

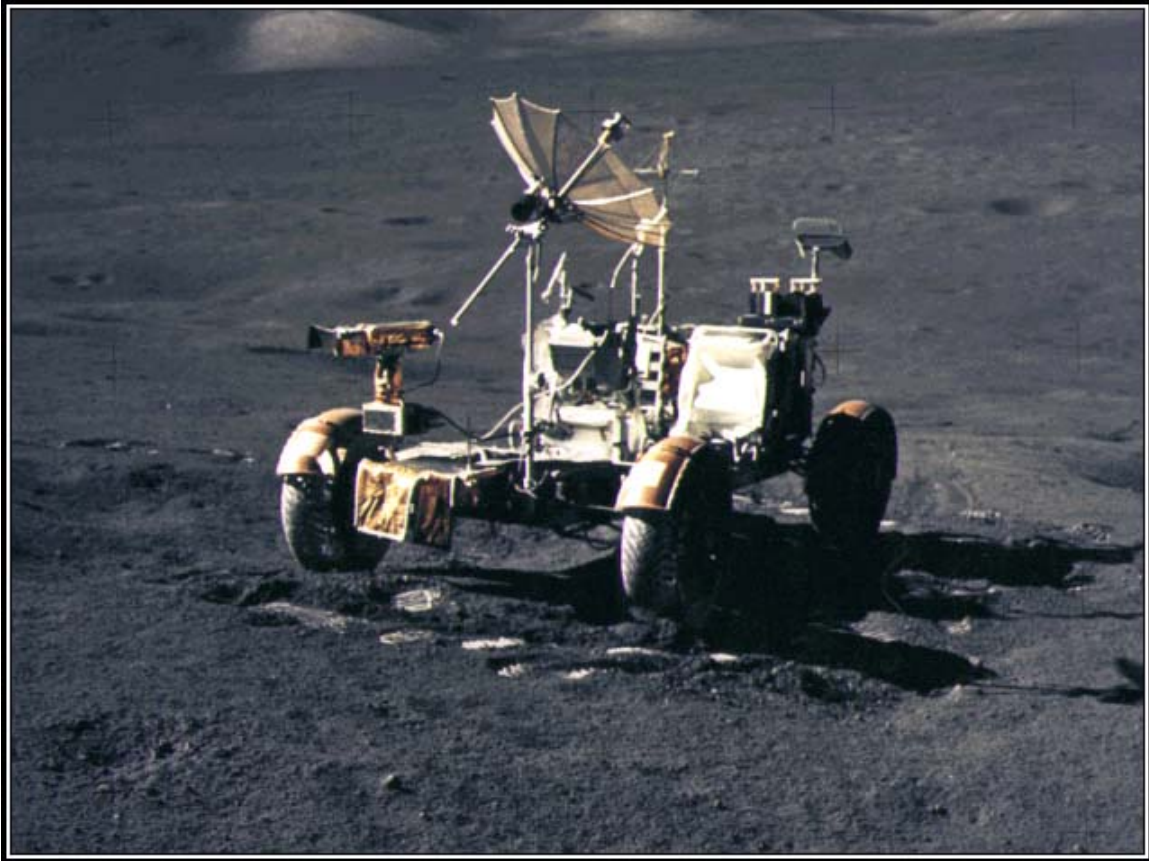
Apollo 15 was the fourth mission to land men on the Moon. This mission was the first flight of the Lunar Roving Vehicle (LRV) which astronauts used to explore the geology of the Hadley Rille/Apennine region. The LRV allowed the astronauts to venture further from the Lunar Module than in previous missions. Total surface traverses increased from hundreds of meters during earlier missions to tens of kilometers during Apollo 15 and 16 and just over 100 kilometers during Apollo 17.

The space vehicle with a crew of David R. Scott, commander; Alfred J. Worden, command module pilot; and James B. Irwin, lunar module (LM) pilot, was launched on schedule from the NASA Kennedy Space Center, Fla., at 9:34:00 a.m. EST on July 26, 1971 and landed on the moon 4 days later.

First of the Apollo J mission series which were capable of longer stay times on the Moon and greater surface mobility. The mission objectives were to explore the Hadley-Apennine region, set up and activate lunar surface scientific experiments, make engineering evaluations of new Apollo equipment and conduct lunar orbital experiments and photographic tasks.

During a lunar stay of 66 hr 54 min 53 sec, a 33-min standup extravehicular activity (EVA) and three periods of surface EVA totaling approximately 18.5 hr were performed. The astronauts were able to collect samples from the low dark plains (maria), the Apennine highlands, and the area along Hadley Rille, a long, narrow winding valley. Approximately 76 kg of lunar material including soil, rock, core-tube, and deep-core samples were returned to Earth.

Traverses during the three EVA periods were enhanced by use of a Lunar Roving Vehicle (LRV). The four-wheel, lightweight vehicle greatly extended the lunar area that could be explored by humans. The LRV could be operated by either astronaut. The LRV was the first manned surface transportation system designed to operate on the Moon.



An average speed of 9.6 km/hr was achieved, and speeds up to 12 km/hr were attained over level lunar terrain. The total distance traveled, was 27.9 km, corresponding to a map distance of approximately 25.3 km.

Liftoff of the LM ascent stage occurred at 17:11:23 GMT on August 2 and was monitored by the ground-command television assembly mounted on the LRV.

I was in high school during these Apollo missions, glued to the TV set whenever broadcasts about the missions was on. I remember Apollo 15 and the fun the astronauts had driving the vehicle around. I remember the liftoff from the LRV TV camera, which really inspired me.