

Virgin Galactic unveils commercial space suits

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Models demonstrate Virgin Galactic's new space flight suits in a skydiving simulator October 16, 2019

The date for the world's first commercial space flight is not even confirmed yet, but future passengers' Star Trek-like outfits are ready and

waiting.

Virgin Galactic founder Richard Branson on Wednesday introduced the custom suits that will be worn by the first private astronauts.

US sportswear designer Under Armour "worked day and night for about two years on this project" said Branson, who himself served as a model at the presentation at a skydiving simulator near New York.

The 69-year-old British billionaire donned the personalized royal blue suit that he plans to wear during his company's inaugural flight—sometime in 2020.

"Spacesuits are a part of the iconography of the first [space](#) age. Our visual impressions of human spaceflight and what astronauts wear are inextricably linked," Branson explained. "I love the way the spacewear looks and I love the way it feels."

"I also love the fact that the next time I put it on, I will be on my way to space."

Under Armour president Kevin Plank said the suits' creators approached the design the same way they would think about clothing for extreme sports.

"They approached it just like one of our typical uniform deals," Park said. "They started with... understanding the sport, understanding the needs of the athlete, understanding the [extreme conditions](#) they go through."



British billionaire and Virgin Galactic founder Richard Branson, 69, wears his new personalized suit for the company's first commercial space flight, set for some time in 2020

The material for the suits, undergarments and boots were chosen for their ability to aid in the body's temperature and moisture regulation.

A transparent interior pocket was added so space-exploring customers can keep pictures of their loved ones "literally... close to the heart," according to a statement from Virgin Galactic.

And they are designed so wearers can fit perfectly into the spacecraft's seats.

Every space tourist will get their own custom suit that they can take home with them back on Earth, complete with a label of their name and their country's flag.

"To be able to touch the [suit](#) is equivalent to touching the spacecraft for the first time," said British Trevor Beattie, one of some 600 clients already signed up for Virgin Galactic's first flights. "It's tangible."

"It's a new stage that we're involved in and we're closer still," he said. "But we're still patient, we can wait."



From left to right, Richard Branson, founder of Virgin Galactic, Kevin Plank, head of Under Armour and Stephen Attenborough, Virgin Galactic commercial director, are seen during the presentation of the company's new space suits near New York

Virgin Galactic, which was founded in 2004, has spent years developing its [space program](#), and after a [fatal accident](#) in 2014, has twice crossed the barrier into the final frontier.

But the company has still not yet piloted a space flight with clients on board.

The company plans to offer weightless flights to six passengers at a time, at \$250,000 (225,750 euros) a ticket for the first customers.



US sportswear manufacturer Under Armour designed the new space suits for Virgin Galactic's upcoming commercial flights

The client-astronauts will be able to float around the ship's cabin and look out of portholes to see the curvature of the Earth, all while surrounded by the blackness of space.

The Virgin Galactic suits were unveiled in the wake of NASA's presentation of new uniform prototypes for "real" American astronauts, who are set to return to the Moon in 2024.

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