

NASA astronauts go spacewalking days after reaching orbit

March 29 2018, by Marcia Dunn



In this image made from video provided by NASA, astronauts Ricky Arnold, center attached to robotic arm, and Drew Feustel, above, work during a spacewalk outside the International Space Station on Thursday, March 26, 2018. The two astronauts arrived to the station less than a week ago. (NASA via AP)

Two new arrivals at the International Space Station went spacewalking Thursday less than a week after moving in, completing all their work despite a slightly shortened excursion.

NASA [astronauts](#) Drew Feustel and Ricky Arnold quickly installed new wireless antennas and removed leaky hoses from a radiator. They also replaced a broken camera.

"We got a lot done today," Mission Control radioed, offering congratulations.

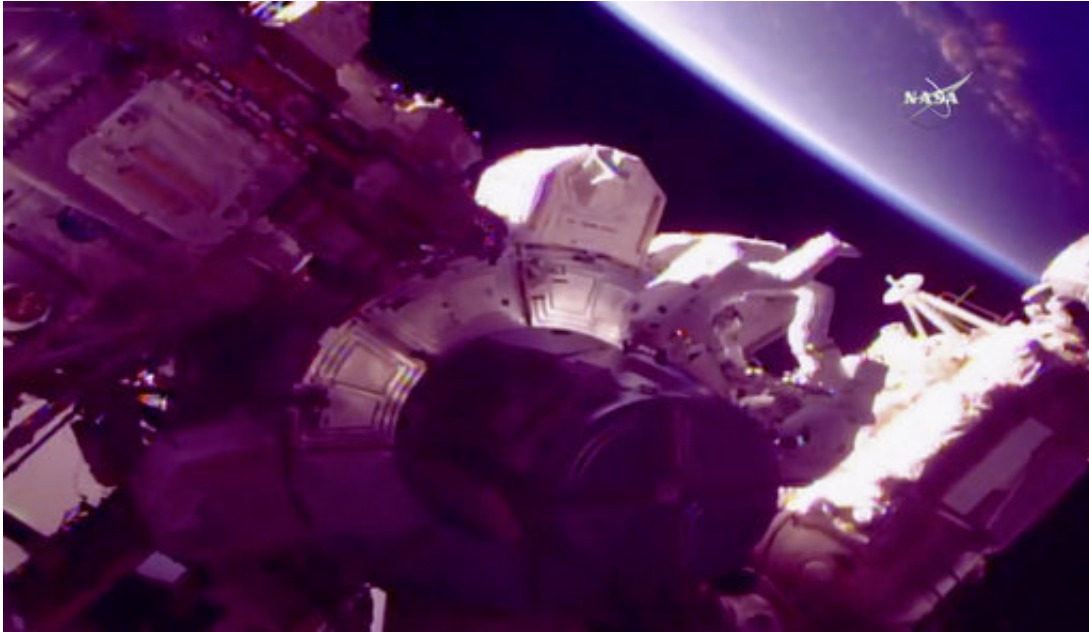
The astronauts brought the old equipment inside for eventual return to Earth. It was a tight fit inside the airlock as the [spacewalk](#) concluded at the six-hour, 10-minute mark.

The spacewalk was planned for 6 ½ hours, but NASA decided to limit the men's time outside because of an issue with Feustel's air-cleaning system. They still managed to complete all their tasks and tackled an extra chore.

NASA stressed Feustel's suit issue was unrelated to the trouble he had earlier in the day. His suit failed three leak checks after he put it on, but passed on the fourth try. That put the astronauts more than an hour late in getting outside.

"You guys are working harder up there today than in the gym," Mission Control said before the spacewalk had begun.

Feustel and Arnold rocketed away from Kazakhstan last Wednesday and arrived at the 250-mile-high outpost two days later. They will remain on board until August. Shuttle astronauts often went spacewalking a few days after reaching orbit, given their short flights, but it's less common for station residents who spend five to six months aloft.



In this frame from NASA TV, astronaut Drew Feustel, right, and NASA astronaut Ricky Arnold prepare to install new antennas, replace a bad camera and remove jumper cables from a leaky radiator at the International Space Station Thursday, March 29, 2018. (NASA TV via AP)

A space station manager, NASA's Kenny Todd, said earlier this week that both Feustel and Arnold were experienced spacewalkers from the old space shuttle days and were used to a quick transition in orbit. But Todd cautioned there's nothing routine about spacewalking and is probably the most dangerous undertaking by orbiting astronauts.

This was Feustel's seventh spacewalk and Arnold's third.

The intense pace continues next week. SpaceX plans to launch a load of supplies to the [station](#) crew Monday from Cape Canaveral, Florida.

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