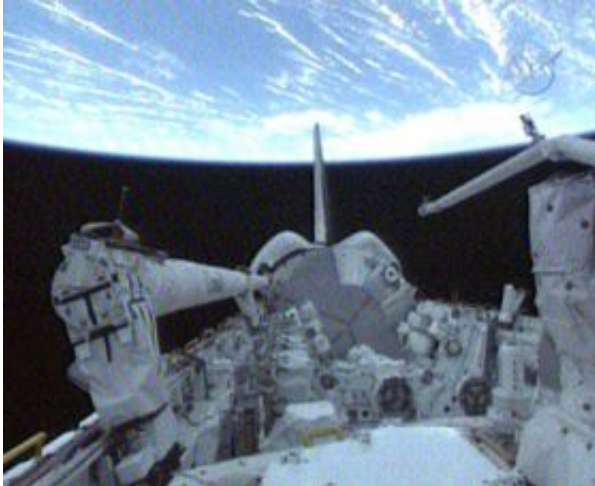


Endeavour Due at Station Tonight

March 12 2008



A look inside the payload bay of space shuttle Endeavour. Credit: NASA TV

Circling the globe aboard space shuttle Endeavour, the STS-123 crew members have completed their first full day in space. The astronauts inspected the orbiter's heat shield and prepared for their arrival at the International Space Station tonight at 11:25 p.m. EDT.

Crew members used the shuttle's robotic arm and Orbiter Boom Sensor System (OBSS) to check out the underside of Endeavour and the leading edges of its wings. The purpose of this inspection was to ensure that, during the vehicle's climb to orbit, no damage occurred to the tiles that protect Endeavour from the heat of reentry.

Endeavour's crew also extended the Orbiter Docking System Ring and

checked out rendezvous tools in preparation for their arrival at the station.

The STS-123 astronauts checked out spacesuits they will use during the mission's five scheduled spacewalks at the station. Three of these will include tasks devoted to assembly of Dextre, the Canadian Space Agency's newest contribution to the station and the final element of its Mobile Servicing System, and installation of related equipment. The spacewalkers also will work to unberth from Endeavour's payload bay the Japanese Logistics Module - Pressurized Section, the first element of the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency's Kibo laboratory.

Other spacewalk activities include the installation of spare parts, tools and a materials experiment, as well as the replacement of a circuit-breaker box and demonstration of a repair procedure for tiles of the shuttle's heat shield. The astronauts also will stow the OBSS onto the station's main truss during the fifth spacewalk.

Source: NASA

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