

SpaceX prepares for rehearsal, test flight of Starship rocket

April 7 2023



Credit: Pixabay/CC0 Public Domain

SpaceX plans to carry out a launch rehearsal next week of Starship, the most powerful rocket ever built, and its first test flight possibly the following week, the private space company said Thursday.

SpaceX published photos of the massive Starship, which is designed to eventually send astronauts to the Moon and beyond, on its launchpad at the company's base in Texas.

"Starship fully stacked at Starbase," SpaceX said in a tweet. "Team is working towards a launch rehearsal next week followed by Starship's first integrated flight test ~ week later pending regulatory approval."

SpaceX will need a green light from the Federal Aviation Administration before being allowed to carry out the orbital test launch.

SpaceX conducted a successful test-firing of the 33 Raptor engines on the first-stage booster of Starship in February.

The 230-foot (69-meter) Super Heavy booster was anchored to the ground during the test-firing, called a static fire, to prevent it from lifting off.

Starship consists of a reusable capsule that would carry crew and cargo and the first-stage booster.

NASA has picked the Starship capsule to ferry its astronauts to the Moon as part of the Artemis III mission, set for 2025 at the earliest.

The US space agency will take astronauts up to [lunar orbit](#) itself in November 2024 using its own heavy rocket called the Space Launch System (SLS), which has been in development for more than a decade.

Starship is both bigger and more powerful than SLS.

It generates 17 million pounds of thrust, more than double that of the Saturn V rockets used to send Apollo astronauts to the Moon.

SpaceX foresees eventually putting a Starship into orbit, and then refueling it with another Starship so it can continue a journey to Mars or beyond.

Other super heavy rockets under development include Blue Origin's New Glenn, China's Long March 9 and Russia's Yenisei.

© 2023 AFP

Citation: SpaceX prepares for rehearsal, test flight of Starship rocket (2023, April 7) retrieved 26 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2023-04-spacex-rehearsal-flight-starship-rocket.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.