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Far Margin



A van-sized comet-mapping spacecraft that gives you a real home without separating you from your work. There's a place to stretch out, make a hot meal, wash properly, and bring your instruments back inside, with a protected navigation station for finding your way home.

You asked for

I spend months alone mapping comets and ice drifting far from any settlement, and I need a tiny ship that's my whole world: somewhere to sleep, cook, wash and work on my charts, room for the instruments I take outside, and a way to stay sane and comfortable on long stretches by myself. It should be barely bigger than a delivery van, so every corner has to earn its place. I'd love to see how one small ship can be a home, an office and a safe way back.

The designer’s response

I've made the ship a short, single-floor cabin rather than a miniature stack of rooms. Your chart cockpit occupies the bright forward end, your bed and galley share the middle, and the messy or wet jobs stay aft. The sleeping recess is also a couch, but your bed doesn't have to become your desk. The airlock earns its footprint by storing

and preparing your exterior instruments.

You can leave chart work laid out while cooking or resting. Folding the meal table opens the central floor for stretching and service access. Supplies for months still depend on your actual journey and power-pack technology; I've reserved accessible storage and separate return reserves, without assigning an unsupported endurance or promising complete recycling.

Details to discover

The painting is an artist’s impression. Where it differs, these notes describe the designed ship.

The desk doesn't become dinner

Your chart station stays at the forward end while a folding meal leaf belongs to the central galley. That separation costs very little floor area, but it means a complicated map can remain laid out when you stop to cook, eat or settle onto the couch.

From your idea: “a home, an office”

An airlock that earns its keep

The pressure lock is also the instrument porch: recessed suit support on one side, padded field-equipment trays on the other. Folding gear stays near the exit, while a cleaning tray catches loose frost and grit before equipment travels into the living bay.

From your idea: “room for the instruments I take outside”

A bed with an open edge

Instead of putting your mattress in a narrow sleeping tube, the port recess has an open edge and padded back. It becomes a place to sit away from the cockpit, while its curtain gives the bed a boundary that doesn't close off the ship's walking route.

From your idea: “a way to stay sane and comfortable”

Follow the thread

Stated paths through the design; quantities and capacity are not assessed.

Follow finished comet charts from Forward chart cockpit

No onward route is described from Forward chart cockpit.

Forward chart cockpit. Finished comet charts stay in the protected local archive

Follow wash greywater from Aft wash cubicle

Aft wash cubicle → Service keel and stern machinery

Service keel and stern machinery. Wash greywater stays in a removable holding tank until a suitable offload point is available

Follow sealed sanitation waste from Aft wash cubicle

Aft wash cubicle → Service keel and stern machinery

Service keel and stern machinery. Sealed sanitation waste stays in a separate removable cartridge

Story sources

The desk doesn't become dinner

Forward chart cockpit. Your forward seat slides between an upright flight position and a relaxed chart-working position. A shallow crescent desk leaves knee space beneath it, with a recessed map surface, reachable hand controls and a hinged paper-chart panel. The exterior window has a solid protective shutter, while a separate bounded display shows instrument views. Finished comet charts stay in the protected local archive. A separate return-navigation unit keeps a saved departure fix, route history, beacon controls and its own reserve battery beside the main station.

Central living bay. A compact galley runs along the starboard wall opposite your sleeping recess. It holds a lidded induction pan, a small insulated food drawer, a sink and clipped crockery storage. A folding table leaf gives you somewhere to eat without covering the cockpit desk. When folded, it leaves a clear standing and stretching area. A narrow shelf for books and personal objects, adjustable lighting and a bounded wall screen give this room uses beyond work. The overhead hull window has an opaque sleep shutter. Food stores occupy accessible drawers under the berth, not the central walking space.

Curtained sleeping recess. Your berth is a full-length, adult-sized recess along the port wall, with a padded back that also makes it a day couch. You can sit upright at its open edge rather than crawl into a tube. A soft curtain closes across the recess without blocking the central route. A reading light, a small personal shelf and a reachable ventilation adjustment let you change the atmosphere without getting up. Lift-up mattress sections expose the food drawers and a separate bedding compartment.

