

NASA says test flight of new heat shield a success

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NASA says an experimental heat shield for future spacecraft landings has successfully survived a test launch that brought it through the earth's atmosphere at speeds of up to 7,600 mph (12,230 kph).

The demonstration launch occurred Monday at the Wallops Flight Facility in Virginia.

A high-speed Navy Stiletto boat is attempting to retrieve the 680-pound (310-kilogram) heat shield.

The purpose of the launch was to determine whether a space capsule can use an inflatable [outer shell](#) to slow and protect itself as it enters an atmosphere at hypersonic speed during a planetary entry and descent.

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