

Growing threat of space junk

Record increases in satellite launches and space junk will make low Earth orbit unusable unless countries cooperate and share data needed to manage that most accessible region of space

151

Total launches 2024
269

Failures to date
6

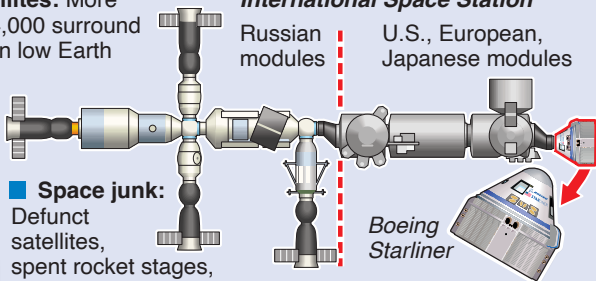
Space launches 2024 (including 15 planned for December)

Satellites: More than 14,000 surround planet in low Earth orbit

International Space Station

Russian modules

U.S., European, Japanese modules



Space junk:

Defunct satellites, spent rocket stages, fragments from disintegration – about 120 million pieces

Dec-May: SpaceX Starlink satellites perform nearly 50,000 collision-avoidance manoeuvres, about double previous six months

Jun 26: Russian satellite breaks up, forcing U.S. astronauts on International Space Station to take shelter in Starliner for an hour

Aug 6: Chinese rocket stage explodes, adding thousands of fragments of debris to low Earth orbit

61

16

7

6

3

2

1

1

U.S.

China

Russia

Japan

India

Iran

Europe

France

N Korea