

Deorbiting ISS

NASA plans to destroy the International Space Station in early 2031 by attaching a SpaceX-built U.S. Deorbit Vehicle to it and steering it to break apart in the atmosphere over the Pacific Ocean.

Early to mid-2029: U.S. Deorbit Vehicle docks with ISS. After the vehicle's six-month commissioning, ISS stationkeeping ceases and the station begins to drift lower.

1

Mid-2030: Remaining crew members return to Earth. ISS continues to drift lower.

2

Late 2030: U.S. Deorbit Vehicle fires its Draco thrusters for the first time to establish the deorbit trajectory.

3

4

Early 2031: U.S. Deorbit Vehicle sends ISS into the atmosphere. Any surviving components splash down in the Pacific Ocean, possibly the South Pacific.

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