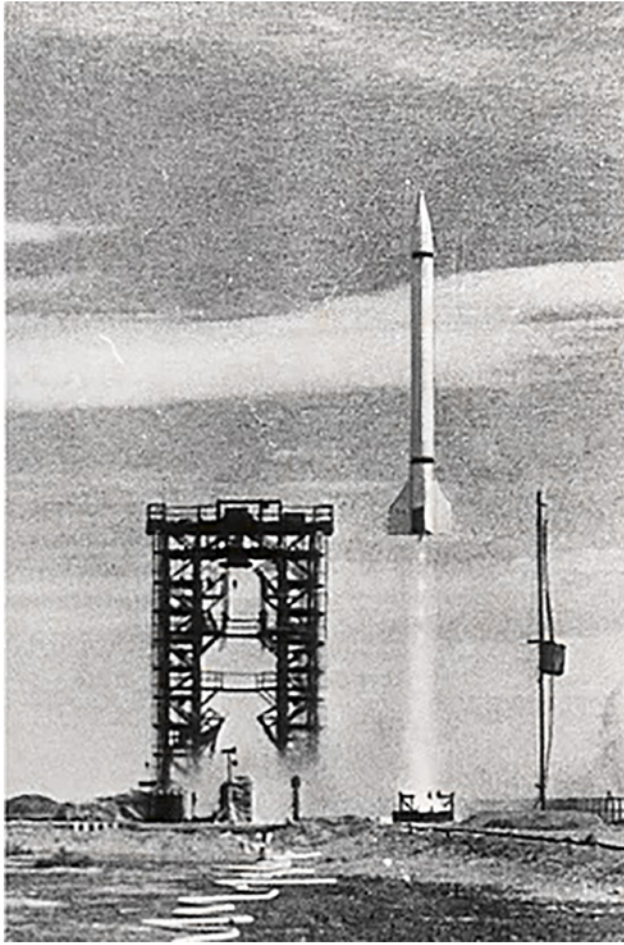


Viking 1 Sounding Rocket



The launch of Viking 1 on May 3, 1949.

May 3, 1949: at 9:14 a.m., Mountain Daylight Saving Time (15:14 UTC), the Viking 1 rocket was launched from the White Sands Proving Grounds in southern New Mexico. The rocket carried a 460 pound (210 kilogram) instrumentation payload.

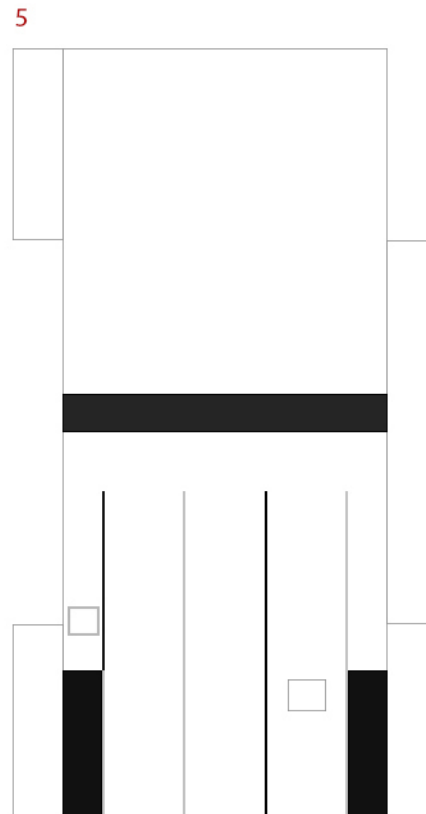
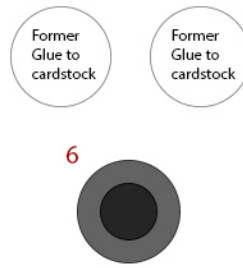
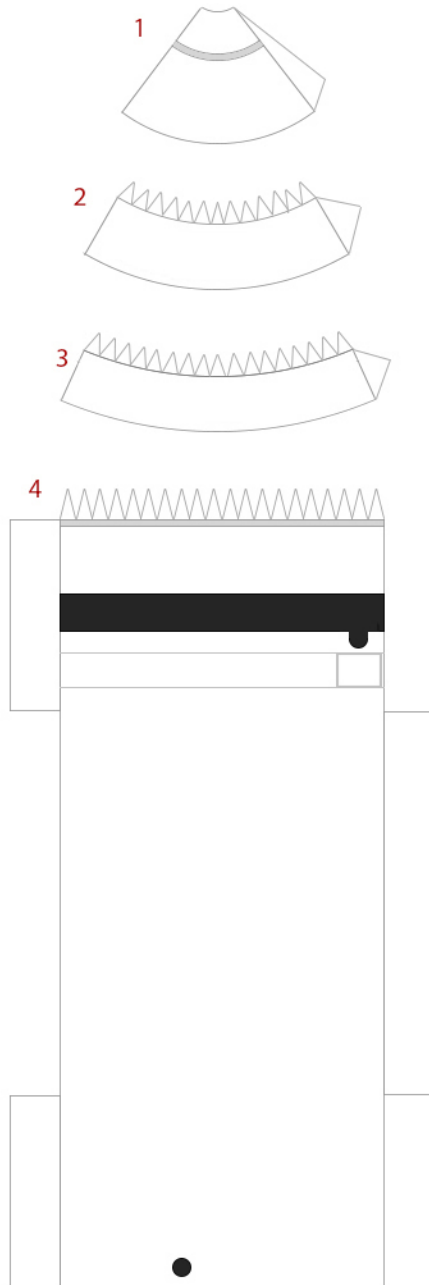
This was the first launch of a U.S. designed and built rocket capable of carrying a payload to space.

Although the planned engine run time was 65 seconds, Viking 1's engine shut down after 54.5 seconds. At that time, the rocket had reached a speed of 2,350 miles per hour (3,780 kilometers per hour). After the engine shut down, Viking 1 continued to climb on a ballistic trajectory to an altitude of 50 miles (81 kilometers). As it fell back to Earth, 291 seconds after launch, the rocket broke up and was scattered across many miles of the Proving Grounds.

Viking 1 was a single-stage liquid-fueled rocket. It was built by the Glenn L. Martin Company for the Naval Research Laboratory. It was constructed primarily of aluminum. The skin was rolled into a cylinder and welded. It was 47 feet, 7.5 inches (14.516 meters) long, 2 feet, 8 inches (0.813 meters) in diameter, with a fin span of 9 feet, 2.5 inches (2.807 meters). Each fin had an area of 15 square feet (1.39 square meters). The rocket had a gross weight of 10,824 pounds (4,910 kilograms).



Viking 1 Sounding Rocket



4 to 5 connector

