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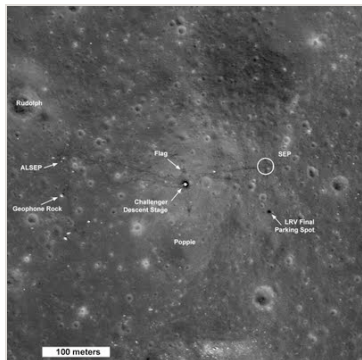
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Best view yet of Apollo landing site

A NASA spaceprobe has sent back the clearest photo yet of an Apollo landing site - including even the US flag. It clearly shows the descent stage of Apollo 17's lunar module Challenger, nearly 37 years after it touched down in December 1972 in the Taurus Littrow valley. The new LRO image. Click it to enlarge For the first time even its legs are visible, thanks to the detail possible with the orbiting digital camera.

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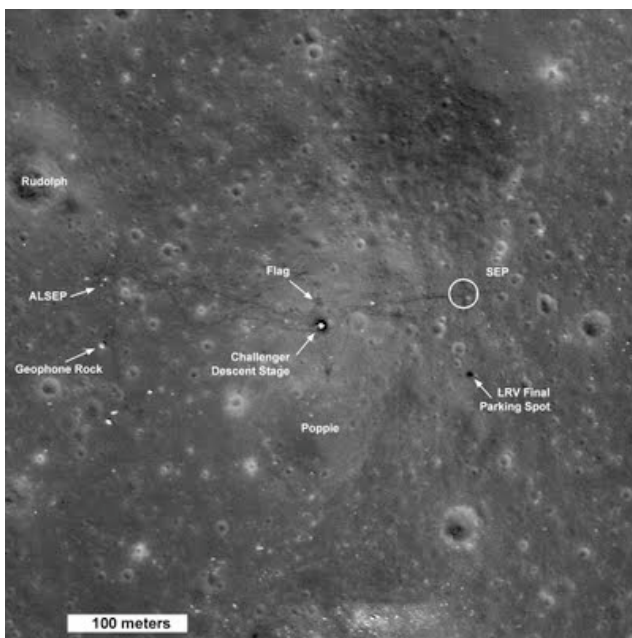
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The new LRO image. Click it to enlarge

For the first time even its legs are visible, thanks to the detail possible with the orbiting digital camera. Tracks can be seen from the astronauts' runabout - the Lunar Roving Vehicle - because there is no atmosphere to weather them. (There is [a photo of one of an LRV here](#)).

Experiments and antennae placed by spacemen Jack Schmitt and Gene Cernan can be picked out plus the place where the vehicle was abandoned - parked to record the astronauts blasting off back to Earth from the final Apollo mission to the Moon.

Amazingly, even the American flag, the Stars and Stripes is visible in the image, which NASA must hope will provide the clearest proof to conspiracy theorists that the Apollo programme was not faked.

The new picture was possible because the robotic probe, Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter, has moved into its new lower mapping orbit just 30 miles (50 km) above the Moon's surface.

The 13 ft (4-metre) wide lunar module is just eight pixels across on the picture. See NASA's hi-res photo [here, annotated with names of experiments or other features](#). Newly enhanced [video of the first Moon landing, by Apollo 11](#), was released earlier this year.

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♦PAUL SUTHERLAND, [Skymania.com](#)

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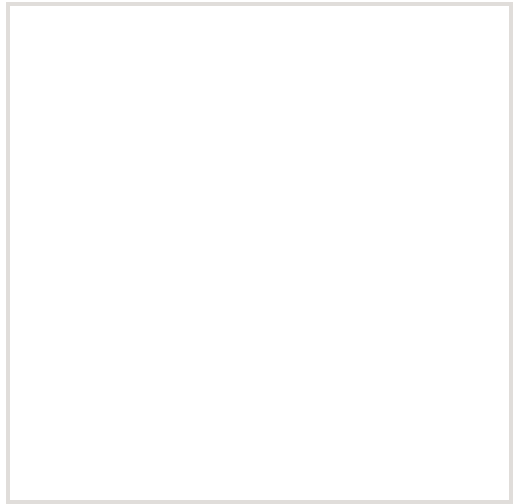
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