

# ASTRONAUT BIOGRAPHY



National Aeronautics and Space Administration

Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center  
Houston, Texas 77058

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## Bob Behnken

(Colonel, U.S. Air Force, Ret.) (Ph.D.) NASA Astronaut

### Summary:

Bob Behnken was selected as an astronaut by NASA in 2000 and is a veteran of three space flights. A native of Missouri, Behnken flew space shuttle missions STS-123 in March 2008 and STS-130 in February 2010. He most recently served as Joint Operations Commander on the first crewed flight of the SpaceX Crew Dragon, the Demo-2 mission, which landed August 2, 2020. He has accumulated 93 days in space and 61 hours of extravehicular activity (EVA) time during 10 spacewalks.

### Personal Data:

Hometown: St. Ann, Missouri.

### Education:

Pattonville High School, Maryland Heights, Missouri, 1988; Bachelor of Science degree in Physics, Washington University, 1992; Bachelor of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering, Washington University, 1992; Master of Science in Mechanical Engineering, California Institute of Technology, 1993; Doctorate in Mechanical Engineering, California Institute of Technology, 1997.

### Experience:

Behnken's research at Caltech involved non-linear control systems with applications in flexible robotic manipulators and a thesis on the control of instabilities within compressor systems. These projects involved non-linear analysis, hardware development, and real-time software implementation.

Behnken was commissioned via the Air Force Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC). His first assignment was at Eglin Air Force Base, Florida developing new weapon systems. He attended the Air Force Test Pilot School at Edwards Air Force Base, California with a follow on assignment to the F-22 Combined Test Force (CTF) where he served as the lead Flight Test Engineer for the 4th F-22. While serving in the Air Force, Behnken achieved the rank of Colonel. He has flown more than 2,000 flight hours in more than 25 different types of aircraft. Behnken retired from active military service in February, 2022, and transitioned to civil service.

### NASA Experience:

Behnken was selected by NASA in July 2000, and following completion of astronaut candidate training was assigned to support space shuttle launch and landing activities. He has also served in various other roles supporting human spaceflight, including as NASA's Chief Astronaut from 2012-2015, as well as Deputy of NASA's Flight Operations Directorate (FOD), from September, 2021 to April, 2022.

Behnken trained as an international space station crew member following the loss of Columbia and as a mission specialist for STS-400 the launch-on-need rescue flight for the last Hubble servicing mission.

<http://www.nasa.gov/astronauts/biographies>

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### **Spaceflight Experience:**

STS-123 Endeavour (March 11 to March 26, 2008) was the 25th ISS assembly mission, delivered the first component of the Japanese Aerospace Exploration Agency's Kibo Laboratory and the Canadian Space Agency's Special Purpose Dexterous Manipulator (Dextre). Behnken served a flight deck mission specialist, performed three spacewalks, and operated both the ISS robotic arm and the Dextre robot. Mission facts: 250 orbits, 6,577,857 statute miles, 15 days 18 hours, 10 minutes and 54 seconds.

STS-130 Endeavour (February 8 to February 21, 2010) was the 32nd ISS assembly mission and delivered Node 3 (the station's habitation module) and the Cupola (the station's seven-window Earth facing observation portal). Behnken served as a mission specialist, operated the ISS robotic arm, served as the lead spacewalker-performing three spacewalks. Mission facts: 217 orbits, 5,738,991 statute miles, 13 days, 18 hours, 6 minutes and 24 seconds.

DM-2 and Expedition 63 (May 30 to August 2, 2020) was the second demonstration mission of SpaceX's Crew Dragon spacecraft and the first human spaceflight accomplished under NASA's Commercial Crew Program. Behnken joined ISS Expedition 63 in progress, assumed ISS maintenance and science duties as assigned, and performed four spacewalks. Mission facts: 1024 orbits, 27 million statute miles, 63 days, 23 hours 25 minutes and 21 seconds.

### **Awards/Honors include:**

Washington University Outstanding Mechanical Engineering Senior; National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellow; United States Air Force Test Pilot School Distinguished Graduate and Distinguished Alumni Awards; Defense Meritorious Service and Defense Superior Service Medals; NASA Space Flight, Exceptional Service, and Outstanding Leadership Medals; Washington University Young Alumni and Distinguished Alumni Awards.