

# NASA to begin developing Ares rockets

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The U.S. space agency said it will begin testing core rocket engine components from the Apollo era this month to help build the Ares rocket.

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration said data from the tests will help scientists build the next generation engine that will power the Ares launch vehicles on voyages that will send humans to the moon.

NASA is testing the Apollo engine's powerpack -- a gas generator and turbo pumps that perform the rocket engine's major pumping and combustion work. Those components originally delivered propellants to the Apollo-era J-2 engine that fueled the second stage of the Saturn V rockets.

"The J-2X engine will incorporate significant upgrades to meet higher thrust and efficiency requirements for Ares," said Mike Kynard, manager of the upper stage engine for the Ares Projects Office at NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, Ala.

The J-2X is an evolved version of two historic predecessors: the J-2 engine that propelled the Saturn IB and Saturn V rockets, and the J-2S, a simplified version of the J-2 that was developed and tested during the early 1970s.

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