

National Mapping Program

Manned Spacecraft Photographs and Major Metropolitan Area Photographs and Images

U.S. Department of the Interior
Geological Survey
National Cartographic
Information Center (NCIC)

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Views of the Earth obtained from the air or from space have provided vast amounts of new information about our planet, its resources, and its inhabitants.

Aerial and space photographs and satellite images are obtained by a wide variety of sophisticated techniques. For example, aerial photographs are taken by special cameras mounted on aircraft that range from low-flying commercial helicopters to high-flying aircraft operated by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

The U.S. Geological Survey has established the National Cartographic Information Center (NCIC) to help customers find maps, aerial and space photographs, satellite images, and other cartographic products. NCIC offers direct access to a significant number of the photographs and images available to the public. Many other sources also exist, and NCIC will direct you to them if they hold photographs more appropriate for your needs. These sources include Federal agencies and private firms that retain the originals of photographs or that produce highly specialized products.

NCIC works in conjunction with the the Earth Resources Observation Systems Data Center (EDC) in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. Both the EROS Data Center and NCIC take orders for aerial and space photographs, and space images.

All NCIC and EDC photograph and image orders must include prepayment by check or money order. Each print of a photograph is made especially for a customer. For this reason, it is important that you be sure of what you are ordering. Paper prints cost three times as much as film negatives and film positives.

Apollo 17 view of Earth centered on Central Africa



Major Metropolitan Area Landsat image - Boston, Mass.



Major Metropolitan Area Skylab photo - Boston, Mass.



Major Metropolitan Area NASA photo - Boston, Mass.

Satellite Images and Photographs

Most satellite images available today are a result of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Landsat program established in 1972. A limited number of photographs from space come from the Gemini and Apollo programs (1965 to 1970) and from the Skylab program in 1973 and 1974. The photographic coverage of the Gemini and Apollo programs, however, was limited by the flight paths of the spacecraft. These pictures generally cover only the Southwest, the Gulf coast, and Florida.

A major goal of the Skylab program, however, was to obtain photographic coverage of the Earth between Latitudes 50° North and South. During the three Skylab manned flights, more than 35,000 frames of photography were acquired. Coverage included most of the conterminous United States, a large part of South America, and parts of Africa, Europe, and the Middle East.

Available Products

Manned Spacecraft Photographs: The photographs acquired during the Gemini, Apollo, and Skylab series of manned spacecraft programs were taken by both fixed on-board cameras and hand-held cameras. These photographs are useful in planning, in agricultural, geographic, and other studies, and for general viewing.

You may order these photographs by contacting any NCIC office or the EROS Data Center and requesting two forms: *Manned Spacecraft Photograph Order Form* and *Geographic Search Inquiry Form*. Then simply follow the ordering instructions.

Major U.S. Metropolitan Area Photographs and Images: Prints of color and color-infrared photographs of more than 100 cities in the United States are also available. They were chosen from National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) aircraft, Skylab manned spacecraft and Landsat satellite coverage. These photographs and images are useful for regional planning and general

viewing. The NASA aircraft photographs provide the most terrain detail. Skylab photographs offer the next greatest level, and Landsat imagery the least amount of detail. Print sizes range from a 4.5-inch square Skylab print to a 36-inch square NASA aerial photograph.

You may order these prints by contacting any NCIC office or the EROS Data Center and requesting a *Major U.S. Metropolitan Area Order Form*.

EROS Data Center

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