



Discovery (OV-103)

America's fleet of Space Shuttle orbiters are named after pioneering sea vessels which established new frontiers in research and exploration.

NASA delved through the history books to find ships which achieved historical significance through discoveries about the world's oceans or the Earth itself. Another important criterion in the selection process was consideration for the international nature of the Space Shuttle program.

Discovery, the third orbiter to become operational at Kennedy Space Center, was named after one of two ships that were used by the British explorer James Cook in the 1770s during voyages in the South Pacific that led to the discovery of the Hawaiian Islands. Another of his ships was the Endeavour, the namesake of NASA's newest orbiter.

Cook also used Discovery to explore the coasts of southern Alaska and northwestern Canada. During the American Revolutionary War, Benjamin Franklin made a safe conduct request for the British vessel because of the scientific importance of its research.

Other famous ships have carried the name



Discovery, including one used to explore Hudson Bay in Canada as well as search for what was hoped to be the northwest passage from the Atlantic to the Pacific in 1610 and 1611. Another, based on whaling ship design, was used by the British Royal Geographical Society for an expedition to the North Pole in 1875. This organization then built another Discovery in 1901 to conduct its Antarctic expedition that concluded in 1904. This ship still exists and is being preserved by the Society.

The first orbiter to fly in space was Columbia in 1981, followed by Challenger in 1983. Discovery arrived at KSC later that year, and was launched on its first mission in 1984. Atlantis followed Discovery, arriving at the Center in 1985, with Endeavour, the replacement for Challenger, being delivered at KSC atop the Shuttle Carrier Aircraft in 1991. A test vehicle, the Enterprise, was used for suborbital approach and landing tests, and did not fly in space.

In the day-to-day world of Shuttle operations and processing, the Space Shuttle orbiters go by a more prosaic designation. Discovery is commonly referred to as OV-103, for Orbital Vehicle-103. Columbia, Atlantis and Endeavour are, respectively, OV-102, OV-104, and OV-105.

Flights of Discovery (OV-103)

(1984 to date)

