

NASA confirms July 8 for last shuttle launch

June 28 2011, By MARCIA DUNN , AP Aerospace Writer



The crew of space shuttle Atlantis, from left, mission specialist Sandy Magnus, pilot Doug Hurley, mission specialist Rex Walheim and commander Chris Ferguson, leave the Operations and Checkout Building on their way to board the shuttle for their final day of training during the Terminal Countdown Demonstration Test at the Kennedy Space Center in Cape Canaveral, Fla., Thursday, June 23, 2011. The launch of Atlantis, the final space shuttle mission, is scheduled for July 8. (AP Photo/John Raoux)

(AP) -- The last space shuttle launch ever is set for July 8.

NASA managers met at Kennedy Space Center on Tuesday and confirmed Friday, July 8, as the launch date for Atlantis. The 12-day mission will close out the 30-year shuttle program.

Atlantis will fly to the [International Space Station](#) with a year's worth of supplies. Four astronauts will be on board for this grand finale.

NASA spent the past week testing a new fuel valve that was installed in one of Atlantis' main engines to stop a leak. Technicians also X-rayed support brackets on the [external fuel tank](#). Officials say everything looks good.

Launch time is 11:26 a.m. Huge crowds are expected.

More information: NASA: <http://www.nasa.gov/shuttle>

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