"The conquest of space is such a fantastic, gorgeous and colossal subject, that it's hard to know where to begin."

James S. McDonnell, 1959
President, McDonnell Aircraft Corporation

In 1959, the race between the United States and the Soviet Union to conquer space was heating up, and NASA awarded the contract to the McDonnell Aircraft Corporation to build the Mercury capsule – the spacecraft that would fly the first American Astronauts into space. After an exhaustive test program, and under pressure to beat the Soviets, the Mercury spacecraft flew its first orbital flights on the Convair Atlas SLV-3D booster, a derivative of the successful SM-65D Atlas missile. Four brave American Astronauts flew these dangerous missions, where the temperatures outside their spacecraft reached over 1,000 degrees Celsius upon re-entry. The Mercury missions were a success proving that man could travel safely into space, paving the way for more ambitious programs that included landing on the moon.

Specifications: Mercury-Atlas SLV-3D

Length: 96.9 feet (29.5 metres) with Mercury Capsule
81.9 feet (25.0 metres) with Mercury Boilerplate
Diameter: 10 feet (3.05 metres)
Weight: over 260,000 lbs (118,000 kg)
Engines: Two LR-89 boosters with 150Klbs thrust each
One LR-105 sustainer with 57Klbs thrust
Two LR-101 verniers with 1Klbs each

Mission Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mission</th>
<th>Capsule</th>
<th>Atlas</th>
<th>Launch Date</th>
<th>Orbits</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Astronaut</th>
<th>Call sign</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Big Joe</td>
<td>Boilerplate</td>
<td>10D</td>
<td>Sep 09, 1959</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0:13:00</td>
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<td>MA-1</td>
<td>Porthole</td>
<td>50D</td>
<td>Jul 29, 1960</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>*</td>
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<tr>
<td>MA-2</td>
<td>Porthole</td>
<td>67D</td>
<td>Feb 21, 1961</td>
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<td>MA-3</td>
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<td>Apr 25, 1961</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>*</td>
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<td>MA-4</td>
<td>Porthole</td>
<td>88D</td>
<td>Sep 13, 1961</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1:49:20</td>
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<td>*</td>
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<td>MA-5</td>
<td>Window</td>
<td>93D</td>
<td>Nov 29, 1961</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3:20:59</td>
<td>Enos the Chimp</td>
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<td>MA-7</td>
<td>Window</td>
<td>107D</td>
<td>May 24, 1962</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4:56:05</td>
<td>M. Scott Carpenter</td>
<td>Aurora 7</td>
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WARNING

CHOKING HAZARD: KEEP AWAY FROM CHILDREN UNDER THREE YEARS OF AGE. DO NOT USE PAINTS OR GLUES NEAR FLAMES OR FIRE, OR WITHOUT ADEQUATE VENTILATION.

This model is intended for ages 14 and older. PAINT AND GLUE NOT INCLUDED
Beware of small and/or sharp parts. Use paints and glues in a well ventilated area.
Throw away plastic bags when no longer required. Take care when handling knives and other sharp objects.

Assembly
1. Study these instructions carefully before assembly and note the payload and marking options that you will build.
2. Remove the parts from the sprue one at a time with a sprue cutter, and carefully sand off any excess plastic.
3. Test fit the parts to ensure they fit correctly, then glue into place using polystyrene glue. When attaching PE parts, use a cyanoacrylate glue.
4. Some parts should be painted prior to gluing to the main assembly.
5. Before painting, carefully sand the model if required, then wash it in a soapy solution.
6. Allow to dry thoroughly before applying paint.
7. Paint the model in a well ventilated area, and allow to dry thoroughly.
8. Apply the decals (see instructions below).
9. Seal the decals with a clear coat of paint (allow at least one day for the decals to dry thoroughly).

Applying Decals
1. Cut the decal from the carrier sheet.
2. Dip the decal into water for about 10 seconds.
3. Place the decal on a cloth to absorb excess moisture.
4. Wet the model where you want to place the decal.
5. Slide the decal from the backing paper directly onto the model.
6. Do not lift the decal off the sheet as this may cause it to fold.
7. Once positioned correctly, press the decal gently with a soft cloth.

Sprue A (x2) Parts A7 & A11 not used
Sprue B Part B9, B11 & B12 not used
Sprue M Parts M10, M11 & M14 not used

Photo Etched Parts (PE) Parts PE5 & PE6 not used
Use a cyanoacrylate glue to attach PE parts

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AIRFRAME PREPARATION

Open holes as shown below

AIRFRAME ASSEMBLY

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Apply "UNITED STATES" decals before attaching parts A15 and A16.

Remove the shaded area on A2 to fit A4

Big Joe and MA-1 only

OPTION

MA-2 to MA-9

Attach A3 to B8, leaving a gap of 9 mm at the top.
**MERCURY™ CAPSULE**

Glue one truss (M7) to the base (M17) at a time, then glue the cross beams to the other trusses.

Attach PE2 (x 2) to two of the three trusses (M7) as shown. Connect the horizontal bars from each to the last truss, and then to the base M17.

**Note** - Parts M21 and PE9 will not be visible once the capsule is glued to the adaptor (M13). Paint part M21 before assembly. When dry, apply the decals as shown below. Then glue part PE3 to M21 and carefully attach to M9 as instructed below.

**Mercury™ Capsule: "Porthole" version**

Missions MA-1 to MA-4 only

Attach parts PE8 and PE9 (x2), PE10 and PE11 as shown to plastic parts M1, M2 & M3.

Use a cyanoacrylate glue.
5 CAPSULE AND ADAPTOR ASSEMBLY
CHOOSE A PAYLOAD:
BOILERPLATE OR PRODUCTION CAPSULE

6 ROCKET ENGINE ASSEMBLY

7 FINAL ASSEMBLY

If attaching the Mercury™ capsule, align the porthole window with Part M6, and PE3 with the three black sections at the top of M13.

Align

Fold PE7 along line and attach to PE8. See diagrams below for location onto M13.

Note the direction of the curved pipe when attaching the base to the missile.
STENCILS COMMON TO ALL VARIANTS

Place decals #14 and #17 before #8

Note the direction of decal #8 which wraps around part B10. Cut into smaller sections to make placement easier.

Decal #36 is placed on the 2nd, 6th and 11th rib (when counted outwards from the centre).

Note the direction of decal #20 which wraps around part B7.