

# ASTRONAUT BIOGRAPHY



National Aeronautics and Space  
Administration

Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center  
Houston, Texas 77058

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## Loral O'Hara

NASA Astronaut

### Summary:

Loral O'Hara was selected by NASA to join the 2017 Astronaut Candidate Class. The Texas native holds a Bachelor of Science in Aerospace Engineering from the University of Kansas and a Master of Science in Aeronautics and Astronautics from Purdue University. Prior to joining NASA, she was a research engineer at Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution working with deep-ocean scientific research submersibles and robots. O'Hara launched to the International Space Station aboard the Soyuz MS-24 spacecraft on September 15, 2023. She served 204 days in space as a flight engineer on Expedition 70 and conducted one spacewalk lasting 6 hours, 42 minutes. O'Hara returned to Earth on April 6, 2024, landing safely near Dzhezkazgan, Kazakhstan.

### Personal Data:

O'Hara was born in Houston, Texas, and most recently resided in Woods Hole, Massachusetts. She enjoys spending her free time on the water and in the backcountry, traveling, and building and working on boats. She holds a Private Pilot license.

### Education:

Graduated from Clements High School in Sugar Land, Texas in 2001. Earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Aerospace Engineering from the University of Kansas in Lawrence, Kansas, in 2005. Earned a Master of Science degree in Aeronautics and Astronautics from Purdue University, in West Lafayette, Indiana in 2009.

### Experience:

At the time of her selection in June 2017, O'Hara was a research engineer at Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (WHOI) in Woods Hole, Massachusetts, where she spent eight years working on the engineering and operations of underwater vehicles such as the human-occupied research submersible *Alvin* and the remotely operated vehicle *Jason*. Her experience includes mechanical design and analysis, systems engineering, manned submersible testing and certification, and vehicle operations. She participated in eleven scientific research cruises aboard research vessels as a mechanical technician and data processor. From 2006 to 2007, she worked for Rocketplane in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma as a project engineer on the development of a suborbital space vehicle.

### NASA Experience:

As an undergraduate student, O'Hara worked as an intern at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in 2003, participated in the NASA Academy at Goddard Space Flight Center in 2004, and participated in the NASA KC-135 Reduced Gravity Student Flight Opportunities Program in 2005. In May 2017, she was selected as a member of the 22<sup>nd</sup> NASA Astronaut Candidate Class, the "Turtles". She reported for duty in August 2017 and completed two years of training as an Astronaut Candidate. Following graduation, she served as the Astronaut Office's Director of Operations in Star

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City, Russia for one year. In 2021, she was assigned to her first spaceflight, which she completed in April 2024 after living and working aboard the ISS for 204 days. After returning to the office, she served as the Astronaut Office's Assistant to the Chief for EVA and Robotics and then as the Mission Support Branch Chief, managing all unassigned astronauts and mission support activities. She is currently serving as the Assigned Crew Branch Chief where she manages all astronauts assigned to and flying spaceflight missions as well as assigned crew support activities.

### **Spaceflight Experience:**

On September 15, 2023, O'Hara launched to the International Space Station aboard the Soyuz MS-24 spacecraft alongside Roscosmos cosmonauts Oleg Kononenko and Nikolai Chub. Aboard the space station, she became a flight engineer for Expedition 70.

Throughout her mission, O'Hara contributed to a host of science and maintenance activities and technology demonstrations, including investigating heart health, cancer treatments, and space manufacturing techniques. O'Hara conducted one spacewalk totaling 6 hours, 42 minutes, joined by NASA astronaut Jasmin Moghbeli, replacing one of the 12 trundle bearing assemblies on the port solar alpha rotary joint, which allows the arrays to track the Sun and generate electricity to power the station.

After making a safe, parachute-assisted landing southeast of the remote town of Dzhezkazgan, Kazakhstan, on April 6, 2024, O'Hara completed her more than six-month science mission, logging 204 days aboard the space station.

O'Hara traveled 86,555,554 miles during her mission and completed 3,264 orbits around Earth. Expedition 70 was the first spaceflight for O'Hara.

### **Awards/Honors:**

National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship (2008).