

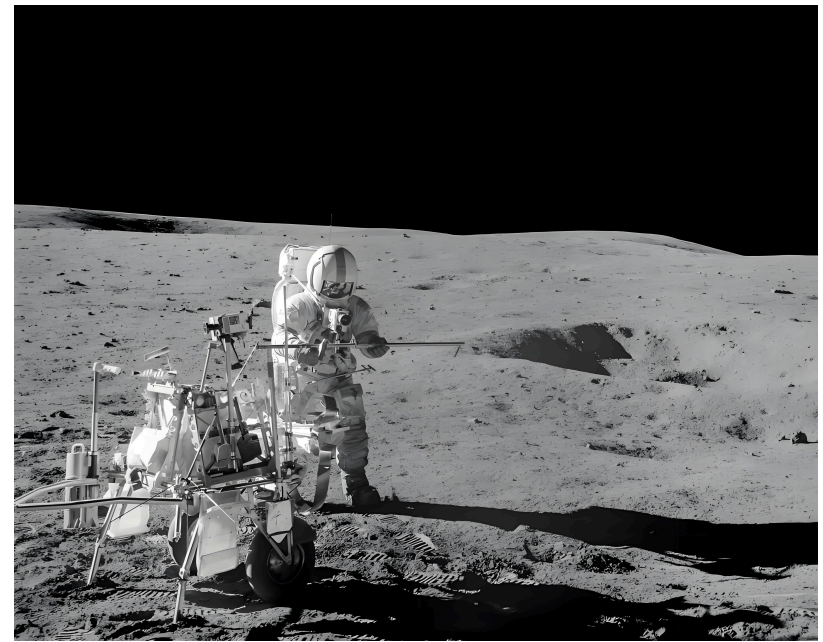
NASA's Perseverance rover has successfully touched down on the surface of Mars after surviving a "seven minutes of terror" descent through the Red Planet's atmosphere.

The six-wheeled vehicle, the largest and most advanced ever sent to another world, landed in a deep crater near the planet's equator called Jezero. Engineers at mission control in California erupted with joy when confirmation of the touchdown came through.

"Touchdown confirmed! Perseverance is safe on the surface of Mars," announced flight controller Swati Mohan. The landing marks the beginning of a multi-year mission to search for signs of ancient microbial life. Unlike previous rovers, Perseverance is equipped with a drill to collect core samples of Martian rock and soil, which will be stored in sealed tubes for future return to Earth.

The mission also carries a small helicopter named Ingenuity, which will attempt the first powered flight on another planet. Scientists believe Jezero Crater was once home to a river delta billions of years ago, making it the ideal location to hunt for biosignatures.

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NASA's Perseverance rover landed safely in Jezero Crater on Mars on Thursday. The mission aims to search for signs of ancient life and collect rock samples for return to Earth. It also carries a helicopter named Ingenuity to test flight on another planet.

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