MISSION CONTROL KIT · EVENT BRIEF

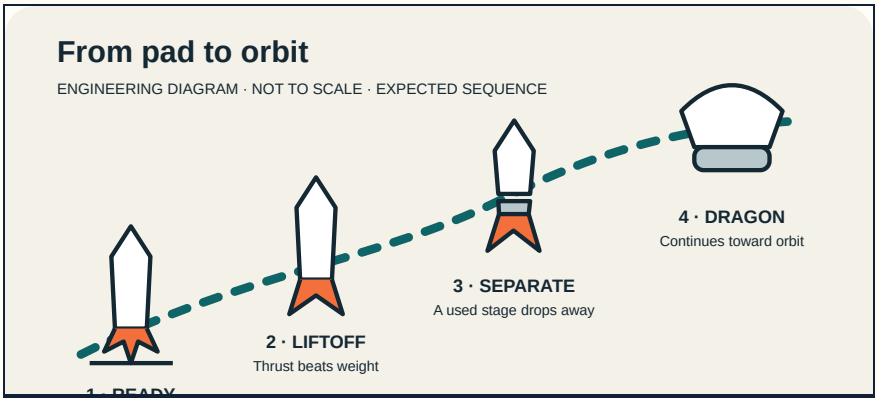
# Mission Control Kit: Crew-13

Crew-13 begins its trip to the space station · Sep 12–30, 2026 · WINDOW SET

**Why this moment?**

Four astronauts are preparing to leave Earth, enter orbit, and catch a laboratory moving around our planet.

| PREP | WATCH | MATERIALS | FIT |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2 minutes | Choose a 10–15 minute launch window | This Kit; pencil optional | Co-viewing recommended |




ENGINEERING DIAGRAM · NOT TO SCALE · EXPECTED · Credit: Space Now Kids

| 1 · CHECK | 2 · LIFT | 3 · SEPARATE | 4 · RELEASE | 5 · CATCH |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| The countdown team confirms the rocket, spacecraft, weather, range, and people are ready. | Falcon 9's thrust overcomes its weight and the vehicle clears the tower. | The first stage finishes its job and separates; the second stage continues. | Dragon separates from the second stage in orbit. | Dragon later approaches and docks with the space station. |

Crew-13's expected crew is Jessica Watkins, Luke Delaney, Joshua Kutryk, and Sergey Teteryatnikov, an international team of four.

Dragon is the spacecraft; Falcon 9 is the rocket that gives it the push off Earth. Dragon later changes course to meet the station.

The mission is expected to launch from Space Launch Complex 40 and travel to the International Space Station.

**What counts as launch-day success?**

For launch day, success is official confirmation that Dragon reached the planned orbit and is operating normally. Docking is a later milestone.

MISSION CONTROL KIT · WATCH TOGETHER

# Watch together

Choose one cue and one question. You do not need to narrate everything.

## Point this out

- The rocket may seem to rise slowly at first because you are seeing an enormous vehicle from far away.
- Listen for ‘Max Q’: the point of greatest aerodynamic pressure as the rocket climbs through the atmosphere.
- Notice when the broadcast changes from one vehicle name to another. That tells you which machine is doing the work now.

## Tell them this

A spacecraft does not fly straight up to the station. It enters orbit, then changes its path over time to meet the station safely.

### Afterward

Ask your child to retell the mission using five words: goal, machine, milestone, evidence, next.

## Why did the countdown stop?

Why can a launch stop after the countdown begins? A target time is the best safe plan, not a promise. A hold pauses the clock; a scrub ends that attempt. Stopping when a rule is not satisfied can mean the safety system did exactly its job.

## Mission words

| | |
|---|---|
| **Thrust** | the push made by the engines |
| **Stage** | a rocket section that does its job, then separates |
| **Orbit** | falling around Earth fast enough to keep missing the ground |

## Ask, then listen

What evidence would prove Dragon, not just the rocket, is healthy?

Why is docking a different problem from launching?

## Sources & credits

**NASA · Crew-13 mission**
https://www.nasa.gov/mission/nasas-spacex-crew-13/

**NASA · 2026 station flight plan**
https://www.nasa.gov/blogs/commercialcrew/2026/05/01/nasa-partners-update-international-space-station-2026-flight-plan/

Optional countdown context photo: NASA/Ben Smegelsky · REAL IMAGE · CONTEXT PHOTO

**NASA · Crew-13 briefings advisory**
https://www.nasa.gov/news-release/nasa-sets-briefings-for-spacex-crew-13-mission-to-space-station/

Sequence graphic: Space Now Kids · ENGINEERING DIAGRAM · NOT TO SCALE · EXPECTED