



ASTRONAUTS



Astronauts are highly trained people who travel into space to explore, carry out scientific research, and help us understand more about our universe. They work with space agencies such as NASA or the European Space Agency (ESA). Becoming an astronaut is an exciting and challenging career that requires intelligence, bravery, and dedication.

WHAT ASTRONAUTS DO

Astronauts have many important jobs. They might live and work on the International Space Station (ISS), conduct experiments in zero gravity, repair satellites, or help test new space technology. They also spend time communicating with scientists on Earth and collecting data to improve our knowledge of space. Astronauts must work as a team and be ready to deal with emergencies quickly and calmly.

SKILLS AND PERSONAL QUALITIES

To become an astronaut, a person needs a mix of scientific knowledge, physical fitness, and emotional strength. Astronauts must be calm under pressure, good problem solvers, and excellent team players. They also need to be healthy and fit enough to handle the physical demands of space travel, such as strong gravity forces during launch and re-entry.

TRAINING AND PREPARATION

Astronaut training is long and difficult. Before going into space, astronauts spend years preparing. Training includes learning how to operate spacecraft, practising spacewalks underwater, and studying how to live in space for months at a time. They also learn survival skills in case they land in remote areas when returning to Earth.

QUALIFICATIONS NEEDED

Most astronauts begin their careers by studying science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM) subjects at university. Many have degrees in fields like physics, engineering, biology, or medicine. After earning a degree, they often gain work experience as pilots, scientists, or engineers before applying to a space agency. It's also important to have excellent physical health and some experience of flying aircraft.

HOW TO APPLY

To become an astronaut, people can apply to space agencies such as NASA, ESA, or the UK Space Agency when they announce recruitment opportunities. The selection process is very competitive, involving physical tests, interviews, and psychological assessments to find the best candidates.



REWARDS AND CHALLENGES

Being an astronaut is one of the most demanding jobs in the world. It involves long periods away from family, intense training, and physical risks. However, it is also one of the most inspiring careers. Astronauts experience things few others ever do – floating in space, seeing Earth from orbit, and contributing to discoveries that could change the future of humanity.

Astronauts are brave explorers who push the boundaries of what humans can achieve. The path to becoming one is difficult, but for those with a passion for science, exploration, and adventure, it is an incredible and life-changing career.

Find out more

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/watch/stargazing-bluepeter-astronaut>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zhx4k2p>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zyq4wxs#znd2b7h>

Example Questions:

- Where do astronauts explore?
- What space agencies do they work for?
- What quality does an astronaut need to have?
- What qualifications do astronauts need?
- How do you become an astronaut?