconfigure the layout as new modules are added.

Did You Know?

Parts of the ISS were built in different areas of the world and were only fitted together for the first time once they were in space.



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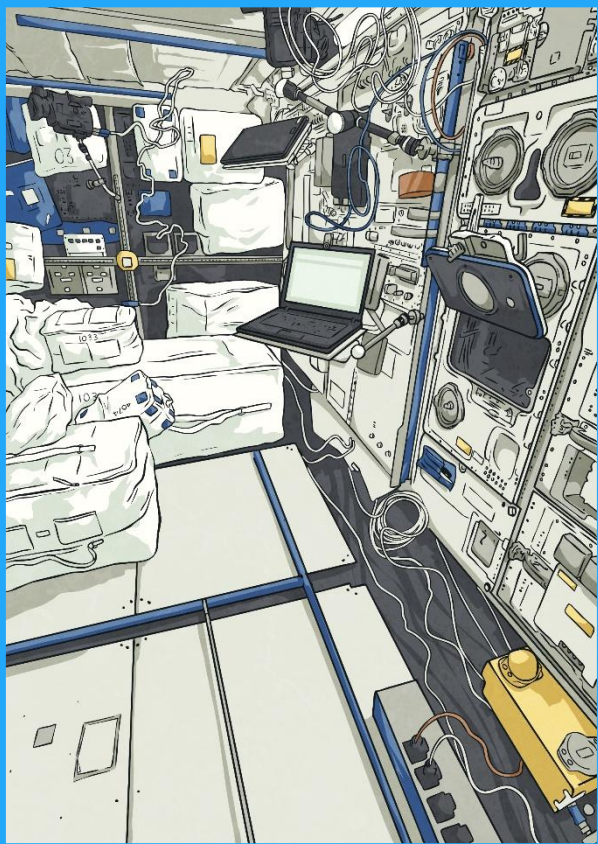


In the year 2000 the crew of Expedition 1 Baikonur Cosmodrome, Sergei Krikalev and Bill Shepard, inhabited the ISS for the first time. At this time, the station was made up of only three different modules: the Zarya Module (power control module), Unity Module (used for docking with the space station) and Zvezda Service Module. The Zvezda Service Module was the most important module providing the living quarters, life support systems, electrical power distribution, data processing, flight control systems and propulsion systems. Without this module, it would not have been possible for people to survive in space.

Did You Know?

At least 221 spacewalks have taken place to assemble the ISS and for maintenance.

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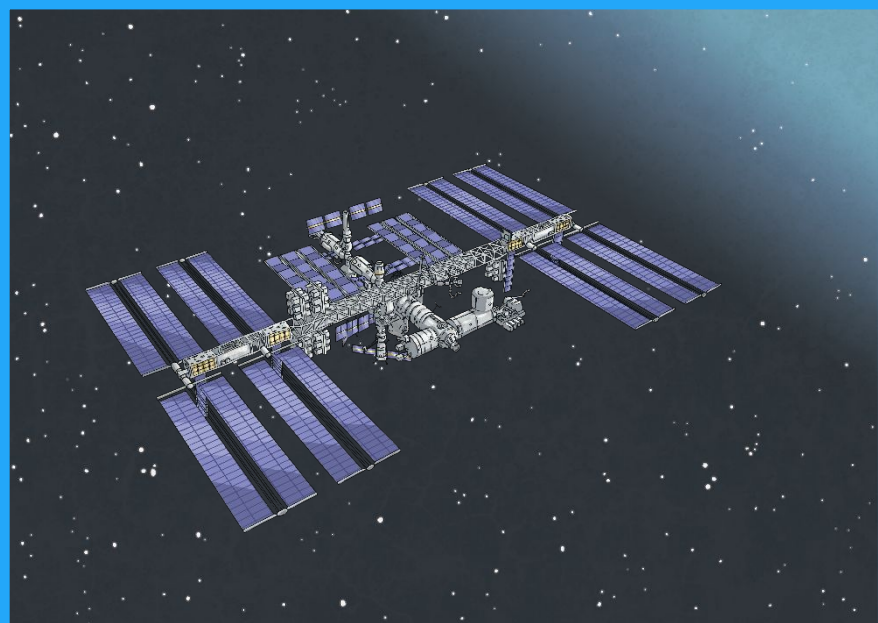


Not only was Expedition 1 breaking new ground by allowing astronauts to live in space; it also marked a new peaceful, global cooperation between Russia and America. The ISS became a place where people could collaborate on projects that would benefit the whole human race and work towards the common goal of colonizing other planets.

Did You Know?

Altogether 15 nations have collaborated to build the ISS.

