

NASA Gives 'Go' for Shuttle Endeavour Launch on Aug. 7

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Space Shuttle Endeavour stands at Kennedy Space Center's Launch Pad 39A.
Photo credit: NASA/Ken Thornsley

On Thursday, NASA managers set Aug. 7 as the official launch date for space shuttle Endeavour's STS-118 mission to the International Space Station. Liftoff from NASA's Kennedy Space Center, Fla., is scheduled for 7:02 p.m. EDT.

Endeavour's launch date was announced following the traditional Flight Readiness Review at Kennedy. During the two-day meeting, top NASA and contractor managers assessed any risks associated with the mission and determined that the shuttle's equipment, support systems and procedures are ready for flight.

Commander Scott Kelly and his six crewmates are scheduled to arrive at Kennedy at 5 p.m. Friday, Aug. 3, for final launch preparations. The countdown is scheduled to begin at 9 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 4.

During the 11-day mission, Endeavour's crew will add another truss segment to the expanding station, install a new gyroscope on the complex and add an external spare parts platform. The flight will include at least three spacewalks. The crew will debut a new system that enables docked shuttles to draw electrical power from the station to extend visits to the outpost. If this system functions as expected, three additional days will be added to the STS-118 mission.

Joining Kelly on the flight will be Pilot Charlie Hobaugh and mission specialists Tracy Caldwell, Rick Mastracchio, Barbara R. Morgan, Alvin Drew and Canadian Space Agency astronaut Dave Williams.

The mission will be Endeavour's first flight in more than four and a half years. The spacecraft has undergone extensive modifications, including the addition of safety upgrades already added to shuttles Discovery and Atlantis.

Source: NASA

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