

NROL-69

CAPE CANAVERAL



NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE OFFICE

NRO Mission

Since its inception more than 60 years ago, the National Reconnaissance Office has been on the leading edge of innovation – collecting and delivering critical information that can only be obtained from the vantage point of space.

From warfighters to humanitarian responders, the NRO serves a wide range of customers. The Department of Defense and Intelligence Community depend on NRO capabilities for national security objectives. NRO systems are often the only tools able to access hostile territory or rugged terrain, and they can collect critical information without risking human lives or infringing on other nations' territorial sovereignty. Civilian customers depend on the NRO's space-based collections to assess damage from natural disasters, and help relief agencies determine how and where to deliver humanitarian aid.

The NRO is investing in the world's most advanced tools, information technology, and communications networks in order to meet customers' needs today and anticipate and adapt to the emerging demands of tomorrow. NRO capabilities on the ground, on orbit, and everywhere in between ensure customers get the information they need, where they need it, faster than ever before.

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The National Reconnaissance Office (NRO) and U.S. Space Force Space Systems Command (SSC) are partnering to launch NROL-69 on a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket through the National Security Space Launch (NSSL) program. This mission carries a national security payload designed, built, and operated by NRO.

One of NRO's most critical relationships is with the Space Force. The partnership between NRO and SSC through the NSSL program plays a key role in delivering critical space-based capabilities for national security. NSSL, a government launch acquisition partnership program between SSC's Assured Access to Space and NRO, is overseen and operated by SSC headquartered at Los Angeles Air Force Base in California. The program uses commercial-like contracts and pricing to save taxpayer dollars while ensuring high-quality service. This innovative approach ensures that the U.S. government benefits from the best value while meeting its national security needs.

NROL-69 is the first NRO mission launched with SpaceX from the NSSL Phase 2 contract awarded in August 2020. Previously, NRO and SSC launched two NSSL Phase 1A missions with SpaceX from Vandenberg Space Force Base with NROL-87 and NROL-85 in 2022.

NSSL continues to be NRO's principal mechanism to procure launch services for major system acquisitions to maintain NRO's assured and affordable access to space.



The Hummingbird illustrates the speed and agility with which we provide an advantage to the nation and its allies.

NUMQUAM HIBERNARE is Latin for "never hibernate." Our bird is ever vigilant.

To read more about NRO launches and previous patches, visit www.NRO.gov/launch

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Rocket & Launch Facts

Falcon 9 is a reusable, two-stage rocket designed and manufactured by SpaceX for the reliable and safe transport of people and payloads into Earth orbit and beyond.

Fairing

Made of a carbon composite material, the fairing protects satellites on their way to orbit. The fairing is jettisoned approximately three minutes into flight, and SpaceX continues to recover fairings for reuse on future missions.

First Stage

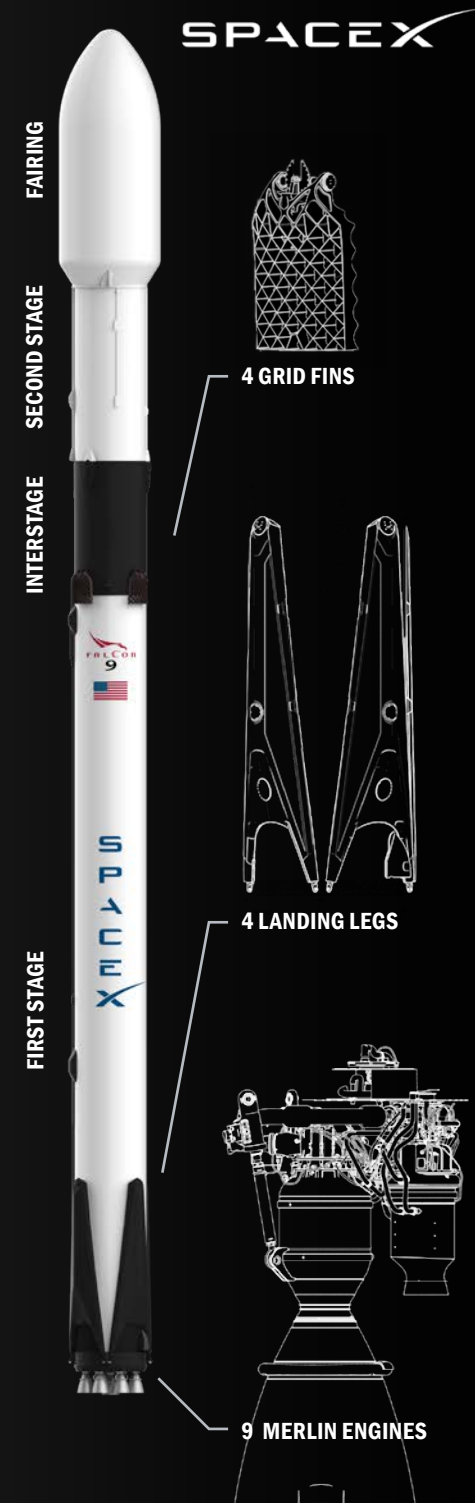
Falcon 9's first stage incorporates nine Merlin engines and aluminum-lithium alloy tanks containing liquid oxygen and rocket-grade kerosene (RP-1) propellant, generating more than 1.7 million pounds of thrust at sea level. After separation, the first stage will return to SpaceX's Landing Zone 1 (LZ-1) at Cape Canaveral Space Force Station.

Interstage

The interstage is a composite structure that connects the first and second stages, and houses the pneumatic pushers that allow the first and second stage to separate during flight. Falcon 9 is equipped with four hypersonic grid fins positioned at the base of the interstage. They orient the rocket during reentry by moving the center of pressure.

Second Stage

Powered by a single Merlin Vacuum Engine, the second stage delivers Falcon 9's payload to the desired orbit. The engine ignites a few seconds after stage separation, and can be restarted several times to place multiple payloads into different orbits.



Launch Site

Space Launch Complex-40 (SLC-40)

NROL-69 will launch from Space Launch Complex-40 (SLC-40) at Cape Canaveral Space Force Station, Florida. SLC-40 was the first of two complexes built to support the Titan III series of launch vehicles. A total of 55 Titan III and Titan IV missions were launched between 1963 and 2005. In 2007, SLC-40 was leased to SpaceX and was refurbished to accommodate the Falcon 9 rocket. Modifications include a new hangar on the pad to support Falcon 9 launches, new launch mount, a mobile Transporter/Erector system, and support equipment. The maiden flight of Falcon 9 from SLC-40 lifted off in June 2010, and fifteen years later, SLC-40 remains an active launch location for SpaceX missions.

2025 Success

The NRO is the best in the world at providing overhead intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance to more than half a million government users—including every member of the Intelligence Community, two dozen domestic agencies, our nation’s military, lawmakers, and decision makers.

Over the past two years, NRO has launched more than 150 satellites, creating the largest and most capable government constellation on orbit in our nation’s history. Continuing with this momentum, 2025 is set to be another dynamic year, with approximately a dozen NRO launches scheduled – four of which have already achieved mission success. NROL-69 follows NROL-153, NROL-57, and the successful deployment of spacecraft aboard SpaceX’s Transporter-12 and Transporter-13 rideshare missions. Additional information on upcoming launches will be made available at [NRO.gov/launch](https://www.nro.gov/launch).

Visit www.NRO.gov to view launch press releases.

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Future Launches

Additional information on upcoming launches will be made available at www.NRO.gov.

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