

# The First In-Flight Space Fatality

- Which mission had the first in-flight space fatality?
  - Soyuz-1*
  - Space Shuttle *Challenger*
  - Apollo13*
- How old was Colonel Vladimir Komarov at the time of this mission?
  - 30
  - 35
  - 40
- Why did the mission fail?
  - The oxygen tank exploded
  - The parachute did not open
  - The heat shield was damaged
- What was the pilot doing minutes before the crash?
  - Screaming at mission control
  - Saying good-bye to his wife
  - Preparing for landing
- What was the purpose of the flight?
  - Dock with another vehicle and exchange crew in flight
  - Take photographs of US missile sites
  - Test a lunar spacesuit
- What was Col. Komarov's code name for this flight?
  - Rubin (ruby)
  - Izumrud (emerald)
  - Chayka (seagull)
- Until its final moments, the spacecraft:
  - Operated flawlessly
  - Experienced usual/routine issues, which were easily overcome
  - Was beset by numerous technical problems
- Which pilot was the mission backup?
  - Vladimir Titov
  - Yuri Gagarin
  - Sergei Gonchar
- Where was Col. Komarov buried?
  - On a hill overlooking Moscow
  - In a wall at the Kremlin
  - At an undisclosed location

## Answers:

- (A) The mission took place April 23-24, 1967, and killed the pilot and only crew member, Colonel Vladimir Komarov.
- (C)
- (B) The main parachute did not release and the manually-deployed reserve chute tangled with the main's drogue. The *Soyuz-1* descent module hit the ground at around 40 meters per second (89mph).
- (C)
- (A) It was the first crewed flight of the Soyuz launch 7K-OK spacecraft and Soyuz rocket. The *Soyuz-2* mission was aborted before launch, after the 13<sup>th</sup> orbit of *Soyuz-1*.
- (A)
- (C) There were numerous spacecraft design issues, but the flight proceeded due to political pressure.
- (B)
- (B) His ashes were interred in the Kremlin Wall Necropolis—the highest honor of the Soviet Union.

**Learn more:** "The Death of Vladimir Komarov: Pressure, Politics, and Parachutes" by Asif Siddiqi, PhD ([Quest: Volume 27 #1](#))

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