Besides the Earth and the Moon, Mars is probably the only other place in our solar system that humans could visit or live on some day. Will astronauts visit Mars in the future? Will you? Here are some interesting facts about Mars you might want to consider before your trip.

- Like Earth, Mars has polar ice caps, volcanoes, canyons, and four seasons — but the seasons on Mars are twice as long.
- It could take between 6 months and almost a full year to reach Mars in a spaceship depending on the orbital paths of Earth and Mars during the mission.
- NASA has proposed missions going to Mars where astronauts would stay on the planet from 30 to 500 days (almost a year and a half). Astronauts would need to stay at least 30 days to recover from zero gravity and to wait for the planets to be in a good position for a return trip.
- The average temperature on Mars is -81°F or -62°C.
- If you were standing on Mars, you would see its two moons in the sky.
- Scientists think there may be some microbial life (tiny organisms smaller than your eye can see) on Mars that we haven’t discovered yet, or evidence of past microbial life.
- Mars may have had a warm climate and liquid water in its ancient past. Robots on Mars found small round balls of hematite (a mineral form of iron oxide) the same shape and size as blueberries. These “blueberries” form in water and also occur on Earth. They suggest that water once flowed on Mars, perhaps as salty lakes or seas.

How to become an astronaut

To become an astronaut you…

- need good grades and good physical health.
- need a college degree and better yet, a graduate degree.
- must be between 5 feet 2 inches and 6 feet 3 inches tall.
- must have good eyesight or have your sight be able to be corrected to 20/20 in each eye.

To learn more about how to become an astronaut visit
www.nasajobs.nasa.gov/astronauts

To learn more about NASA projects at MSU and student scholarships and internships, visit http://spacegrant.montana.edu