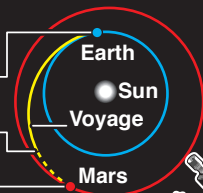


# Mars orbiter approaches red planet

After a seven-month journey from Earth, NASA's Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter (MRO) is nearing the critical phase of its mission as it enters orbit around the red planet. The craft aims to study Mars in unprecedented detail, look for evidence of water and identify landing sites for future missions

## MISSION

Launch  
Aug 2005  
Approach  
Mar-Nov 2006  
Main mission  
to Dec 2010



**SHARAD:** Radar seeks water up to 1km below surface

**Antenna:** Transmits data to Earth and serves as comms relay for future Mars missions

## MRO SYSTEMS

**CRISM:** Spectrometer maps surface mineralogy

**MARCI:** Produces global image of Mars weather

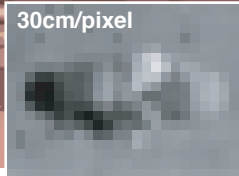
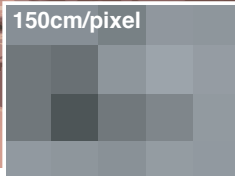
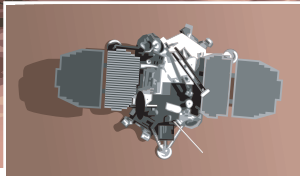
**MCS:** Observes temperature, humidity and dust in atmosphere

**HiRISE:** High-resolution telescopic camera

**CTX:** Wide area camera

Thrusters

## IMAGE QUALITY



**Mars Polar Lander (model)    Mars Global Surveyor    HiRISE**

HiRISE has five times better resolution than Mars Global Surveyor's camera and may even allow scientists to find NASA's Mars Polar Lander, lost in 1999

Sources: NASA / Jet Propulsion Laboratory

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