

SpaceX Dragon cargo ship leaves space station

March 26 2013, by Marcia Dunn



This image provided by NASA-TV shows the SpaceX Dragon commercial cargo craft as it is backed away from the International Space Station early Tuesday March 26, 2013 by the International Space Station's Canadarm2 robotic arm. The Dragon is expected to splash down in the eastern Pacific ocean approximately 246 miles off the coast of Baja Calif., later this morning. (AP Photo/NASA)

The Dragon cargo ship has left the International Space Station and is on its way back to Earth.

Astronauts released the unmanned cargo ship from the end of the space station's giant [robot arm](#) Tuesday morning.



This image provided by NASA-TV shows the SpaceX Dragon commercial cargo craft after it was detached from the International Space Station early Tuesday March 26, 2013 by the International Space Station's Canadarm2 robotic arm. The two spacecraft were traveling Canada at the time. The rising sun and the curvature of the earth can be seen behind the spacecraft. The Dragon is expected to splash down in the eastern Pacific ocean approximately 246 miles off the coast of Baja Calif., later this morning. (AP Photo/NASA)

The parting occurred about 250 miles over the South Pacific. The privately owned spacecraft will splash down in the Pacific early in the afternoon. It's returning science samples and old space station equipment.

The California-based SpaceX company launched the Dragon from [Cape Canaveral](#), Fla., at the beginning of March. NASA is paying SpaceX to periodically supply the space station.



This image provided by NASA-TV shows the SpaceX Dragon commercial cargo craft as it is backed away from the International Space Station's Canadarm2 robotic arm early Tuesday March 26, 2013 on it's return to earth. The Dragon is expected to splash down in the eastern Pacific ocean approximately 246 miles off the coast of Baja Calif., later this morning. (AP Photo/NASA)

Mechanical trouble caused a one-day delay in Dragon's arrival to the space station.

Three people are aboard the space station right now. They'll be joined by three more following this week's Soyuz launch from Kazakhstan.



This image provided by NASA-TV shows the SpaceX Dragon commercial cargo craft after it was detached from the International Space Station at 4:10 a.m. EDT Tuesday March 26, 2013 by the International Space Station's Canadarm2 robotic arm. The two spacecraft were traveling over the western edge of California at the time. The Dragon is expected to splash down in the eastern Pacific ocean approximately 246 miles off the coast of Baja Calif. later this morning. (AP Photo/NASA)

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Citation: SpaceX Dragon cargo ship leaves space station (2013, March 26) retrieved 27 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2013-03-spacex-dragon-cargo-ship-space.html>

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