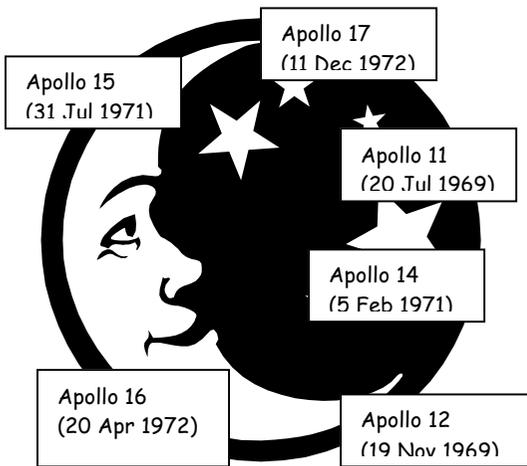


In 1959 a Soviet spacecraft, Luna 2, crash landed on the Moon. Two years later, the Americans began planning a spacecraft that could carry astronauts to the Moon and back. By 1969 they were ready. Three astronauts travelled to the Moon in the Apollo 11 spacecraft, which was launched from Earth by a giant Saturn rocket. The main spacecraft orbited the Moon by Michael Collins, while astronauts Neil Armstrong and Edwin Aldrin flew down in a small landing craft. They set foot on the Moon on 20 July 1969.



Between 1969 and 1972, six of the USA's Apollo spacecraft landed on the Moon, and 12 astronauts explored different parts of its surface. The longest visit was in December 1972 when the Apollo 17 astronauts Eugene Cernan and Harrison Schmitt stayed for almost 75 hours.

MOON FACTS:

- 384 400km from the Earth
- 3476km in diameter
- Atmosphere - none
- One day lasts 29.5 Earth days
- It can be as hot as 100C and as cold as -170C.
- It's roughly as wide as Australia

HOW FAR IS THE MOON?

1. To get an idea of the size of the Moon in comparison to the Earth, use a small marble and a golf ball.
2. The diameter of the golf ball is roughly 4cm. Cut a piece of string 30 times as long.
3. Put the golf ball (the Earth) at one end of the string. Stretch the string out and put the marble at the other end to see how far away the Moon is. It's roughly 30 times the Earth's diameter (12 713km).

The moon lander was 7 metres high. The top part took off to carry the astronauts back to the main spacecraft.

Helmets had gold-tinted visors to shield eyes from the Sun.

Backpacks had oxygen for breathing, as well as radios.



The astronauts were protected by thick, layered spacesuits.

TV cameras took pictures of the desert-like landscape.

An umbrella shaped antennae beamed pictures to Earth.



A Moon car, called a lunar rover, was powered by batteries.

Neil Armstrong and Edwin Aldrin left an American flag.

DO YOU KNOW?
The moon has no water and no wind.
Footprints left by astronauts on its surface will never be worn away.

