

Mars Curiosity rover live Q&A

Now NASA has set down on Mars, what's next? Your chance to question the experts.

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On 6 August, NASA's Curiosity rover landed safely on the surface of Mars, capping a tense '7 minutes of terror' that delivered the most sophisticated rover ever to the bottom of Gale Crater (see '[Curiosity sets down safely on Mars](#)').

But what happens now? When will the rover begin driving towards the 5.5-kilometre-tall Mount Sharp? What might it expect to find along the way? When will it begin using its instruments to search for organic molecules and habitable environments?

Please bring your questions and join *Nature* reporter Eric Hand at 12 p.m. Eastern time on Wednesday 8 August for an online Q&A with three Mars scientists. The panellists are:

Ashwin Vasavada A deputy project scientist on the Curiosity team at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California, and an expert on the atmosphere and climate of Mars.

Roger Wiens A physicist at the Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico and the principal investigator for the ChemCam instrument on the mast of the rover. ChemCam shoots a laser at rock targets up to 7 metres away to create a small spot of glowing, ionized gas. By looking at the spectroscopic signatures in the glow, its camera can identify the chemical elements in the rock.

Jack Mustard of Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island. Mustard is the former chair of the Mars Exploration Program Analysis Group and a scientist on CRISM, an instrument on the Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter that looks for the spectral fingerprints of minerals that formed in water. The instrument is responsible for detecting thin rings of water-altered clays and sulphates around the base of Mount Sharp.