

# Expedition 13 Welcomes Atlantis Crew Aboard Station

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The Expedition 13 crew welcomes the STS-115 crew aboard the International Space Station. Photo Credit: NASA TV

The six Atlantis astronauts entered the International Space Station for the first time at 8:30 a.m. EDT where they were greeted by the station's Expedition 13 crew. Atlantis arrived at 6:48 this morning when Space Shuttle Atlantis linked up with the station.

The two crews are now turning to their attention to beginning STS-115's major task at the station, the installation and outfitting of the P3/P4 integrated truss structure and solar arrays. STS-115 is the first station assembly mission since STS-113 in late 2002.

The P3/P4 truss arrived at the station in Atlantis' payload bay. The crews will use the shuttle robotic arm to hand off the truss to the station arm at about 10:45 a.m. After the truss is attached to the station on Tuesday, the STS-115 crew will conduct three spacewalks to outfit and prepare the truss and arrays for operation.

Mission Specialists Joe Tanner and Heidemarie Stefanyshyn-Piper are scheduled to begin a new pre-spacewalk procedure called "camping out" when they enter the station's Quest Airlock at about 2:40 p.m. They will stay in the Airlock until they start the mission's first spacewalk Tuesday morning.

"Camping out" helps the spacewalkers to begin the spacewalk earlier by reducing the amount of time typically required for the pre-breathe exercise and some spacewalk preparations.

Before docking, Commander Brent Jett and Pilot Chris Ferguson commanded Atlantis to do a back flip maneuver, which allowed the Expedition 13 crew to photograph Atlantis' heat shield. Those pictures will be downlinked to engineers on the ground for analysis.

Source: NASA

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