

# China selects first spacewomen trainees

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China has officially selected its first group of 35 women to be trained as astronauts. The women, all between 17 and 20 years old, will train as pilots at the Chinese military's Aviation University, Xinhua, China's main government-run news agency, reported.

Some of the women will then be chosen for space missions, with China's first woman astronaut scheduled to be launched into space by 2010.

The 35 candidates were selected from among more than 200,000 applicants, according to Xinhua. The woman finally selected to become China's first woman in space will work as flight commanders or as an on-board engineer, Hu Shixiang, deputy chief commander of China's Manned Space Program, told the China Daily newspaper.

The United States and Russia are the only other nations to have launched manned spacecraft -- and both have sent women into space. The current U.S. shuttle mission has a woman commander.

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