

# SpaceX will try again to launch its mega rocket into orbit after first attempt ended in an explosion

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In this image from video provided by SpaceX, the company's Starship launches from Boca Chica, Texas, on April 20, 2023. SpaceX is aiming for another test flight of its mega rocket on Friday, Nov. 17, 2023, now that's it's gotten the final OK from the Federal Aviation Administration. The FAA issued its license Wednesday, Nov. 15, noting that SpaceX has met all safety, environmental and other requirements. Credit: SpaceX via AP

SpaceX is aiming for another test flight of its mega rocket on Friday after getting final approval from federal regulators.

The first launch of Starship ended in an explosion minutes after lifting off from South Texas in April.

The [Federal Aviation Administration](#) issued its license Wednesday, noting that SpaceX has met safety, environmental and other requirements to launch again. Elon Musk's rocket company said it was targeting Friday morning.

After the self-destruct system blew up the rocket over the Gulf of Mexico, SpaceX made dozens of improvements to the nearly 400-foot (121-meter) rocket and to the [launch pad](#), which ended up with a large crater beneath it.

SpaceX has a \$3 billion NASA contract to land astronauts on the [lunar surface](#) as early as 2025, using the spacecraft.

A month ago, the FAA completed its safety review of the upcoming Starship launch. It needed more time to wrap up its environmental review. No one was injured in the first attempt, but the pad was heavily damaged as the rocket's 33 main engines ignited at liftoff.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service later reported that concrete chunks, steel sheets and other objects were hurled thousands of feet (hundreds of meters) from the pad. It also said a plume of pulverized concrete sent material several miles (up to 10 kilometers) away.



NASA astronaut Sunita Williams, left, and Haley Esparza ride on horses as they visit SpaceX's Starship, April 19, 2023, as it's readied for launch at Starbase in Boca Chica, Texas. SpaceX is aiming for another test flight of its mega rocket, Starship, on Friday, Nov. 17, after getting the final OK from the Federal Aviation Administration. The FAA issued its license Wednesday, Nov. 15, noting that SpaceX has met safety, environmental and other requirements. Credit: AP Photo/Eric Gay, File

Wildlife and [environmental groups](#) sued the FAA over what they considered to be the FAA's failure to fully consider the environmental impacts of the Starship program near Boca Chica Beach.

Plans call for the [test flight](#) to last 1 /1/2 hours and fall short of a full orbit of Earth. The spacecraft would go eastward, passing over the Atlantic, Indian and Pacific oceans before ditching near Hawaii. Nothing

of value will be on board.

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