

# Mae Jemison

1956 – Present



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## What did she discover?

Mae Jemison was an astronaut, educator and doctor born in America in 1956. From a young age Mae was always fascinated with space, she loved finding out everything she could about the Apollo missions. However, she noticed that no one who looked like her had ever been to space before. She found a role model in Lieutenant Uhura in Star Trek, as she was a fictional character who represented black women in space.

Jemison studied Chemical Engineering and African American studies at Stanford University.

She then went on to study medicine and became a doctor. A few years later, Mae applied to NASA and her dream of becoming an astronaut became a reality. In 1992 she boarded the shuttle Endeavour and became the first African American woman in space. On her trip she took many different African cultural objects so that black people could be represented in space.

Mae Jemison went on to start up many medical companies including the BioSentient Corporation, which creates medical devices that allow doctors to monitor patients' nervous system functions. She is also part of the 100 Year Starship project which aims for humans to travel to the next solar system within 100 years.

**Something to think about...**

Why is representation in science so important?