

COLONIES IN SPACE

1 Stephen Hawking, one of the world's
most important scientists, believes that
to **survive**, humans must move into space:
"Once we **spread out** into space and
5 establish **independent** colonies our future
should be safe," he says.

Today, the United States, India, China, and
Japan are all planning to send astronauts
back to Earth's closest **neighbor**: the moon.

10 Each country wants to create space stations there
between 2020 and 2030. These stations will prepare humans
to visit and later live on Mars or other Earth-like planets.

Robert Zubrin, a rocket scientist, thinks humans should
colonize space. He wants to start with Mars. Why? There are
15 several advantages: for one, sending people to the moon and
Mars will allow us to learn a lot—for example, whether living
on other planets is possible. Then, we can eventually create new
human societies on other planets. In addition, the **advances**
we make for space travel in the fields of science, technology,
20 **medicine**, and health can also **benefit** us here on Earth.

But not everyone thinks sending humans into space is a smart
idea. Many say it's too expensive to send people, even on a
short **journey**. And most space trips are not short. A one-way
trip to Mars, for example, would take about six months. People
25 traveling this kind of distance face a number of health
problems. Also, for many early space **settlers**, life would be
extremely difficult. On the moon's **surface**, for example, the
air and the sun's rays¹ are very dangerous. People would have
to stay indoors most of the time.

30 Despite these concerns, sending people into space seems
certain. In the future, we might see lunar² cities and
maybe even new human cultures on other planets.
First stop: the moon.

¹ The **sun's rays** are narrow beams of light from the sun.

² **Lunar** means "related to the moon."



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out into space and
establish independent
colonies, our future
should be safe."*

—Stephen Hawking



Did you Know?

The meals astronauts
eat in space include
food like pasta and
chocolate cake or,
for Japanese
astronauts, ramen.