Glossary

ADU: Avtonomnaya Dvigatel'naya Ustanovka; Autonomous Engine Unit

Aerobraking: A maneuver where a spacecraft's orbit is changed by reducing its energy by repeated passages through a planet's upper atmosphere.

Aerocapture: A maneuver where a spacecraft enters into orbit around a planet by slowing it down by a passage through the upper levels of a planet's atmosphere.

Aerogel: A silicon-based foam in which the liquid component of a gel has been replaced with gas or, for use in space, effectively with vacuum, to produce a solid with a very low density.

AGORA: Asteroidal Gravity Optical and Radar Analysis

ALH: Allan Hills (meteorites)

AMPTE: Active Magnetospheric Particle Tracer Explorer

AMSAT: The Radio Amateur Satellite Corporation.

Aphelion: The point of maximum distance from the Sun of a heliocentric orbit. Its contrary is perihelion.

APL: The Applied Physics Laboratory of Johns Hopkins University.

Apoapsis: The point of maximum distance from the central body of any elliptical orbit. This word has been used to avoid complicating the nomenclature, but a term tailored to the central body is often used. The only exceptions used herein owing to their importance were for Earth (apogee) and the Sun (aphelion). The contrary of apoapsis is periapsis.

Apogee: The point of maximum distance from the Earth of a satellite orbit. Its contrary is perigee.

AS: Aerostatnaya Stantsiya; Aerostatic probe

ASI: Agenzia Spaziale Italiana; Italian Space Agency

ASLV: Advanced Satellite Launch Vehicle

ASPERA: Automatic Space Plasma Experiment with a Rotating Analyzer

Astronomical Unit: To a first approximation the average distance between the Earth and the Sun is 149,597,870,691 ($\pm$ 30) meters.

AU: Astronomical Unit

BMDO: Ballistic Missile Defense Organization

Booster: Auxiliary rockets used to boost the lift-off thrust of a launch vehicle.

Bus: A structural part common to several spacecraft.

C4: Comet Coma Chemical Composition

CAESAR: Comet Atmosphere Encounter and Sample Return, or Comet Atmosphere and Earth Sample Return

CFD: Computational Fluid Dynamics

CHON: Carbon, Hydrogen, Oxygen and Nitrogen-rich molecules

CIA: Central Intelligence Agency

CISR: Comet Intercept and Sample Return

CNES: Centre National d'Etudes Spatiales; the French National Space Studies Center

CNRS: Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique; the French National Scientific Research Center

CNSR: Comet Nucleus Sample Return

CNUCE: Centro Nazionale Universitario di Calcolo Elettronico; the Italian National University Center for Electronic Computation

Conjunction: The time when a solar system object appears close to the Sun as seen by an observer. A conjunction where the Sun is between the observer and the object is called 'superior conjunction'. A conjunction where the object is between the observer and the Sun is called 'inferior conjunction'. See also opposition.

CONSCAN: Conical Scan

CONTOUR: Comet Nucleus Tour

Cosmic velocities: Three characteristic velocities of spaceflight:

First cosmic velocity: Minimum velocity to put a satellite in a low Earth orbit. This amounts to some 8 km/s.

Second cosmic velocity: The velocity required to exit the terrestrial sphere of

attraction for good. Starting from the ground, this amounts to some 11 km/s. It is also called 'escape' speed.

Third cosmic velocity: The velocity required to exit the solar system for good.

CRAF: Comet Rendezvous/Asteroid Flyby

Cryogenic propellants: These can be stored in their liquid state under atmospheric pressure at very low temperature; e.g. oxygen is a liquid below –183°C.

DAS: Dolgozhivushaya Avtonomnaya Stanziya; Long-Duration Autonomous Station

Deep Space Network: A global network built by NASA to provide round-the-clock communications with robotic missions in deep space.

Direct ascent: A trajectory on which a deep-space probe is launched directly from the Earth's surface to another celestial body without entering parking orbit.

DMSP: Defense Meteorological Satellite Program

DSN: Deep Space Network

DSPSE: Deep Space Program Science Experiment

DZhVS: Dolgozhivushaya Veneryanskaya Stanziya; long-duration Venusian probe

ECAM: Earth-Crossing Asteroid Mission

Ecliptic: The plane of the Earth's orbit around the Sun.

Ejecta: Material from a volcanic eruption or a cratering impact that is deposited all around the source.

EOS: Eole–Venus

EPONA: Energetic Particle Onset Admonitor

ESA: European Space Agency

Escape speed: See Cosmic velocities

ESO: European Southern Observatory

ESRO: European Space Research Organization (incorporated into ESA)

Flyby: A high relative speed and short-duration close encounter between a spacecraft and a celestial body.

