

Astronauts 'tweet' from space

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Astronauts are giving a behind the scenes look at the space shuttle Atlantis's high-risk mission to service the Hubble telescope, thanks to micro-blogging sensation Twitter.

Mike Massimino, 47, blasted off into space Monday with six other crew members. But thanks to Twitter, the space veteran is keeping his promise to stay posted, even from space.

"Next stop, Earth Orbit!!" Massimino -- whose Twitter account is [Astro_Mike](https://twitter.com/Astro_Mike) and can be found at [Twitter.com/Astro_Mike](https://twitter.com/Astro_Mike) -- wrote in his most recent tweet, posted just hours before takeoff.

Massimino, one of the mission's specialists, already has 221,119 followers and had given Twitter updates during training in April in Houston.

The current mission, STS-125, is Massimino's second space flight. He had previously participated in a Hubble maintenance mission in 2002 (STS-109) during which he performed two spacewalks.

The other Atlantis crew members are commander Scott Altman, pilot Gregory Johnson and mission specialists Andrew Feustel, Michael Good, John Grunsfeld and Megan McArthur.

Mark Polansky, who will be the commander of the next planned space shuttle mission to the [International Space Station](#) (ISS), is giving updates on Twitter about his training for the scheduled June launch.

He has invited his followers, who currently number 6,051 on Twitter, to submit questions on video website YouTube that he will answer from orbit, according to NASA.

Polansky's Twitter account is Astro_127 and can be found at [Twitter.com/Astro_127](https://twitter.com/Astro_127).

The Hubble mission is the fifth and last maintenance operation to the telescope before the shuttle fleet is retired. If successful, NASA has said the fix-up would extend the stargazer's already lengthy life by another five years or longer.

Atlantis is due to arrive at Hubble, 563 kilometers (360 miles) above Earth, on Wednesday afternoon.

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