

CAREER BRIEF

(Grades K - 2)

ASTRONAUT



WHAT IS AN ASTRONAUT?

An astronaut is a space adventurer who travels, works and learns about outer space. Astronauts can serve as a pilot astronaut or a mission specialist.

WHAT DO ASTRONAUTS DO?

- Pilot Astronauts are in charge of the space mission and crew.
- Mission Specialist Astronauts work on experiments, look after the spacecraft and launch satellites.

Fun Fact: Did you know that astronauts are called different names in different countries? In Russia astronauts are called “Cosmonauts”, in China they’re called “Taikonauts” and in France they go by “Spationautes”.

EDUCATION

- A bachelor’s degree in engineering, science or math is required

TRAINING

- NASA requires 20 months of training, including time spent in an aircraft known as the Vomit Comet!
- Astronauts need to be able to pass a difficult physical examination.

SKILLS

- Must get used to weightlessness.
- Leadership skills.
- Experience in piloting a jet aircraft.
- Experience with science experiments.