

1. Intro
2. New Technologies and Research

Humans did not evolve to go into space, but we go there anyway. That has led to the development of various technologies that feed back into the economy and improve our lives on Earth. Without space programs, we wouldn't have GPS, accurate weather prediction, solar cells, or the ultraviolet filters in sunglasses and cameras. There's also medical research happening in space right now that could cure diseases and prolong human lives, and these experiments can't be done on Earth. Space exploration could save your life.

3. Colonization Is our Ultimate Backup

There are currently more than 7 billion humans, which is a lot. However, we're all crammed together on this one planet. If something happened to Earth, our species could be wiped out. Colonizing other bodies in the solar system is a way to create a "backup" of humanity that will survive no matter what happens to Earth. Maybe future humans will be Martians who will never set foot on Earth.

4. Space Mining Could Save the World

As we develop new technologies on Earth, the strain on our natural resources continues to increase. The extraction of valuable minerals has led to a host of problems, including environmental damage and human exploitation, but there's a wealth of precious materials in space. Startups like Planetary Resources want to mine asteroids instead of Earth, which would mean an effectively unlimited supply of raw materials that are rare on Earth.

5. Asteroids and Comets Don't Care About Us

Speaking of saving lives, space exploration could save *all* our lives. Our solar system has calmed down a lot since the early time of Earth existence, but there are still uncountable big asteroids and comets out there that could smack into the planet and really ruin your day. It's happened several times in the past, each one causing a mass extinction. It's not a matter of if another large asteroid hits Earth, but when. A robust space program is the only hope we have of deflecting such an object.

6. We Are Explorers

There are more practical reasons for space exploration, but one of the principle reasons we must continue is that we're explorers. That's why humans number in the billions — from our earliest upright steps, we've endeavored to learn more about the world around us, and this allowed us to build civilization. Exploring space is an opportunity not only to discover new worlds and build advanced technologies, but to work together toward a larger goal irrespective of nationality, race, or gender. If we stop exploring, we stop being human.