

NASA says test good enough to try for Artemis launch next week

September 23 2022, by Richard Tribou



The Artemis I unmanned lunar rocket sits on the launch pad at the Kennedy Space Center in Cape Canaveral, Florida, on August 25, 2022. Credit: NASA

NASA announced Thursday that the cryogenic fueling test this week at Kennedy Space Center did well enough to keep moving toward a launch

attempt as early as Tuesday.

"Based on data from the test, teams are fine-tuning procedures for the next launch opportunity, targeted for no earlier than Sept. 27," reads a statement on the NASA website. "The rocket remains in a safe and flight-ready configuration at the [launch pad](#)."

The nearly 10-hour test at Launch Pad 39-B on Wednesday saw several issues with liquid hydrogen leaks, some similar to what caused a scrub on the last attempt to launch on Sept. 3.

But mission managers were able to troubleshoot and push through to accomplish all the goals for the test setting the rocket up for what would be its third attempt to get off the ground.

NASA will host a discussion about the next chance to launch that will be streamed on its website at [nasa.gov/live](https://www.nasa.gov/live) at 12:30 p.m. Eastern time Friday.

One uncertain factor is whether or not the U.S. Space Force will give NASA the OK to try for a launch despite not having checked the batteries on its flight termination system since before Aug. 16, the last time the massive 5.75 million-pound, 322-foot-tall combination of Space Launch System rocket, mobile launcher and Orion spacecraft was in Kennedy Space Center's Vehicle Assembly Building.

The Space Force controls the Eastern Range over which the rocket would launch, and had only a previous 25-day window allowed between times the [rocket](#)'s self-destruct mechanism could go without having been checked.

But if a waiver is allowed, NASA could pursue two previously announced potential launch dates. Tuesday's is a 70-minute window that

opens at 11:37 a.m. that would fly on a nearly 40-day mission that would land back on Earth on Nov. 5. The second is Sunday, Oct. 2, a 109-minute window that opens at 2:52 p.m. and fly for roughly a 41-day mission and land on Nov. 11.

Artemis I is the first of a series of missions NASA plans to return humans to the moon and eventually to Mars. This first uncrewed flight looks to prove the Orion spacecraft can support humans as it will travel farther out beyond the moon and bring it back home to Earth faster than any other previous human-rated spacecraft.

If successful, it would be followed by a crewed Artemis II mission to orbit the moon in 2024 followed by Artemis III as early as 2025, which aims to return humans including the first woman to the [lunar surface](#) for the first time since 1972.

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