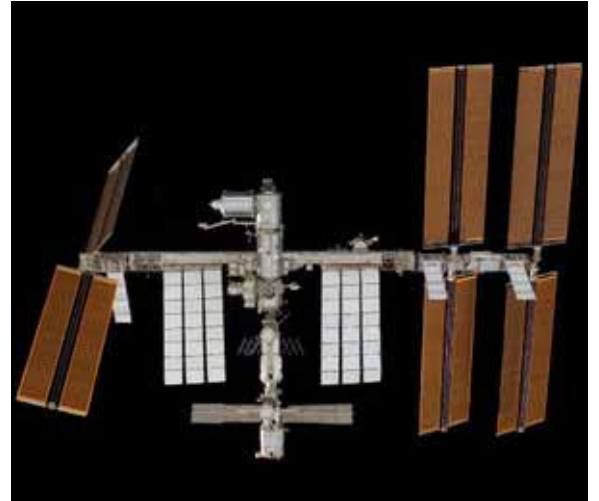


ISS Expedition Crews

NASA, along with its 14 international partners, began building the International Space Station on December 13, 1998 with the connection of the Russian-built Zarya and the US-built Unity modules. Since that moment, more than 20 missions have added pieces to the ISS to make it into what it is today. Most recently, STS-124 added the Japanese Kibo module—meaning “hope” in Japanese—which will enhance the research capabilities of the space station. The JPM will be the largest habitable module on the station and is equipped with its own airlock and robotic arm for external experiments.



Over the course of the last 10 years of building the ISS, the look of it has changed dramatically growing from 2 modules to the size of 2 football field laid side by side by the time of its completion within the next 2 years. Pictures of the ISS at each stage of development can be found at <http://spaceflight.nasa.gov/gallery/images/station/assembly/ndxpage1.html>.



The crews living on board the station have also changed dramatically over the last 10 years. The first Expedition crew inhabited the ISS from October 2000 to March 2001 and since then 16 additional crews have joined them in long duration spaceflight. With the most recent crew being Expedition 17 beginning in April 2008. In all, over 22 US Astronauts, 20 Russian Cosmonauts and 2 European Space Agency Astronauts have lived aboard the ISS. You can find pictures of each crew at http://www.nasa.gov/mission_pages/station/expeditions/index.html.

Activity

Have your students make a book, timeline or poster of the Expedition Crews and draw pictures of how the International Space Station looked during that mission. You can also have the students find one significant or interesting thing that the Expedition Crew did or that a shuttle crew did during the Expedition crew's mission. You can assign one Expedition crew per student to research or have all of the students research all of them. If you choose individual Expedition crews for each student, have the students present their crew to the class so the other students will have the opportunity to learn about the crews. This can be a group project or an individual project. It is a great opportunity to learn about the international partners in space and our long duration space inhabitants.