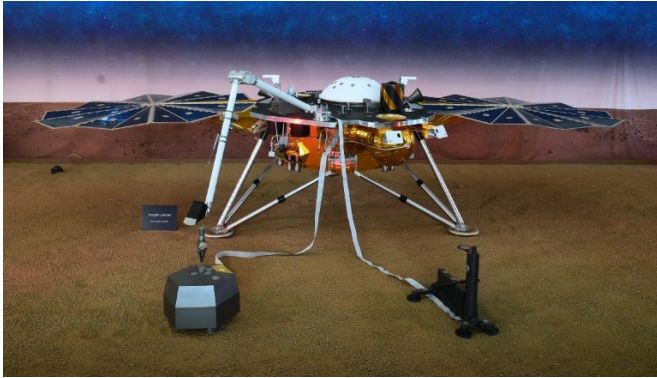


Safely on Mars, InSight unfolds its arrays and snaps some pics

29 November 2018



A replica of the Mars InSight lander at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California, showing instruments used to study the planet

After safely landing on Mars following its nearly seven month journey, NASA has released the first pictures taken by its InSight spacecraft, which has opened its solar arrays to charge batteries.

The \$993 million lander, which landed on Monday and appears to be in good shape, will soon begin unfolding its robotic arm and deploying its quake-sensors on the Martian surface.

NASA engineers are planning to begin work with its [robotic arm](#) soon, but are proceeding with caution.

The arm has five mechanical fingers to help it lift out and place its two instruments on Martian soil in the coming few months.

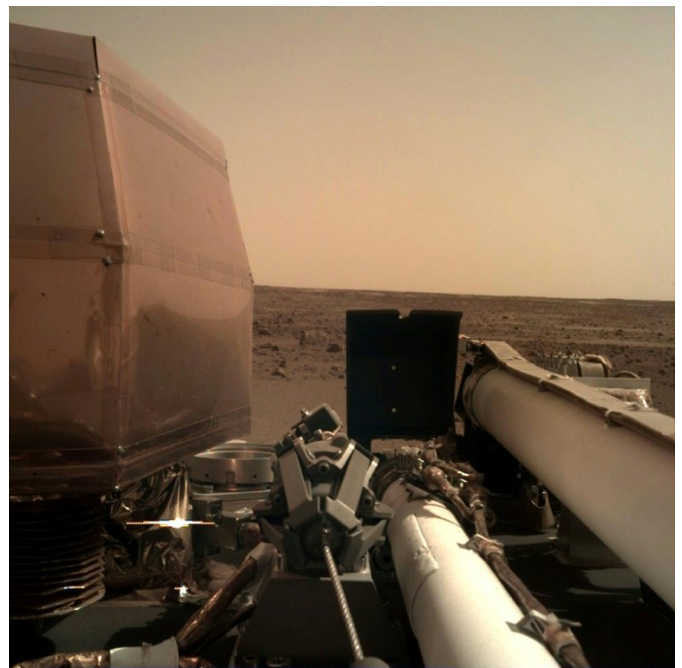
"Slowly releasing all my pent-up tension, starting with loosening my grapple, as these before-and-after pics show," said the NASAInSight Twitter account.

"Until I'm ready to stretch my arm out, my camera angles will be the same."

InSight is equipped with two full-color cameras and has already sent back six shots since touching down.

The waist-high spacecraft will stay in place for the two-year duration of its mission.

NASA has not said anything about the condition of the other instruments on board, which include a French-made seismometer to study Marsquakes and a German self-hammering mole to measure heat's escape from the planet.



One of the first images taken by the Mars InSight lander and released by NASA after the probe landed on the surface of the Red Planet

NASA did say its [solar arrays](#) have deployed, which is good news since the lander runs on solar energy.

In Paris, the French space agency CNES said everything seems fine for the moment, and that it is up to NASA to communicate with the SEIS quake-sensing instrument.

© 2018 AFP

APA citation: Safely on Mars, InSight unfolds its arrays and snaps some pics (2018, November 29) retrieved 1 October 2022 from <https://phys.org/news/2018-11-safely-mars-insight-unfolds-arrays.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.