

By Owen Good  Nov 5, 2011 2:00 PM 22,632  125 



Welcome Back to Earth, Mars500; Guitar Hero Died While You Were (Not) Gone

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The six brave non-adventurers of the Mars500 project yesterday **emerged from their capsule for the first time in 18 months**, finding they had returned to a dystopic Earth where their *Guitar Hero* skills were utterly useless.

Either that, or they are as utterly sick of the game as we are, after spending a 520 days **locked in a simulated space vessel**. The Mars500 project, a mission of the European Space Agency, studied the effects of isolation over the time necessary to reach the red planet and return. To combat boredom, the crew took along video games, if by video games one means **"a Wii with *Guitar Hero*."**

The Mars500 bid goodbye on June 3, 2010. Exergaming and guitar games were staggering as they left, yet the earthstronauts still had confidence in them enough to **bring along *Guitar Hero* (version unknown) and a Wii Balance Board**. *Guitar Hero: Warriors of Rock* would release three months after the voyage, covering zero miles of space, began. As there were no actual ship maintenance, piloting, or science experiments to be done, perhaps the crew whiled away the time trying to 100 percent "Cliffs of Dover," and dreaming of owning their friends when they returned to Earth.

Alas, that was not meant to be. On Feb. 9, three days before they were to land on fake Mars, **Activision killed *Guitar Hero***. Bravely, Mars500 continued their mission, **touching down on Feb. 12** and venturing from their cabin for the first time in more than eight months.

Setting foot in a world teeming with game retailers, the explorers were still unable to visit one to trade in *Guitar Hero: World Tour* for *Epic Mickey* or maybe *Donkey Kong Country Returns*. They went back to their ship and the same goddamn games they had played for the preceding 240 days. Yesterday they set foot on real Earth soil, learned of *Guitar Hero's* demise in their absence and realized their mission of discovery was partially in vain. They carried on to the next stage of the study.

Quarantine.

(Image via [European Space Agency](#))