

NASA hears from Voyager 1, the most distant spacecraft from Earth, after months of quiet

April 27 2024, by Marcia Dunn



This illustration provided by NASA depicts Voyager 1. The most distant spacecraft from Earth stopped sending back understandable data in November 2023. Flight controllers traced the blank communication to a bad computer chip and rearranged the spacecraft's coding to work around the trouble. In mid-April 2024, NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory declared success after receiving good engineering updates. The team is still working to restore transmission of the science data. Credit: NASA via AP

NASA has finally heard back from Voyager 1 again in a way that makes sense.

The most distant spacecraft from Earth stopped sending back understandable data last November. Flight controllers traced the blank communication to a bad computer chip and rearranged the spacecraft's coding to work around the trouble.

NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Southern California declared success after receiving good engineering updates late last week. The team is still working to restore transmission of the science data.

It takes 22 1/2 hours to send a signal to Voyager 1, more than 15 billion miles (24 billion kilometers) away in [interstellar space](#). The signal travel time is double that for a round trip.

Contact was never lost, rather it was like making a phone call where you can't hear the person on the other end, a JPL spokeswoman said Tuesday.

Launched in 1977 to study Jupiter and Saturn, Voyager 1 has been exploring interstellar space — the space between star systems — since 2012. Its twin, Voyager 2, is 12.6 billion miles (20 billion kilometers) away and still working fine.

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