GEM: Galileo Europa Mission

GEM: Giotto Extended Mission

GMM: Galileo Millennium Mission

GRB: Gamma-Ray Bursts

GSFC: Goddard Space Flight Center

GSLV: Geostationary Satellite Launch Vehicle

HAPPEN: Halley Post-Perihelion Encounter

HEOS: Highly Eccentric Orbit Satellite

HER: Halley Earth Return

HIM: Halley Intercept Mission

HMC: Halley Multicolor Camera

HST: Hubble Space Telescope

Hypergolic propellants: Two liquid propellants that ignite spontaneously on coming into contact, without requiring an ignition system. Typical hypergolics for a spacecraft are hydrazine and nitrogen tetroxide.

IACG: Inter-Agency Consultative Group

ICM: International Comet Mission

IHW: International Halley Watch

IKI: Institut Kosmicheskikh Isledovanii; the Russian Institute for Cosmic Research

IMEWG: International Mars Exploration Working Group

IMP: Interplanetary Monitoring Platform

IRAS: InfraRed Astronomical Satellite

IRIS: Italian Research Interim Stage

ISAS: Institute of Space and Astronautical Sciences

ISEE: International Sun–Earth Explorer

ISO: Infrared Space Observatory

ISPM: International Solar Polar Mission

ISPP: In-Situ Propellant Production

ISRO: Indian Space Research Organization

IUE: International Ultraviolet Explorer

IUS: Inertial Upper Stage (previously: Interim Upper Stage)

JOP: Jupiter Orbiter with Probe

JPA: Johnstone Plasma Analyzer

JPL: Jet Propulsion Laboratory; a Caltech laboratory under contract to NASA

KGB: Komityet Gosudarstvennoy Bezapasnosti; Committee for the State Security

KTDU: Korrektiruyushaya Tormoznaya Dvigatelnaya Ustanovka; course correction and braking engine

Lander: A spacecraft designed to land on another celestial body.

LaRC: Langley Research Center

Launch window: A time interval during which it is possible to launch a spacecraft to ensure that it attains the desired trajectory.

LEAP: Light ExoAtmospheric Projectile

LESS: Low-cost Exploration of the Solar System

Lyman-alpha: The emission line corresponding to the first energy level transition of an electron in a hydrogen atom.

MAGE: Moteur d'Apogée Geostationnaire Européen; European Geostationary Apogee Motor

MAOSEP: Multiple Asteroid Orbiter with Solar Electric Propulsion

MAV: Mars Ascent Vehicle

MBB: Messerschmitt Bölkov Blohm

MEI: Moskovskiy Energeticheskiy Institut; Moscow's Power Institute

MER: Mars Exploration Rover

MESUR: Mars Environmental Survey

MGCO: Mars Geoscience/Climatology Orbiter

MGS: Mars Global Surveyor

MIT: Massachusetts Institute of Technology

MORO: Moon Orbiting Observatory

MPF: Mars Pathfinder, MESUR Pathfinder

MPO: Mercury Polar Orbiter

MRSR: Mars Rover and Sample Return

MSM: Mars Science Microrover

MSX: Midcourse Space Experiment

MS-T5: Mu Satellite-Test 5

MUADEE: Mars Upper Atmosphere Dynamics, Energetics and Evolution Mission

MUSES: MU [rocket] Space Engineering Satellite

NAS: National Academy of Sciences

NASA: National Aeronautics and Space Administration

NASDA: National Space Development Agency

NEAR: Near Earth Asteroid Rendezvous

NEARS: Near Earth Asteroid Returned Sample

NEP: Nuclear Electric Propulsion

Occultation: When one object passes in front of and occults another, at least from the point of view of the observer.

OOE: Out-Of-Ecliptic mission

Orbit: The trajectory on which a celestial body or spacecraft is traveling with respect to its central body. There are three possible cases:

Elliptical orbit: A closed orbit where the body passes from minimum distance to maximum distance from its central body every semiperiod. This is the orbit of natural and artificial satellites around planets and of planets around the Sun.

Parabolic orbit: An open orbit where the body passes through minimum distance from its central body and reaches infinity at zero velocity in infinite time. This is a pure abstraction, but the orbits of many comets around the Sun can be described adequately this way.

Hyperbolic orbit: An open orbit where the body passes through minimum distance from its central body and reaches infinity at non-zero speed. This describes adequately the trajectory of spacecraft with respect to planets during flyby manoeuvres.

Opposition: The time when a solar system object appears opposite to the Sun as seen by an observer.

Orbiter: A spacecraft designed to orbit a celestial body.