| Times OV-103 Flown | Mission Name | Crew | Launch Pad | Launch Date | Landing Date & Site | Primary Payload |
|--------------------------|-----------------|--|---------------|----------------|------------------------|---|
| 1 | 41-D | Hartsfield, Coats, Resnik, Mullane, Hawley, Walker | 39A | 8/30/84 | 9/5/84 at Edwards | SBS; SYNCOM IV-2 |
| 2 | 51-A | Hauck, Walker, Fisher, Gardner, Allen | 39A | 11/8/84 | 11/16/84 at KSC | TELESAT-H; SYNCOM IV-1 |
| 3 | 51-C | Mattingly, Shriver, Buchli, Onizuka, Payton | 39A | 1/24/85 | 1/27/85 at KSC | DOD |
| 4 | 51-D | Bobko, Williams, Seddon, Griggs, Hoffman, Walker, Garn | 39A | 4/12/85 | 4/19/85 at KSC | TELESAT-1; SYNCOM IV-3 |
| 5 | 51-G | Brandenstein, Creighton, Lucid, Nagel, Fabian, Baudry, Salman-Al-Saud | 39A | 6/17/85 | 6/24/85 at Edwards | MORELOS-A; ARABSAT-A |
| 6 | 51-I | Engle, Covey, Van Hoften, Lounge, Fisher | 39A | 8/27/85 | 9/3/85 at Edwards | AUSSAT-1; SYNCOM IV-4 |
| 7 | STS-26 | Hauck, Covey, Lounge, Hilmers, Nelson | 39B | 9/29/88 | 10/3/88 at Edwards | TDRS-3 |
| 8 | STS-29 | Coats, Blaha, Buchli, Springer, Bagian | 39B | 3/13/89 | 3/18/89 at Edwards | TDRS-4 |
| 9 | STS-33 | Gregory, Blaha, Musgrave, Thornton, Carter | 39B | 11/22/89 | 11/27/89 at Edwards | DOD |
| 10 | STS-31 | Shriver, Bolden, Hawley, McCandless, Sullivan | 39B | 4/24/90 | 4/29/90 at Edwards | Hubble Space Telescope |
| 11 | STS-41 | Richards, Cabana, Shepherd, Melnick, Akers | 39B | 10/6/90 | 10/10/90 at Edwards | Ulysses |
| 12 | STS-39 | Coats, Hammond, Bluford, Hieb, Harbaugh, McMonagle, Veach | 39A | 4/28/91 | 5/6/92 at KSC | DOD |
| 13 | STS-48 | Creighton, Reightler, Brown, Gemar, Buchli | 39A | 9/12/91 | 9/18/91 at Edwards | UARS |
| 14 | STS-42 | Grabe, Oswald, Readdy, Merbold, Thagard, Hilmers, Bondar | 39A | 1/22/92 | 1/30/92 at Edwards | IML-1 |
| 15 | STS-53 | Walker, Cabana, Bluford, Voss, Clifford | 39A | 12/2/92 | 12/9/92 at Edwards | DOD |
| 16 | STS-56 | Cameron, Oswald, Cockrell, Foale, Ochoa | 39B | 4/8/93 | 4/17/93 at KSC | ATLAS-2 |
| 17 | STS-51 | Culbertson, Readdy, Newman, Bursch, Walz | 39B | 9/12/93 | 9/22/93 at KSC | ACTS |
| 18 | STS-60 | Bolden, Reightler, Chang-Diaz, Davis, Sega, Krikalev | 39A | 2/3/94 | 2/11/94 at KSC | Wake Shield Facility-1; SPACEHAB-2 |
| 19 | STS-64 | Richards, Hammond, Helms, Meade, Lee, Linenger | 39B | 9/9/94 | 9/20/94 at Edwards | LITE; SPARTAN-201 |
| 20 | STS-63 | Wetherbee, Collins, Harris, Voss, Foale, Titov | 39B | 2/3/95 | 2/11/95 at KSC | Mir rendezvous; SPACEHAB-3; SPARTAN-204 |
| 21 | STS-70 | Henricks, Kregel, Currie, Thomas, Weber | 39B | 7/13/95 | 7/22/95 at KSC | TDRS-7 |
| 22 | STS-82 | Bowersox, Horowitz, Lee, Hawley, Harbaugh, Smith, Tanner | 39A | 2/11/97 | 2/21/97 at KSC | 2nd Hubble Space Telescope servicing |
| 23 | STS-85 | Brown, Rominger, Davis, Curbeam, Robinson, Tryggvason | 39A | 8/7/97 | 8/19/97 at KSC | CRISTA-SPAS-2, JEM, TAS-1, IEH-2 |
| 24 | STS-91 | Precourt, Gorie, Lawrence, Chang-Diaz, Kavandi, Ryumin Returning (Mir 25): Thomas | 39A | 6/2/98 | 6/12/98 at KSC | 9th and final Shuttle-Mir docking |
| 25 | STS-95 | Brown, Lindsey, Parazynski, Robinson, Duque, Mukai, Glenn | 39B | 10/29/98 | 11/7/98 at KSC | SPACEHAB- SM; Spartan-201; HOST; IEH-03 |
| 26 | STS-96 | Rominger, Husband, Ochoa, Jernigan, Barry, Payette, Tokarev | 39B | 5/27/99 | 6/6/99 at KSC | Orbital Transfer Device, Strela, ISS supplies |
| 27 | STS-103 | Brown, Kelly, Smith, Foale, Grunsfeld, Nicollier, Clervoy | 39B | 12/19/99 | 12/27/99 at KSC | 3rd Hubble Space Telescope servicing |
| 28 | STS-92 | Duffy, Melroy, Chiao, McArthur, Wisoff, Lopez-Alegria, Wakata | 39A | 10/11/00 | 10/24/00 at Edwards | 100th Shuttle Flight, Zenith Z1 Truss, |
| 29 | STS-102 | Wetherbee, Kelly, Thomas, Richards, Voss, Helms, Usachev | 39B | 03/08/01 | 03/21/01 at KSC | MPLM Leonardo, Expedition 2 Crew Up |
| 30 | STS-105 | Horowitz, Sturckow, Barry, Forrester, Culbertson, Tyurin, Dezhurov | 39A | 08/10/01 | 08/22/01 at KSC | Expedition 3 Crew Up, Early Ammonia Servicer |