

U.S. cargo spacecraft set for departure from International Space Station

January 9 2018



The SpaceX Dragon cargo craft is pictured attached to the Harmony module of the International Space Station after it arrived on Dec. 17, 2017. Credit: NASA

After delivering more than 4,800 pounds of science and supplies to the International Space Station, a SpaceX Dragon cargo spacecraft will depart the orbiting laboratory on Saturday, Jan. 13. NASA will provide live coverage of Dragon's departure beginning at 4:30 a.m. EST.

On Friday, Jan. 12, flight controllers will use the [space station's](#) Canadarm2 robotic arm to detach Dragon from the Earth-facing side of the station's Harmony module. After Dragon is maneuvered into place, a ground-controlled command will release the spacecraft as NASA's Expedition 54 Flight Engineers Joe Acaba and Scott Tingle monitor its departure at 5 a.m. Saturday.

Dragon's thrusters will fire to move the spacecraft a safe distance from the station before SpaceX flight controllers in Hawthorne, California, command its deorbit burn. The spacecraft will splash down about 10:36 a.m. in the Pacific Ocean, where recovery forces will retrieve Dragon and approximately 4,100 pounds of cargo, including science samples from human and animal research, biology and biotechnology studies, physical science investigations and education activities. NASA will not provide coverage of the deorbit burn and splashdown.

NASA and the Center for the Advancement of Science in Space (CASIS), the nonprofit organization that manages research aboard the U.S. national laboratory portion of the space station, will receive time-sensitive samples from experiments conducted aboard the station and begin working with researchers to process and distribute them within 48 hours of splashdown.

Dragon, the only [space](#) station resupply spacecraft capable of returning science and cargo to Earth, launched Dec. 15 on a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket from Space Launch Complex 40 at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station in Florida and arrived at the station Dec. 17 for the company's 13th NASA-contracted commercial resupply mission to the [station](#).

Provided by NASA

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