

NASA's Perseverance rover has sent back incredible images from Mars

[SPACE](#) 19 February 2021

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The Perseverance rover lowering gently to the surface of Mars

NASA/JPL-Caltech

NASA's Perseverance rover [landed](#) on the surface of Mars on 18 February, and it's already begun its work. The rover has sent back its first images, and they are incredible.

The below image was taken from the sky crane, a sort of robotic jet pack which used thrusters to slow the rover down after it entered the Martian atmosphere before gently placing it on the ground. No image like this has ever been taken before – while the Curiosity rover also used a sky crane to land on Mars, that crane did not have cameras. The still image is part of a video that NASA is expected to release soon, the first video taken on Mars.

“As a scientist we're used to the engineers showing us animations of the rover, and that's at first what I thought this was,” said Perseverance team member Katie Stack Morgan at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) during a press conference. “And then

I did a double-take and said, ‘That’s the actual rover!’” The picture shows Perseverance moments before its wheels touched down on the Martian surface.



NASA/JPL-Caltech

Once it landed, Perseverance took the above picture of its own front right wheel. “We have now actually seen what it looks like right under the wheels,” said Hallie Abarca at JPL, also a member of the Perseverance team, in the press conference.

The rover landed in Jezero crater, which may have once been a lake bed. The rocks underneath its wheels, which are probably between 3.6 and 3.8 billion years old, may be ancient lake sediments. NASA scientists’ first impressions from the image are that they may be volcanic rocks, which will require further investigation.



NASA/JPL-Caltech

The above image shows the desolate landscape in Jezero crater, with a ridge in the distance. It is the highest-resolution picture ever taken on the surface of Mars. Soon, Perseverance will set out into the crater and begin exploring.