



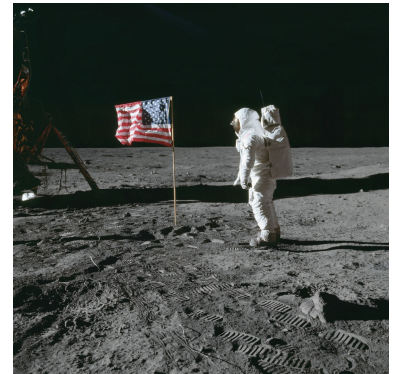
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## American Space Missions: Exploring the Universe

The United States has sent many exciting missions into space to explore the Moon, planets, stars, and beyond! Space missions help scientists learn more about our solar system and universe. Let's look at some famous American space missions.

### Apollo: The First Moon Landings

One of the most famous American space missions was Apollo 11. In 1969, astronauts Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin became the first humans to walk on the Moon! This mission was part of NASA's Apollo program, which had several missions to explore the Moon. The Apollo missions taught us a lot about the Moon's surface, rocks, and gravity.



Apollo mission

### Voyager: Journey to the Edge of Space

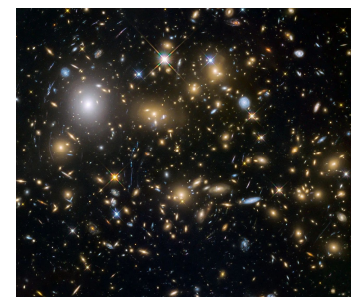
In 1977, NASA launched Voyager 1 and Voyager 2. These two spacecraft were sent to study the outer planets, like Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune. After finishing their main mission, they kept traveling beyond our solar system! Voyager 1 is now the farthest human-made object in space and still sends back messages, even though it has traveled billions of miles away.



Voyager spacecraft

### Hubble Space Telescope: A Window to the Stars

The Hubble Space Telescope was launched in 1990. It orbits Earth and takes clear, colorful pictures of planets, stars, and galaxies far away. Hubble has helped scientists see parts of the universe we could never see from Earth. Its pictures have shown us things like galaxies, black holes, and stars being born!



Galaxies photographed by the Hubble Telescope

### Mars Rovers: Exploring the Red Planet



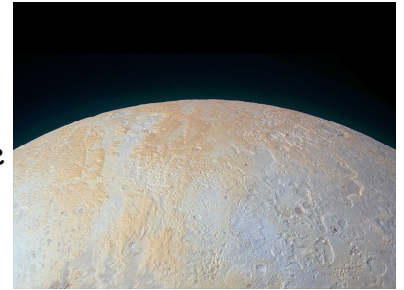
Mars Rover Curiosity

NASA has sent several missions to explore Mars, including rovers that move around and study the planet's surface. The most famous rovers are Spirit, Opportunity, Curiosity, and Perseverance. These robots take pictures, dig in the soil, and search for signs of past water on Mars. Scientists hope to learn if Mars could have once supported life!

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### **New Horizons: A Visit to Pluto**

In 2006, NASA launched New Horizons to explore the faraway dwarf planet Pluto. After nearly 10 years of travel, New Horizons reached Pluto in 2015 and sent back the first close-up images of the dwarf planet. New Horizons is still traveling through space, exploring regions beyond Pluto.



Close-up image of Pluto's surface

### **Fun Facts About American Space Missions**

The Apollo missions brought back rocks from the Moon.

Voyager 1 and 2 carry a special record with sounds and greetings from Earth, in case they are ever found by aliens!

The Hubble Space Telescope has taken over a million pictures of space objects.

Perseverance, the Mars rover, carries a small helicopter called Ingenuity, which is the first helicopter to fly on another planet.

1. What did the Apollo Mission accomplish? \_\_\_\_\_

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2. What is special about Voyager 1? \_\_\_\_\_

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3. What do scientists hope to learn from the Mars Rover Missions? \_\_\_\_\_

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