

SpaceX sets up 200th reflight with Cape Canaveral launch Saturday night

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SpaceX's reusability juggernaut keeps rolling with a planned Space Coast launch Saturday night that would mark the 200th time the company has relied on a previously launched booster to get its payloads to space.

A Falcon 9 rocket flying on the Starlink 6-18 mission carrying 22 of its Starlink satellites is set to lift off from Cape Canaveral Space Force Station's Space Launch Complex 40 at 9:07 p.m. with three more options Saturday night from 9:57 p.m. until 12:05 a.m. Sunday. Another four backup options fall Sunday night between 8:41 p.m. and 11:39 p.m.

The first-stage booster is making a record-tying 17th flight with a planned recovery landing down range on dronship Just Read the Instructions in the Atlantic Ocean.

Space Launch Delta 45's weather squadron predicts 95% chance for good conditions, and in the event of a 24-hour delay, chances would be 90% sliding to 80% chance across the three-hour window.

It marks the 200th reuse of a booster among its Falcon 9 and Falcon Heavy rockets. If it sticks the landing, it will be the 228th successful recovery since the first success in December 2015. It has not lost a first-stage since February 2021 nailing 153 attempts in a row since.

A successful launch would be the 266th overall since the first Falcon 9 success in 2008 and 67th this year among its launch pads at Canaveral, Kennedy Space Center and Vandenberg Space Force Base in California. The workhorse Falcon 9 began flying in 2010 and it has not had a launch failure since 2015.

For the Space Coast, the launch marks the 51st of the year coming up quick on its record 57 set in 2022. SpaceX has launched all but three of them so far this year, although United Launch Alliance, which had only its second liftoff of the year earlier this month, is setting up for its third flight soon, and could also launch its new Vulcan Centaur before the end of the year.

SpaceX has a slew more Falcon 9 launches planned as well as its next

Falcon Heavy launch as early as Oct. 5 on a mission for NASA to send the Psyche probe on a multiyear mission to the metal-rich asteroid also named Psyche that orbits the sun between Mars and Jupiter.

The only other company to launch from the Space Coast was Relativity Space back in March with its 3D-printed Terran 1 rocket.

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