

Ride, Sally Encyclopedia Article

Ride, Sally

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Ride, Sally

Sally Ride was the first American woman in space.

American Astronaut and Physicist 1951-

The first American woman in space was Sally Ride, who served as a mission specialist on the space shuttle Challenger in 1983 during mission STS-7. Ride majored in physics at Stanford University in California and earned a bachelor of science degree in 1973, a master of science degree in 1975, and a doctorate in 1978 in that field, as well as a bachelor of arts degree in English in 1973.

Ride was selected as an astronaut candidate in January 1978 and, after completing a one-year training program, became eligible for assignment as a mission specialist on space shuttle flights in August 1979. Her first flight was STS-7, when she not only gained the distinction of becoming the first American female astronaut, but was also responsible for operating the robotic arm during the deployment of several satellites. Ride flew again in 1984, aboard STS 41-G. In June 1985 she was assigned to serve as a mission specialist on STS 61-M, but she terminated her training in January 1986 to serve as a member of the Presidential Commission on the Space Shuttle Challenger Accident.

Ride left the National Aeronautics and Space Administration in 1989 to join the faculty of the University of California at San Diego as a physics professor and become the director of the California Space Institute.

See Also

History of Humans in Space (Volume 3);; Mission Specialists (Volume 3);; Satellites, Types of (Volume 1);; Space Shuttle (Volume 3);; Sullivan, Kathryn (Volume 3);; Tereshkova, Valentina (Volume 3);; Women in Space (Volume 3).

Nadine G. Barlow

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Hopping, Lorraine Jean. *Sally Ride: Space Pioneer*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2000.

Internet Resources

NASA Astronaut Biography. <http://www.jsc.nasa.gov/Bios/ht_mlbios/ride-sk.htm>.