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Endeavour lands in California
AP Photo / Pat Sullivan

[Bad Weather Forces Endeavour to Land in California](#)

The mission has set a few new records

Finally, after several delays, the spaceship Endeavour and its crew touched down safely on a temporary runway in California, instead of the original designated place, which was regularly used - the Kennedy Space Center in Florida. The detour was resorted to due to the poor weather conditions in Florida, where strong winds and thunderstorms had affected the landing site. The spacecraft touched ground at California's Edwards Air Force Base at 4:25pm EST (2125 GMT).

This was the longest of Endeavour's 22 flights, both in duration and in the distance covered, summing up 6,615,109 miles along 250 orbits, performed during the 15 days, 20 hours, 29 minutes and 37 seconds long mission. Among the other records set were the 200th American spacewalk, the longest joint operation performed between two spacecraft joined together by open hatches, the first time a temporary runway was used for landing by a spacecraft, as well as reaching the milestone of the 100th landing during daytime.

According to [Space](#), after watching the orbiter's landing from aboard the International Space Station, commander Michael Fincke shared by radio that "The crew of Expedition 18 would like to extend a congratulations to the crew of Endeavour and the entire team that made that incredible home makeover mission possible. What a great crew and what a great team we have. We're really proud of everyone."

The re-routing process was a difficult decision to make, but NASA experts thought there was no point for the craft and the crew to spend one more day in orbit, with real possibilities of the weather not getting any better even by then. The move, which came somewhat as a disappointment as the astronauts' families were waiting for them in Florida, will cost NASA an additional \$1.8 million, which is required for a week-long effort of bringing Endeavour back to Florida atop a modified Boeing 747 carrier.