

Thomas Pesquet prepares for spacewalk



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On 13 January, ESA astronaut Thomas Pesquet will leave the International Space Station for a spacewalk! Equipped with a high-tech spacesuit, Thomas’s spacewalk will last up to seven hours. Joining him will be the ISS Commander, Shane Kimbrough.

But Thomas and Shane’s spacewalk is not for fun. Instead, they have an important mission: replacing old batteries with new improved ones. These batteries store power produced by solar panels on the ISS. When the ISS is on the daytime side of the Earth, plenty of power is produced. But when the ISS is on the night-time side of the Earth, the solar panels do not receive any sunlight. During this time the ISS runs from power stored in the batteries. These are then recharged when the solar panels are in sunlight again. So having efficient batteries is vital!



Luca Parmitano

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Thomas and Shane will be helped via radio from NASA’s mission control in Houston, USA. There, ESA astronaut Luca Parmitano will give advice to the two spacewalkers, guiding them through their complex tasks. Luca is an excellent choice for this job as he has completed two spacewalks himself.

Thomas has already begun preparing his spacesuit, and readying the tools and equipment that he and Shane will need. No doubt he is also looking forward to the spectacular view he will enjoy of Earth and the ISS!

Cool fact: Thomas will be the 11th European to perform a spacewalk.

Thomas Pesquet

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