

Introducing Sentinel-3B, ESA's latest satellite!

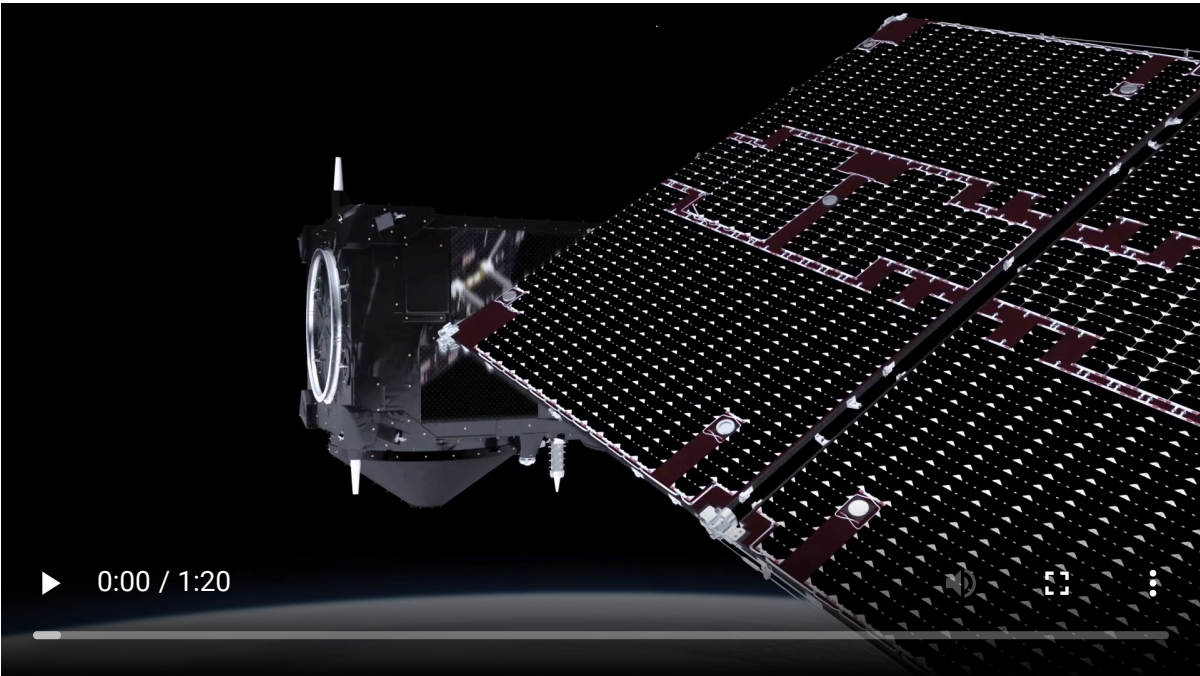


Sentinel-3B was thoroughly tested before launch
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Orbiting Earth are the Sentinels, a fleet of ESA satellites that watch over our planet. They send pictures and data to scientists on the ground, who use the information to understand the effects of climate change, monitor our environment, and keep people safe. Now a new satellite called Sentinel-3B has been successfully launched and is joining in the mission!

Sentinel-3B already has a twin satellite in orbit, Sentinel-3A, which was launched in February 2016. They will work together, using high-tech instruments, to measure Earth's oceans, land, ice, and atmosphere, all helping us to better understand planet Earth.



Sentinel-3B is now in orbit! Copyright: ESA/ATG medialab.

Sentinel-3A and 3B specialise in ocean studies. They are able to measure the temperature, colour, and height of the sea surface, as well as the thickness of sea ice! These measurements can be used to see how sea levels change, how much pollution is in our oceans, and even how healthy our sealife is. Once Sentinel-3B has been fully tested and is working together with Sentinel-3A, the two satellites will check the entire Earth every two days! This will allow scientists to make accurate forecasts of ocean conditions, which is currently very difficult to do.



The Sentinel-3 satellites specialise in watching over Earth's oceans
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Sentinels are designed to team up with their sister-satellites. When Sentinel-3A and 3B are over land, they will help the Sentinel-2 satellites to watch out for wildfires, map how land is being used, and measure the height of rivers and lakes. Together the Sentinels will produce a lot of information about our planet. This data is available to anyone, free of charge, so we can all use it to help understand our environment.

Sentinel-3B is the latest Sentinel satellite, but more are planned for the future. They will allow us to keep a careful watch over our planet, helping to keep it, and we humans that live on it healthy and safe. If you could make a Sentinel satellite, what would you design it to look out for? Would its mission be to help the other Sentinels, or would you think of something completely new?

Cool fact: The two Sentinel-3 satellites were designed and built by a group of around 100 companies!