PAH: Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons

PAM: Payload Assist Module

Parking orbit: A low Earth orbit used by deep-space probes before heading to their targets. This relaxes the constraints on launch windows and eliminates launch vehicle trajectory errors. Its contrary is direct ascent.

Periapsis: The minimum distance point from the central body of any orbit. See also apoapsis.

Perigee: The minimum distance point from the Earth of a satellite. Its contrary is apogee.

Perihelion: The minimum distance point from the Sun of a heliocentric orbit. Its contrary is aphelion.

PFF: Pluto Fast Flyby

PKE: Pluto Kuiper Express

POLO: Polar Orbiting Lunar Observatory

PrOP: Pribori Otchenki Prokhodimosti; instrument for cross-country characteristics evaluation

PSLV: Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle

PVM: Pioneer Venus Multiprobe

PVO: Pioneer Venus Orbiter

'Push-broom' camera: A digital camera consisting of a single row of pixels, with the second dimension created by the motion of the camera itself.

Re: Earth radii (6,371 km)

Rendezvous: A low relative speed encounter between two spacecraft or celestial bodies.

Retrorocket: A rocket whose thrust is directed opposite to the motion of a spacecraft in order to brake it.

Rj: Jupiter radii (approximately 71,200 km)

RKA: Rossiyskoye Kosmisheskoye Agenstvo; Russian Space Agency

Rover: A mobile spacecraft to explore the surface of another celestial body.

RPA: Rème Plasma Analyzer

RTG: Radioisotope Thermal Generator

RTH: Radioisotope Thermal Heater

SAR: Synthetic Aperture Radar

SEI: Space Exploration Initiative

SETI: Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence

SLIM: Surface Lander Investigation of Mars

SLV: Satellite Launch Vehicle

SMACS: Small Missions to Asteroids/Comets

SNAP: System for Nuclear Auxiliary Power

SNC: Shergottites–Nakhlites–Chassignites meteorites

SOCCER: Sample of Comet Coma Earth Return

SOHO: Solar and Heliospheric Observatory

Solar flare: A solar chromospheric explosion creating a powerful source of high energy particles.

Space probe: A spacecraft designed to investigate other celestial bodies from a short range.

Spectrometer: An instrument to measure the energy of radiation as a function of wavelenght in a portion of the electromagnetic spectrum. Depending on the wavelength the instrument is called, e.g. ultraviolet, infrared, gamma-ray spectrometer etc.

Spin stabilization: A spacecraft stabilization system where the attitude is maintained by spinning the spacecraft around one of its main inertia axes.

SSEC: Solar System Exploration Committee

SSED: Solar System Exploration Division

STS: Space Transportation System; the Space Shuttle

Synodic period: The period of time between two consecutive superior or inferior conjunctions or oppositions of a solar system body.

TAU: Thousand Astronomical Units mission

TDRS: Tracking and Data Relay Satellite

Telemetry: Transmission by a spacecraft via a radio system of engineering and scientific data.

3-axis stabilization: A spacecraft stabilization system where the axes of the spacecraft are kept in a fixed attitude with respect to the stars and other references (the Sun, the Earth, a target planet etc.)

TOPS: Thermoelectric Outer Planet Spacecraft

TOS: Transfer Orbit Stage

UDMH: Unsymmetrical DiMethyl Hydrazine

UMVL: Universalnyi Mars, Venera, Luna; Universal for Mars, Venus and the Moon

UTC: Universal Time Coordinated; essentially Greenwich Mean Time

V2: Vergeltungswaffe 2 (vengeance weapon 2)

Vidicon: A television system based on resistance changes of some substances when exposed to light. It has been replaced by the CCD.

VLA: Very Large Array

VLBI: Very Long Baseline Interferometry

VMPM: Venus Multiprobe Mission

VOIR: Venus Orbiting Imaging Radar

VRM: Venus Radar Mapper

Yarkovsky effect: A force acting on a rotating body in space caused by the emission of thermal photons, carrying momentum. Small asteroids and meteoroids are known to be perturbed by this effect.

