

OURSPACE

DIGITAL ADVENTURES IN SPACE

International Space Station

The ISS is a collaboration between a number of different countries and space agencies. Construction began in 1998 and it is due for completion in 2011. The ISS is a laboratory for numerous experiments and to test systems and technology which may be used on extended missions to the Moon and Mars.

The ISS can be seen with the naked eye and orbits the Earth over 15 times each day, travelling at 28,000 km per hour. It orbits between 278 and 460 km above the surface of the Earth.

The ISS has been continually staffed since 2000 and the inhabitants have come from 15 different countries. British-born astronauts include Michael Foale, Piers Sellers, Gregory Johnson, Nicholas Patrick and Richard Garriott.

The parts for the ISS are taken into orbit by the American Space Shuttles and the Russian Proton and Soyuz rockets. There are five mission control centres who manage the ISS. They are NASA, the Russian Federal Space Agency, the Japanese Aerospace Exploration Agency, the Canadian Space Agency and the European Space Agency.

For more information visit:
www.nasa.gov/station

You can find out where the ISS is by visiting:
<http://www.jsc.nasa.gov/sightings/>