

Project Mercury



The Mercury-Redstone Launch Vehicle, designed for NASA's Project Mercury, was the first American manned space booster. It was used for six sub-orbital Mercury flights from 1960–61; culminating with the launch of the first, and 11 weeks later, the second American (and the second and third humans) in space.

A member of the Redstone rocket family, it was derived from the U.S. Army's Redstone ballistic missile and the first stage of the related Jupiter-C launch vehicle; but to man-rate it, the structure and systems were modified to improve safety and reliability.



The Original Mercury Seven astronauts with a U.S. Air Force F-106B jet aircraft. From left to right: M. Scott Carpenter, Leroy Gordon Cooper, John H. Glenn, Jr., Virgil I. Gus Grissom, Jr., Walter M. Wally Schirra, Jr., Alan B. Shepard, Jr., Donald K. Deke Slayton.



The Mercury Monument honoring the original seven astronauts is shown here at sunrise at Pad 14.

Atlas is a family of United States space launch vehicles. The original Atlas missile was designed in the late 1950s and produced by the Convair Division of General Dynamics,[1] to be used as an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM). It was a liquid-fuel rocket burning liquid oxygen and RP-1 in three engines configured in an unusual "stage-and-a-half" or "Parallel Staging" design: its two outboard booster engines were jettisoned during ascent, while its center sustainer engine, fuel tanks and other structural elements were retained into orbit.



A group photo of the seven original astronauts of Mercury (the Mercury Seven), taken at the Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas .

Astronaut John Glenn enters the Mercury spacecraft, Friendship 7, prior to the launch of MA-6 on February 20, 1961 and became the first American who orbited the Earth. The MA-6



mission was the first manned orbital flight boosted by the Mercury-Atlas vehicle, a modified Atlas ICBM (Intercontinental Ballistic Missile), lasted for five hours, and orbited the Earth three times.

