

Shuttle Countdown Begins Wednesday

June 27 2006



NASA announced Monday the countdown for the next launch of space shuttle Discovery will begin at 5 p.m. Eastern Time on Wednesday at the "T minus 43 hours" mark. Included in the countdown are nearly 28 hours of built-in holds prior to the targeted launch time of 3:49 p.m. Eastern Time on Saturday, July 1, with a launch window that extends for about five minutes.

The launch countdown will be conducted from the newly renovated Firing Room 4 of the Launch Control Center at NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Florida.

NASA TV will provide live coverage of two events Tuesday. At 8:54 a.m. Eastern Time, Pavel Vinogradov and Jeff Williams, respectively the current commander and flight engineer aboard the International Space Station, will discuss their flight and the preparations being made for the arrival of the STS-121 mission crew on Discovery.

Around noon Eastern Time on Tuesday, the Discovery crew is expected to arrive at Kennedy, and its commander, Steven Lindsey, will have an opportunity to speak briefly about the mission.

The STS-121 crew includes Lindsey, Pilot Mark Kelly and Mission Specialists Michael Fossum, Lisa Nowak, Stephanie Wilson, Piers Sellers and Thomas Reiter, an astronaut with the European Space Agency. Reiter will remain with the Expedition 13 crew on the station

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