

Archive-name: space/intro

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This series of linked messages is periodically posted to the Usenet groups sci.space and sci.astro in an attempt to provide good answers to frequently asked questions and other reference material which is worth preserving. If you have corrections or answers to other frequently asked questions that you would like included in this posting, send email to leech@cs.unc.edu (Jon Leech).

If you don't want to see the FAQ, add 'Frequently Asked Questions' to your KILL file for this group (if you're not reading this with a newsreader that can kill articles by subject, you're out of luck).

The FAQ volume is excessive right now and will hopefully be trimmed down by rewriting and condensing over time. The FAQ postings are available in the Ames SPACE archive in FAQ/faq<#>.

Good summaries will be accepted in place of the answers given here. The point of this is to circulate existing information, and avoid rehashing old answers. Better to build on top than start again. Nothing more depressing than rehashing old topics for the 100th time. References are provided because they give more complete information than any short generalization.

Questions fall into three basic types:

1) Where do I find some information about space?

Try your local public library first. The net is not a good place to ask for general information. Ask INDIVIDUALS (by email) if you must. There are other sources, use them, too. The net is a place for open ended discussion.

2) I have an idea which would improve space flight?

Hope you aren't surprised, but 9,999 out of 10,000 have usually been thought of before. Again, contact a direct individual source for evaluation. NASA fields thousands of these each day.

3) Miscellaneous queries.

These are addressed on a case-by-case basis in the following series of FAQ postings.

Read news.announce.newusers if you're on Usenet.

Minimize cross references, [Do you REALLY NEED to?]

Edit "Subject:" lines, especially if you're taking a tangent.

Send mail instead, avoid posting follow ups. (1 mail message worth 100 posts).

Internet mail readers: send requests to add/drop to SPACE-REQUEST not SPACE.

Read all available articles before posting a follow-up. (Check all references.)

Cut down attributed articles (leave only the points you're responding to; remove signatures and headers). Summarize!

Put a return address in the body (signature) of your message (mail or article), state your institution, etc. Don't assume the 'reply' function of mailers will work.

Use absolute dates. Post in a timely way. Don't post what everyone will get on TV anyway.

Some editors and window systems do character count line wrapping: keep lines under 80 characters for those using ASCII terminals (use carriage returns).

I've attempted to break the postings up into related areas. There isn't

a keyword index yet; the following lists the major subject areas in each posting. Only those containing astronomy-related material are posted to sci.astro (indicated by '*' following the posting number).

#Contents

1*Introduction

Suggestions for better netiquette

Index to linked postings

Notes on addresses, phone numbers, etc.

Contributors

2*Network resources

Overview

Mailing lists

Periodically updated information

Warning about non-public networks

3*Online (and some offline) sources of images, data, etc.

Introduction

Viewing Images

Online Archives

NASA Ames

NASA Astrophysics Data System

NASA Jet Propulsion Lab (Mission Information and Images)

NASA Langley (Technical Reports)

NASA Spacelink

National Space Science Data Center

Space Telescope Science Institute Electronic Info. Service

Starcat

Astronomical Databases

Astronomy Programs

Orbital Element Sets

SPACE Digest

Landsat & NASA Photos

Planetary Maps

Cometary Orbits

4*Performing calculations and interpreting data formats

Computing spacecraft orbits and trajectories

Computing planetary positions

Computing crater diameters from Earth-impacting asteroids

Map projections and spherical trigonometry

Performing N-body simulations efficiently

Interpreting the FITS image format

Sky (Unix ephemeris program)

Three-dimensional star/galaxy coordinates

5*References on specific areas

Publishers of space/astronomy material

Careers in the space industry

DC-X single-stage to orbit (SSTO) program

How to name a star after a person

LLNL "great exploration"

Lunar Prospector

Lunar science and activities

Orbiting Earth satellite histories

Spacecraft models

Rocket propulsion

Spacecraft design

Esoteric propulsion schemes (solar sails, lasers, fusion...)

