

SPACE RACE HISTORY TIMELINE

A Chronological Record of Human Lunar and Orbital Achievement (1955 - 1975)

Oct 4, 1957

Sputnik 1

USSR launches the first artificial satellite into Earth orbit, marking the official start of the race.

Jan 31, 1958

Explorer 1

First successful U.S. satellite launch; discovers the Van Allen radiation belts.

Oct 1, 1958

NASA Founded

National Aeronautics and Space Administration is established, replacing NACA.

Apr 12, 1961

Vostok 1

Yuri Gagarin (USSR) becomes the first human in space and the first to orbit the Earth.

May 25, 1961

Kennedy's Challenge

JFK commits the U.S. to landing a man on the Moon before the decade is out.

Feb 20, 1962

Friendship 7

John Glenn becomes the first American to orbit the Earth.

Mar 18, 1965

First Spacewalk

Alexey Leonov performs the first Extravehicular Activity (EVA) in history.

Dec 21, 1968

Apollo 8

First humans to leave Earth's orbit, reach the Moon, and return safely.

Jul 20, 1969

Apollo 11

Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin become the first humans to walk on the lunar surface.

Jul 17, 1975

Apollo-Soyuz Project

First joint U.S.-Soviet mission; docking of two spacecraft symbolizes the end of the Space Race.