

Top 10 findings from Pew Research on Americans' views of space

Alex Miller 3 minutes

Technology



Nearly half of Americans have engaged in a space-related activity in the past year, such as viewing imagery from a space telescope like the James Webb. In this image, NASA's Chandra X-ray Observatory teamed up with the Webb telescope to create this composite of the Tarantula Nebula. Chandra's X-rays (shown in royal blue and purple) identify extremely hot gas and supernova explosion remnants, while Webb reveals forming baby stars. | Image credit: X-ray: NASA/CXC/Penn State Univ./L. Townsley et al.; Infrared: NASA/ESA/CSA/STScI/JWST ERO Production Team



NASA remains popular while concerns exist about the handling of space debris by private space companies

As a space company working on a revolutionary type of low Earth orbit satellite constellation, we're always interested to hear what people think about the topic of space in general. A recent study from the Pew Research Center asked a variety of question about Americans' thoughts on space, and some of the findings were quite interesting.

The study was conducted in early summer 2023 and surveyed 10,329 U.S. adults.

Here are the top 10 takeaways from the questions asked:

1. In general, Americans are all for the U.S. being a leader in space exploration, with 69% responding that it's "essential."
2. Along with the rise of private space companies, 65% of Americans say NASA should also play a critical role in space.
3. Americans generally have a positive view of private space companies building safe and reliable rockets and spacecraft, but not so much when it comes to managing debris in space. 69% said this will be a major problem in the next 50 years, with 26% saying private space companies are doing a mostly bad job with limiting debris.
4. It's also telling that, on the question of space debris, about half of those surveyed weren't sure how private space companies were doing. It points to the need for industry to get out ahead of the issue not just by recognizing and highlighting the problem but by working toward solutions — such as building more sustainable satellites.

[Read about E-Space's sustainably built satellites, designed to reduce space pollution.](#)

5. The study revealed that Americans are fairly optimistic that space tourism is going to be a big thing in the coming years. 55% said they thought people will routinely travel in space as tourists over the coming half century, but they'd prefer someone else do it: 65% said they would definitely or probably *not* be up for a spacecraft ride around the Earth.
6. Respondents were skeptical that we'll colonize other planets anytime soon, with only 34% saying they thought that will happen in the coming decades.
7. The survey found that Americans see NASA in a mostly favorable light, with about 75% holding a high opinion and only 9% with an unfavorable view.
8. If there's one thing Americans want to see from NASA, it's monitoring asteroids and other objects that might be headed our way. 60% surveyed said that was a top priority for NASA, followed by 50% who said monitoring the Earth's climate is also of great importance to the space agency.
9. The partisan divide isn't as much in evidence for the U.S. role in space, with both Republicans and Democrats wanting to see the U.S. as a world leader in space. One key difference is on the value of NASA monitoring climate, with about 70% of Democrats in favor of this research as a top priority compared with only 30% of Republicans.
10. Interest in space may not be at the highs it was during the Space Race, but the study found that nearly half of Americans have engaged in a space-related activity in the past year. That includes things like looking at an image from a telescope like the James Webb, watching an eclipse or meteor shower or watching a space launch.



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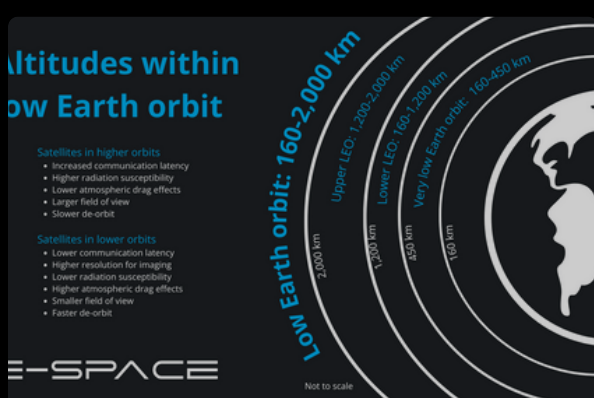
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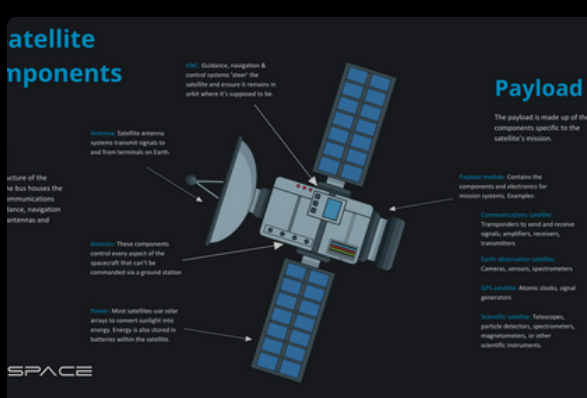
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