A Short Biography of Tim Peake

Tim Peake was born in Chichester, West Sussex, in 1972, and grew up with his sister Fiona, his mother Angela (a midwife) and his father Nigel (a journalist).

Tim’s **fascination with flying began as a child** when his dad took him to air shows. On leaving school, Tim trained at the Royal Military Academy, **Sandhurst**, and joined the **British Army Air Corps**. He served for nearly 18 years in Northern Ireland, Germany, Bosnia, Afghanistan, Kenya and Canada. Tim **flew planes and helicopters**. He also spent time with the US Army, trained as a test pilot (a dangerous job flying new aircraft) and gained a degree in flight dynamics.

In 2008, Tim saw an online advertisement recruiting new astronauts for the **European Space Agency** (ESA). Of more than 8,000 applicants, Tim was one of 900 shortlisted for a year-long assessment. Meanwhile, Tim retired from the British Army (as Major Tim Peake) and went to work as a helicopter test pilot. But a few months into this new job, he got a phone call from ESA offering him one of six places as an astronaut!

Tim moved to Cologne, Germany, with his wife Rebecca and their young son to begin training. Tim had to **learn Russian** and he practised wearing a spacesuit under water to experience the feeling of zero-gravity. He also spent a week in a damp, dark underground cave in Sardinia, and 12 days in an underwater laboratory, 20 metres below the sea. The cramped conditions and limited food supplies were a bit like life in space.

In 2013, ESA announced **Tim’s mission to the ISS** – called Principia (after Isaac Newton’s famous books on gravity). With US astronaut Tim Kopra and Russian cosmonaut Yuri Malenchenko, their rocket launched from Kazakhstan in December 2015, on a six-hour journey into space.

They **joined three astronauts already onboard the ISS**. There they set to work on experiments designed to help people on Earth and to improve future space missions. They investigated the effects of space travel on the human body, for example, looked at how food grows in space, and monitored the Earth’s climate. Tim also became **the first British astronaut to do a spacewalk**.

On 15 January, he and Tim Kopra ventured outside the ISS for four hours, making repairs.

In June 2016, Tim, Kopra and Malenchenko returned to Earth. This time the journey took three hours. Tim was looking forward to having a pizza! He then travelled back to Germany to spend time with his family and to undertake further tests. Tim had **orbited Earth about 3,000 times**, travelling about 125 million kilometres at an average speed of 27,000 kph, and his body needed time to recover.

Tim received **an award from the Queen** for his services to space research and scientific education. His enthusiasm for the job and regular communications with Earth helped to inspire a generation of children – and adults alike – to learn more about the depths of our solar system and the possibilities of future space travel.