

## **Mars in a Minute: How Do You Choose a Landing Site?**

How do you choose a landing site?

So, you want to study Mars with a lander or rover – but where exactly do you send it? It's a tricky question, for engineers and scientists. You want it all: to *land*, *work* and *discover*.

To *land* safely means no high-elevation sites, where there isn't enough atmosphere to slow you down in time. And, try to avoid places with steep slopes or big rocks that could damage something. You also don't want to sink into a thick layer of dust!

*Working* is easier near the equator, where seasons aren't so extreme, and where solar panels can get lots of sun. And, of course, don't send a rover somewhere it can't drive!

Most important is what you want to *discover*. Some sites are great for studying rock layers; others might be perfect to listen for quakes.

Using Mars orbiters, you can collect lots of data on potential sites. When you find the best spot to *land*, *work* and *discover*, you've found your new home on Mars!