

# Just in from SpaceX: Dragon and Falcon 9 assembly now complete

February 28 2012, By Nancy Atkinson

---



Dragon spaceship and Falcon 9 rocket just completed assembly at Cape Canaveral on Feb. 27, 2012. Credit: SpaceX, via @SpaceX

SpaceX today released an image of the fully assembled Dragon capsule and Falcon 9 rocket inside their facility at Cape Canaveral. This means the first test launch of a commercially built spacecraft to the International Space Station is just a bit closer. The exact date of the launch has not yet been announced after NASA and SpaceX agreed in

early this year that the Feb. 7 date they were aiming for was not feasible. The demonstration flight – called COTS 2/3 – will be the premiere test flight in NASA’s new strategy to resupply the ISS with privately developed rockets and cargo carriers under the Commercial Orbital Transportation Services (COTS) initiative.

In a press conference earlier this month, NASA’s Mike Suffredini said [SpaceX](#)’s launch would be no earlier than March 20. “There are no big problems being worked but a lot of little things to wrap up,” he said. “I wouldn’t hold my breath, as it is a challenging date, but I would guess we’ll fly within a couple of weeks of that date. We’ll hold that date as we work towards the launch.”

Suffredini added that SpaceX is working on minor hardware modifications, plus they will need to do a wet dress rehearsal and hot fire test beforehand, so all that makes March 20 a challenging date. There’s a good window of opportunity between March 20 and the next Soyuz launch to bring the next crew to the ISS, which has been delayed due to problems with the Soyuz capsule. No firm date has been set for the Soyuz launch, but it will likely be late April or early May.

We’ll keep you posted when the tentative launch dates are announced.

And if you haven’t seen it yet, click on the image below to see a very cool panorama of the inside of the Dragon capsule.

**More information:** Click to see an interactive panorama for a look inside Dragon in its cargo configuration, as it will be on its first mission to the International Space Station:

[www.spacex.com/panorama/index.html](http://www.spacex.com/panorama/index.html)

Source: [Universe Today](#)

Citation: Just in from SpaceX: Dragon and Falcon 9 assembly now complete (2012, February 28)  
retrieved 24 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2012-02-spacex-dragon-falcon.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.