

# To The Moon And Back

## Astronauts Aim For The Moon—And Beyond

NASA recently announced plans that are out of this world—literally! The space agency hopes to send humans to the moon again by 2020.

NASA hopes to make a giant leap—back to the moon. The U.S. space agency recently [2005] announced its plan to send four astronauts to the moon within the next 15 years.



*The new spacecraft is like Apollo, "the Moon."*

NASA officials say the moon is just the first step. They hope future missions will take astronauts to Mars and beyond. "We will return to the moon no later than 2020 and extend the human presence across the solar system and beyond," says Michael Griffin, the head of NASA.

So far, the moon is the only place beyond Earth that humans have visited. At 238,000 miles away, the moon is Earth's closest space neighbor.

On July 20, 1969, Neil Armstrong and Edwin "Buzz" Aldrin became the first astronauts to land on the moon. They traveled there aboard Apollo 11. When Armstrong first set foot on the moon, he spoke these famous words: "That's one small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind."