

Sally Ride

Dr. Sally Kristen Ride was born in May of 1951 in Encino, California which is part of Los Angeles. Ride attended Westlake School for Girls in Los Angeles on a scholarship. In addition to being interested in science, she was a nationally ranked tennis player. After high school, Ride attended Swarthmore College and transferred to Stanford University graduating bachelor's degrees in English and physics. Afterward, she earned a master's degree and a Ph.D. in physics from Stanford.

Ride was one of 8,000 people to answer an advertisement in a newspaper seeking applicants for the space program. As a result, she joined NASA in 1978. During her career, Ride served as the ground-based Capsule Communicator for the second and third Space Shuttle flights and helped develop the Space Shuttle's robot arm. On June 18, 1983, she became the first American woman in space as a crew member on Space Shuttle, Challenger.

Sally Ride was in training for a third shuttle mission when the space shuttle *Challenger* exploded in January, 1986, with its crew aboard. Ride was appointed to the Presidential Commission investigating the accident, the only astronaut on that commission. She then worked for NASA's administration, creating the Office of Exploration and producing a report on the space program's future.

Briefly married to a fellow astronaut, Sally Ride left NASA in 1987, teaching physics first at Stanford then at the University of California, San Diego.