

# Major Tim Peake

On 18th June 2016, astronaut Major Tim Peake returned to Earth after spending 6 months in space. He had orbited the Earth around 3,000 times and travelled over 125 million kilometres. He said that the trip back to Earth had been “incredible – the best ride I’ve been on ever.” How did he get to make this amazing journey?

Tim’s interest in flying began when his dad took him to see old planes and watch displays at air shows. After leaving school, he joined the Army Air Corps and became a helicopter pilot. In 2008, he was working as a test pilot when he saw an advert online for new astronaut training. He decided to

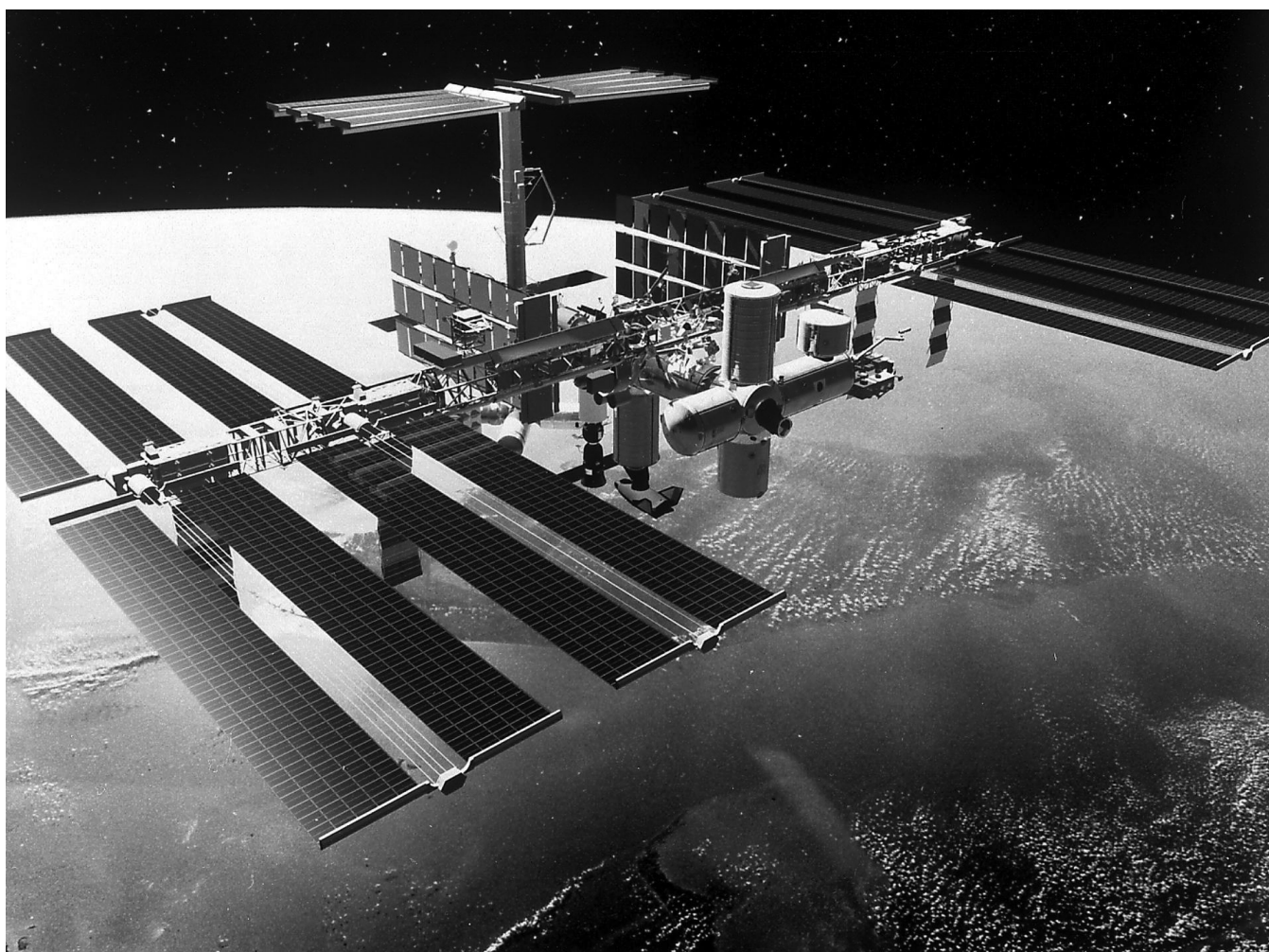


apply as he felt the ad described him perfectly – he had flying experience, he’d been a test pilot and he had a university degree. He was one of 8,413 people to apply to become an astronaut. After many tests and assessments and interviews, Tim finally heard that he had been successful when he was offered the position of one of just six European Space Agency astronauts.

On 15th December 2015, Tim was launched to the International Space Station (ISS), along with two other astronauts. Traditionally, every astronaut is allowed to choose three songs to play during the launch. Tim chose *Don’t Stop Me Now* by Queen, U2’s *A Beautiful Day* and *A Sky Full of Stars* by Coldplay. When Tim arrived at the ISS, he ate his first meal in space – a bacon sandwich with a cup of tea. During his first news conference from space, Tim said “Life up here is absolutely spectacular ... an amazing view of Earth ... way beyond my expectations.”

Tim was often in the news during his time on the ISS. A month after he arrived, he took part in a spacewalk – the first ever by a British astronaut. In April 2015, he ran the London Marathon on the ISS treadmill. Tim was keen to get schoolchildren involved during his mission because he said he “wanted to inspire the next generation”. With the UK Space Agency, he put together a programme of activities for children that included designing an astronaut’s meal, experiments with growing seeds, as well as fitness challenges. Tim captured the interest and imagination of many people around the world by communicating back to Earth regularly, through online messages and photos.

Although Tim is no longer on the ISS, it is still orbiting the Earth and can be tracked from the [principia.org.uk](http://principia.org.uk) website. Next time it’s passing overhead, why not pop out and give it a wave?



*An artist's depiction of the ISS passing over Florida and the Bahamas.*

Name: ..... Class: ..... Date: .....

**1** On which date did Tim Peake return to Earth after his time in space?

.....

**2** What did Tim say about his trip back to Earth?

.....

**3** Why did Tim decide to apply to be an astronaut?

.....

**4** How many people applied to become an astronaut?

.....

**5** What was Tim's first meal in space?

.....

**6** Give **one** reason why Tim was in the news while he was on the ISS.

.....

**7** What reason did Tim give for wanting children to be involved in his space mission?

.....

**8** Which of these activities were included in Tim’s programme of activity for children?

Tick **two**.

- keeping fit
- writing online messages
- writing news stories
- experiments

**9** How did Tim capture people’s interest when he was on the ISS?

.....

**10** Draw lines to match each part of the passage with the quotation.

Introduction

*“he ran the London Marathon”*

Life before the ISS

*“Tim chose Don’t Stop Me Now by Queen”*

Going to the ISS

*“He had orbited the Earth around 3,000 times”*

Life on the ISS

*“pop out and give it a wave”*

Conclusion

*“After leaving school, he joined the Army Air Corps”*