Appendix 1

CHRONOLOGY OF SOLAR SYSTEM EXPLORATION 1983–1996

Date	Event
16 October 1983	The first orbital radar images of Venus are returned by Venera 15
7 January 1985	Sakigake, the first non-US, non-Soviet deep-space probe is launched
11 June 1985	The Vega 1 balloon is the first 'aircraft' to fly in the atmosphere of another planet (Venus)
11 September 1985	The International Comet Explorer flies by comet Giacobini–Zinner
28 January 1986	Space Shuttle Challenger explodes, derailing US planetary exploration initiatives
14 March 1986	The European Giotto flies by comet Halley
10 August 1990	Magellan enters orbit around Venus to deliver a complete radar map of the planet
29 October 1991	Galileo flies by asteroid Gaspra
13 September 1994	Ulysses makes the first pass over one of the poles of the Sun
7 December 1995	Galileo enters orbit around Jupiter as its atmospheric capsule plunges into the planet
17 February 1996	NEAR-Shoemaker, the first low-cost Discovery mission is launched
Related milestones	
4 July 1997	Mars Pathfinder lands on Mars carrying the first working planetary rover
14 February 2000	NEAR-Shoemaker enters orbit around asteroid Eros
12 February 2001	NEAR-Shoemaker lands on asteroid Eros

Appendix 2

PLANETARY LAUNCHES 1983–1996

Launch Date	Name	Main Target	Launcher	Nation
12 August 1978	International Cometary Explorer	P/Giacobini –Zinner	Delta 2914	USA
2 June 1983	Venera 15	Venus	8K82K Proton K/D-1	USSR
7 June 1983	Venera 16	Venus	8K82K Proton K/D-1	USSR
15 December 1984	Vega 1	Venus/Halley	8K82K Proton K/D-1	USSR
21 December 1984	Vega 2	Venus/Halley	8K82K Proton K/D-1	USSR
7 January 1985	Sakigake	P/Halley	Mu-3SII	Japan
2 July 1985	Giotto	P/Halley	Ariane 1	ESA
18 August 1985	Suisei	P/Halley	Mu-3SII	Japan
7 July 1988	(Fobos 1)	Mars/Phobos	8K82K Proton K/D-1	USSR
12 July 1988	(Fobos 2)	Mars/Phobos	8K82K Proton K/D-1	USSR
4 May 1989	Magellan	Venus	OV 104 + IUS	USA
18 October 1989	Galileo	Jupiter	OV 104 + IUS	USA
6 October 1990	Ulysses	Solar orbiter	OV 103 + IUS	ESA/USA
25 September 1992	(Mars Observer)	Mars	Commercial Titan III	USA
25 January 1994	(Clementine)	Moon/Asteroid	Titan IIG SLV	USA
17 February 1996	NEAR-Shoemaker	Asteroid	Delta 7925-8	USA
7 November 1996	Mars Global Surveyor	Mars	Delta 7925A	USA
16 November 1996	(Mars 8)	Mars	8K82K Proton K/D-1	Russia
4 December 1996	Mars Pathfinder	Mars	Delta 7925A	USA

Missions in parentheses are missions that failed, but the status of Fobos 2 and Clementine is disputed. Clementine successfully completed its lunar orbiter mission but not its asteroid flyby.

Appendix 3

GALILEO ORBITS AND ENCOUNTERS

Orbit	Satellite	Date	Minimum Distance (km)
J0	Europa	7 December 1995	32,958
J0	Io	7 December 1995	898
G1	Ganymede	27 June 1996	835
G2	Ganymede	6 September 1996	260
C3	Callisto	4 November 1996	1,136
E4	Europa	19 December 1996	692
J5	*No Encounters*	20 January 1997	–
E6	Europa	20 February 1997	586
G7	Ganymede	5 April 1997	3,102
G8	Ganymede	7 May 1997	1,603
C9	Callisto	25 June 1997	418
C10	Callisto	17 September 1997	539
E11	Europa	6 November 1997	2,042
E12	Europa	16 December 1997	205
E13	Europa	10 February 1998	3,562
E14	Europa	29 March 1998	1,645
E15	Europa	31 May 1998	2,515
E16	Europa	20 July 1998	1,837
E17	Europa	26 September 1998	3,582
E18	Europa	22 November 1998	2,273
E19	Europa	1 February 1999	1,439
C20	Callisto	5 May 1999	1,315
C21	Callisto	30 June 1999	1,047
C22	Callisto	14 August 1999	2,296
C23	Callisto	16 September 1999	1,057
I24	Io	11 October 1999	612

Orbit	Satellite	Date	Minimum Distance (km)
I25	Io	26 November 1999	300
E26	Europa	3 January 2000	351
I27	Io	22 February 2000	198
G28	Ganymede	20 May 2000	809
G29	Ganymede	28 December 2000	2,337
C30	Callisto	25 May 2001	138
I31	Io	6 August 2001	194
I32	Io	16 October 2001	184
I33	Io	17 January 2002	101.5
A34	Amalthea	5 November 2002	244
J35	*Jupiter Impact*	21 September 2003	–

Galileo orbits were named according to the satellite that was the main target of the periapsis pass: A = Amalthea, C = Callisto, E = Europa, G = Ganymede, I = Io, J = no encounter.

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