

*“Orbiting Earth in the spaceship, I saw how beautiful our planet is. People, let us preserve and increase this beauty, not destroy it.”*

— Yuri Gagarin, Russian pilot, cosmonaut and first human to go to space

*“The Earth was small, light blue, and so touchingly alone. Our home that must be defended like a holy relic. The Earth was absolutely round. I believe I never knew what the word “round” meant until I saw Earth from space.”*

— Aleksei Leonov, Russian cosmonaut and first person to conduct a spacewalk

*“I realized up there that our planet is not infinite. It’s fragile. That may not be obvious to a lot of folks, and it’s tough that people are fighting each other here on Earth instead of trying to get together and live on this planet. We look pretty vulnerable in the darkness of space.”*

— Alan Shepard, Mercury & Apollo 14 astronaut and first American to go to space

*“It suddenly struck me that that tiny pea, pretty and blue, was the Earth. I put up my thumb and shut one eye, and my thumb blotted out the planet Earth. I didn’t feel like a giant. I felt very, very small.”*

— Neil Armstrong, Apollo 11 astronaut and first person to walk on the moon

*“From the distance of the moon, Earth was four times the size of a full moon seen from Earth. It was a brilliant jewel in the black velvet sky.”*

— Buzz Aldrin, Apollo 11 astronaut and second person to walk on the moon

*“Oddly enough, the overriding sensation I got looking at the Earth was: My God, that little thing is so fragile out there.”*

— Mike Collins, Apollo 11 astronaut

*“A Chinese tale tells of some men sent to harm a young girl who, upon seeing her beauty, become her protectors rather than her violators. That’s how I felt seeing the Earth for the first time. I could not help but love and cherish her.”*

— Taylor Wang, Scientist and first person of Chinese origin to go to space

*“Seeing Earth from space was a powerful experience that made me feel connected to all living things on our planet. We must work together to protect our home.”*

— Mike Massimino, NASA Space Shuttle astronaut

*“From space, I saw Earth not as a collection of nations, but as a single entity with one destiny.”*

- Ron Garan, ISS astronaut

*“The view of Earth from space is breathtaking, and it really shows our place in the universe. It’s up to us to take care of this beautiful planet.”*

- Nicole Stott, Space Shuttle astronaut

*“Every single part of the Earth reacts with every other part. It’s one thing. Every little animal is important in that ecosystem. [Seeing the Earth] makes you realize that, and makes you want to be a little more proactive in keeping it that way. If I could get every Earthling to do one circle of the Earth, I think things would run a little differently.”*

— Karen Nyberg, NASA astronaut

*“As we got farther and farther away [the Earth] diminished in size. Finally it shrank to the size of a marble, the most beautiful marble you can imagine. That beautiful, warm, living object looked so fragile, so delicate, that if you touched it with a finger it would crumble and fall apart.”*

— James B. Irwin, NASA Apollo 15 astronaut

*“After an orange cloud — formed as a result of a dust storm over the Sahara and caught up by air currents — reached the Philippines and settled there with rain, I understood that we are all sailing in the same boat.”*

— Vladimir Kovalyov, Russian cosmonaut

*“We came all this way to explore the moon, and the most important thing is that we discovered the earth.”*

— William Anders, Apollo 8 astronaut

*“Suddenly, from behind the rim of the moon, in long, slow-motion moments of immense majesty, there emerges a sparkling blue and white jewel, a light, delicate sky-blue sphere laced with slowly swirling veils of white, rising gradually like a small pearl in a thick sea of black mystery. It takes more than a moment to fully realize this is Earth ... home.”*

— Edgar Mitchell, Apollo 14 astronaut

*“We really have the most beautiful planet in our solar system. None other can sustain life like we know it. None other has blue water and white clouds covering colorful landmasses filled with thriving, beautiful, living things like human beings.”*

— Sunita Williams, US Navy Officer and ISS astronaut

*“For those who have seen the Earth from space, and for the hundreds and perhaps thousands more who will, the experience most certainly changes your perspective. The things that we share in our world are far more valuable than those which divide us.”*

— Donald Williams, Space Shuttle astronaut

*“I think the one overwhelming emotion that we had was when we saw the earth rising in the distance over the lunar landscape . . . . It makes us realize that we all do exist on one small globe. For from 230,000 miles away it really is a small planet.”*

- Frank Borman, Commander of Apollo 8

*“Looking outward to the blackness of space, sprinkled with the glory of a universe of lights, I saw majesty—but no welcome. Below was a welcoming planet. There, contained in the thin, moving, incredibly fragile shell of the biosphere is everything that is dear to you, all the human drama and comedy. That's where life is; that's where all the good stuff is.”*

- Loren Acton, Physicist and Space Shuttle astronaut

*“When you look at the Earth from space, you realize that our planet is a beautiful, interconnected system. We are all in this together.”*

- Mae Jemison, Space Shuttle astronaut

*“Once during the mission I was asked by ground control what I could see. “What do I see?” I replied. “Half a world to the left, half a world to the right, I can see it all. The Earth is so small.”*

— Vitali Sevastyanov, Russian Soyuz cosmonaut

*“To fly in space is to see the reality of Earth, alone. The experience changed my life and my attitude toward life itself. I am one of the lucky ones.”*

— Roberta Bondar, Canadian astronaut

*“From space, you see the fragility of our planet and the urgent need to protect it. We are all astronauts on this spaceship Earth.”*

- Jean-Francois Clervoy, European astronaut

*“From space, you realize how small and interconnected we all are. It's a perspective that can inspire us to be better stewards of our planet and work towards a brighter future.”*

- Scott Kelly, ISS astronaut

*“I really believe that if the political leaders of the world could see their planet from a distance of 100,000 miles their outlook could be fundamentally changed. That all-important border would be invisible, that noisy argument silenced. The tiny globe would continue to turn, serenely ignoring its subdivisions, presenting a unified face that would cry out for unified understanding, for homogeneous treatment. The earth must become as it appears: blue and white, not capitalist or Communist; blue and white, not rich or poor; blue and white, not envious or envied.”*

— Michael Collins, Gemini 10 & Apollo 11 astronaut

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*“As I looked down, I saw a large river meandering slowly along for miles, passing from one country to another without stopping. I also saw huge forests, extending along several borders. And I watched the extent of one ocean touch the shores of separate continents. Two words leaped to mind as I looked down on all this: commonality and interdependence. We are one world.”*

— John-David Bartoe, Astrophysicist and ISS astronaut

*“We were flying over America and suddenly I saw snow, the first snow we ever saw from orbit. I have never visited America, but I imagined that the arrival of autumn and winter is the same there as in other places, and the process of getting ready for them is the same. And then it struck me that we are all children of our Earth.”*

— Aleksandr Aleksandrov, Russian Soyuz cosmonaut