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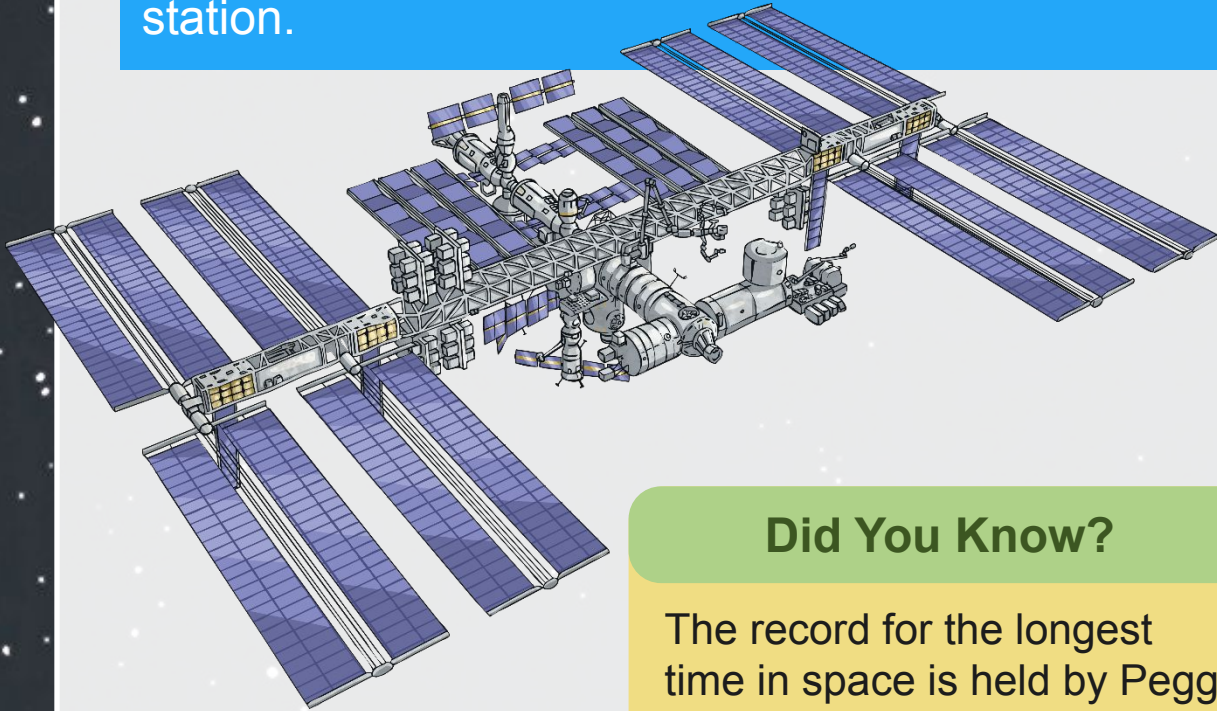
Did You Know?

239 individuals from 19 countries have visited the space station.

ISS's Columbus laboratory has been one of the leading laboratories for scientific investigations. Over the years more than 2,700 experiments have been conducted, and over 108 different countries have sent experiments up to the space station - including from South Africa. At any one time, there can be up to 250 investigations happening simultaneously. The crew themselves also act as living experiments, with their bone scans and eye examinations showing the effect that living in space can have on the human body.

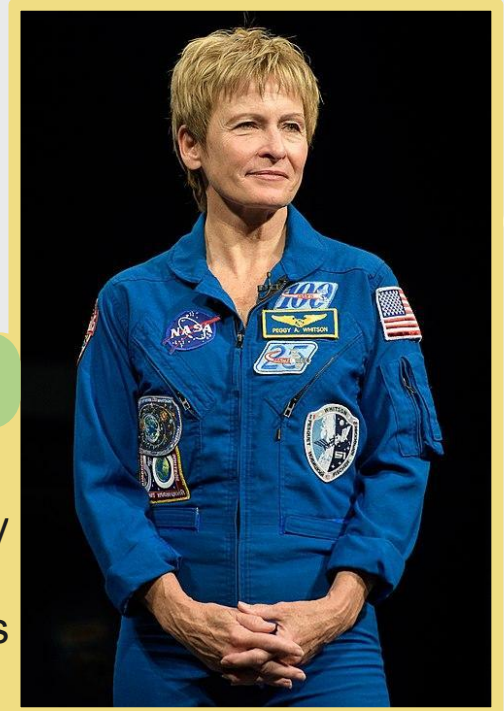
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The plans are in place to keep the International Space Station inhabited till at least 2024. It is exciting to think about all the new things we will learn from the brave men and women who spend time aboard the space station.



Did You Know?

The record for the longest time in space is held by Peggy Whitson, a NASA astronaut. Altogether she spent 665 days in space!



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