

Virgin Galactic space shot

Virgin Galactic has taken its first trip to the edge of space, a major step toward the long-awaited dream of commercial space tourism

MISSION PROFILE



White Knight Two
mothership

1 Air launch: White Knight Two releases **SpaceShipTwo** at altitude of 13,100m

2 Boost: SpaceShipTwo's rocket burns for about 50 seconds at three times speed of sound

3 Apogee: Craft reaches altitude of 82.7km

Wings "feathered" to slow descent

4 Descent: Wings return to original position to allow craft to glide

5 Landing: Craft returns to Mojave Air and Space Port

"Feathering":
Twin tails rotate upward to increase drag and control re-entry of vehicle

SpaceShipTwo (VSS Unity)

Length 18.3m
Wingspan 8.2m
Pilots 2

On commercial flights, six passengers per trip will experience five minutes of weightlessness