Spy satellites

Space shuttle computer systems

SETI computation (signal processing)

Amateur satellites & weather satellites

Tides

6*Constants and equations for calculations

7*Astronomical Mnemonics

8Contacting NASA, ESA, and other space agencies/companies

NASA Centers / Arianespace / ESA / NASDA / Soyuzkarta / Space

Camp / Space Commerce Corporation / Spacehab / SPOT Image

Other commercial space businesses

9Space shuttle answers, launch schedules, TV coverage

Shuttle launchings and landings; schedules and how to see them

Why does the shuttle roll just after liftoff?

How to receive the NASA TV channel, NASA SELECT

Amateur radio frequencies for shuttle missions

Solid Rocket Booster fuel composition

10Planetary probes - Historical Missions

US planetary missions

Mariner (Venus, Mars, & Mercury flybys and orbiters)

Pioneer (Moon, Sun, Venus, Jupiter, and Saturn flybys and orbiters)

Ranger (Lunar lander and impact missions)

Lunar Orbiter (Lunar surface photography)

Surveyor (Lunar soft landers)

Viking (Mars orbiters and landers)

Voyager (Outer planet flybys)

Soviet planetary missions

Soviet Lunar probes

Soviet Venus probes

Soviet Mars probes

Japanese planetary missions

Planetary mission references

11Upcoming planetary probes - missions and schedules

Cassini

Galileo

Magellan

Mars Observer

TOPEX/Poseidon

Ulysses

Other space science missions

Proposed missions

12Controversial questions

What happened to the Saturn V plans

Why data from space missions isn't immediately available

Risks of nuclear (RTG) power sources for space probes

Impact of the space shuttle on the ozone layer

How long can a human live unprotected in space

How the Challenger astronauts died

Using the shuttle beyond Low Earth Orbit

The "Face on Mars"

13Space activist/interest/research groups and space publications

Groups

Publications

Undocumented Groups

14How to become an astronaut

15Orbital and Planetary Launch Services

Unless otherwise specified, telephone numbers, addresses, and so on are for the United States of America. Non-US readers should remember to add the country code for telephone calls, etc.

Eugene Miya started a series of linked FAQ postings some years ago which inspired (and was largely absorbed into) this set.

Peter Yee and Ron Baalke have and continue to spend a lot of their own time setting up the SPACE archives at NASA Ames and forwarding official NASA announcements.

Many other people have contributed material to this list in the form of old postings to sci.space and sci.astro which I've edited. Please let me know if corrections need to be made. Contributors I've managed to keep track of are:

0004847546@mcimail.com (Francis Reddy)- map projections

ad038@yfn.ysu.edu (Steven Fisk)- publication refs.

akerman@bill.phy.queensu.CA (Richard Akerman) - crater diameters

alweigal@athena.mit.edu (Lisa Weigel)- SEDS info

aoab314@emx.utexas.edu (Srinivas Bettadpur) - tides

awpaeth@watcgl.waterloo.edu (Alan Wm Paeth) - map projections

aws@iti.org (Allen W. Sherzer)- Great Exploration

baalke@kelvin.jpl.nasa.gov (Ron Baalke)- planetary probe schedules

bankst@rata.vuw.ac.nz (Timothy Banks)- map projections,

variable star analysis archive

bern@uni-trier.de (Jochen Bern)- German mnemonic translation

brosen@pioneer.arc.nasa.gov (Bernie Rosen)- Space Camp

bschlesinger@nssdca.gsfc.nasa.gov (Barry Schlesinger) - FITS format

cew@venera.isi.edu (Craig E. Ward)- space group contact info

chapin@cbnewsc.att.com (Tom Chapin)- planetary positions

cunnida@tenet.edu (D. Alan Cunningham)- NASA Spacelink

cyamamot@kilroy.Jpl.Nasa.Gov (Cliff Yamamoto) - orbital elements

datri@convex.com (Anthony Datri)- PDS/VICAR viewing software

daver@sjc.mentorg.com (Dave Rickel)- orbit formulae

dlbres10@pc.usl.edu (Phil Fraering)- propulsion

eder@hsvaic.boeing.com (Dani Eder)- Saturn V plans, SRBs

eugene@eos.arc.nasa.gov (Eugene N. Miya)- introduction,

NASA contact info, started FAQ postings

french@isu.isunet.edu (Patrick M. French)- space group contact info

g@telesoft.com (Gary Morris)- amateur radio info

gaetz@cfa.harvard.edu (Terry Gaetz)- N-body calculations,

orbital dynamics

grandi@noao.edu (Steve Grandi)- planetary positions

greer%utd201.dnet%utadnx@utspan.span.nasa.gov (Dale M. Greer) - constants

henry@zoo.toronto.edu (Henry Spencer)- survival in vacuum,

astronaut how-to, Challenger disaster, publication refs, DC-X

higgins@fnal.bitnet (William Higgins)- RTGs, publishers,

shuttle landings, spysats, propulsion, "Face on Mars"

hmueller@cssun.tamu.edu (Hal Mueller)- map projections,
orbital dynamics

jbh55289@uxa.cso.uiuc.edu (Josh Hopkins)- launch services

jim@pnet01.cts.com (Jim Bowery)- propulsion, launch services

jnhead@pir.lpl.arizona.edu (James N. Head) - atmospheric scale heights

jscotti@lpl.arizona.edu (Jim Scotti)- planetary positions

kcarroll@zoo.toronto.edu (Kieran A. Carroll)- refs for spacecraft design

ken@orion.bitnet (Kenneth Ng)- RTGs

kjenks@gothamcity.jsc.nasa.gov (Ken Jenks)- shuttle roll maneuver

klaes@verga.enet.dec.com (Larry Klaes)- planetary probe history

leech@cs.unc.edu (Jon Leech)- crater diameters

lfa@ssi.com (Lou Adornato)- orbital dynamics

maury.markowitz@egsgate.fidonet.org (Maury Markowitz) - propulsion

max@west.darkside.com (Erik Max Francis)- equations

mbellon@mcdurb.Urbana.Gould.COM- N-body calculations

mconley@phoenix.Princeton.edu (Marc Wayne Mcconley) - space careers

msb@sq.com (Mark Brader)- Mariner 1 info.

mwm@cmu.edu (Mark Maimone)- SPACE Digest

nickw@syma.sussex.ac.uk (Dr. Nick Watkins)- models, spysats

ohainaut@eso.org (Olivier R. Hainaut)- publishers, STARCAT

oneil@aio.jsc.nasa.gov (Graham O'Neil)- Lunar Prospector

panama@cup.portal.com (Kenneth W Durham)- cometary orbits, IAU

paul.blase@nss.fidonet.org (Paul Blase)- propulsion

pjs@plato.jpl.nasa.gov (Peter Scott)- RTGs

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rdb@mel.cocam.oz.au (Rodney Brown)- propulsion refs

rja7m@phil.cs.virginia.edu (Ran Atkinson)- FTPable astro. programs
rjungcla@ihlpb.att.com (R. Michael Jungclas)- models
roelle@sigi.jhuapl.edu (Curt Roelle)- German mnemonic translation
seal@leonardo.jpl.nasa.gov (David Seal)- Cassini mission schedule
shafer@skipper.dfrf.nasa.gov (Mary Shafer)- photos, shuttle landings
smith@sndpit.enet.dec.com (Willie Smith)- photos
stephen@gpwd.gp.co.nz (Stephen Dixon)- shuttle audio frequencies
sterner@warper.jhuapl.edu (Ray Sterner)- planetary positions
stooke@vaxr.sscl.uwo.ca (Phil Stooke)- planetary maps
ted_anderson@transarc.com (Ted Anderson)- propulsion
terry@astro.as.utexas.edu (Terry Hancock)- NASA center info
thorson@typhoon.atmos.coloState.edu (Bill Thorson) - FITS info
tm2b+@andrew.cmu.edu (Todd L. Masco)- SPACE Digest
tom@ssd.csd.harris.com (Tom Horsley)- refs for algorithms
veikko.makela@helsinki.fi (Veikko Makela)- orbital element sets
Wales.Larrison@ofa123.fidonet.org (Wales Larrison) - groups & publications
wayne@csri.utoronto.ca (Wayne Hayes)- constants
weemba@libra.wistar.upenn.edu (Matthew P Wiener) - Voyager history
yamada@yscvax.ysc.go.jp (Yoshiro Yamada)- ISAS/NASDA missions
yee@ames.arc.nasa.gov (Peter Yee)- AMES archive server,
propulsion

In Net memoriam:

Ted Flinn

NEXT: FAQ #2/15 - Network Resources