An airlock that earns its keep

Instrument porch and airlock. The aft starboard airlock doubles as your instrument porch, so cold equipment doesn't have to cross the bed or kitchen. An upright adult-sized suit hangs empty in a recessed support shell beside the outer hatch. Opposite it, padded slide-out trays hold a folding tripod, sample tools and compact mapping instruments. A low bracing bench and reachable tether rail help with dressing and

handling cases. A restrained cleaning tray catches loose frost and grit; its residue stays in a lidded removable catch pot here. The inner sliding hatch opens directly into the living bay. Interlocked hatches and a pressure-recovery connection separate this exterior-working space from your home.

Central living bay. A compact galley runs along the starboard wall opposite your sleeping recess. It holds a lidded induction pan, a small insulated food drawer, a sink and clipped crockery storage. A folding table leaf gives you somewhere to eat without covering the cockpit desk. When folded, it leaves a clear standing and stretching area. A narrow shelf for books and personal objects, adjustable lighting and a bounded wall screen give this room uses beyond work. The overhead hull window has an opaque sleep shutter. Food stores occupy accessible drawers under the berth, not the central walking space.

A bed with an open edge

Curtained sleeping recess. Your berth is a full-length, adult-sized recess along the port wall, with a padded back that also makes it a day couch. You can sit upright at its open edge rather than crawl into a tube. A soft curtain closes across the recess without blocking the central route. A reading light, a small personal shelf and a reachable ventilation adjustment let you change the atmosphere without getting up. Lift-up mattress sections expose the food drawers and a separate bedding compartment.

Central living bay. A compact galley runs along the starboard wall opposite your sleeping recess. It holds a lidded induction pan, a small insulated food drawer, a sink and clipped crockery storage. A folding table leaf gives you somewhere to eat without covering the cockpit desk. When folded, it leaves a clear standing and stretching area. A narrow shelf for books and personal objects, adjustable lighting and a bounded wall screen give this room uses beyond work. The overhead hull window has an opaque sleep shutter. Food stores occupy accessible drawers under the berth, not the central walking space.

Ship profile

This is your ship alone, with no hidden crew. You pilot it, map from it and maintain its accessible modules. I've assumed an upright adult body with two grasping hands and two walking legs because your request doesn't specify anatomy. The empty suit in the porch is equipment, not another occupant.

Aboard the ship

Forward chart cockpit

Your forward seat slides between an upright flight position and a relaxed chart-working position. A shallow crescent desk leaves knee space beneath it, with a recessed map surface, reachable hand controls and a hinged paper-chart panel. The

exterior window has a solid protective shutter, while a separate bounded display shows instrument views. Finished comet charts stay in the protected local archive. A separate return-navigation unit keeps a saved departure fix, route history, beacon controls and its own reserve battery beside the main station.

Central living bay

A compact galley runs along the starboard wall opposite your sleeping recess. It holds a lidded induction pan, a small insulated food drawer, a sink and clipped crockery storage. A folding table leaf gives you somewhere to eat without covering the cockpit desk. When folded, it leaves a clear standing and stretching area. A narrow shelf for books and personal objects, adjustable lighting and a bounded wall screen give this room uses beyond work. The overhead hull window has an opaque sleep shutter. Food stores occupy accessible drawers under the berth, not the central walking space.

Curtained sleeping recess

Your berth is a full-length, adult-sized recess along the port wall, with a padded back that also makes it a day couch. You can sit upright at its open edge rather than crawl into a tube. A soft curtain closes across the recess without blocking the central route. A reading light, a small personal shelf and a reachable ventilation adjustment let you change the atmosphere without getting up. Lift-up mattress sections expose the food drawers and a separate bedding compartment.

Aft wash cubicle

The aft port corner is a sealed wet cubicle with a folding wash perch, hand spray, shallow basin and a lidded sanitation unit. Its sliding door stays out of the living aisle. A raised splash lip and extraction grille keep the wet zone distinct from your bedding and galley. The basin and shower drain to the service cassette; sanitation waste uses a separate sealed cartridge. Both can be reached for maintenance from the dry side.

Still to decide

I haven't been given your body shape, so I've provisionally fitted the cabin for an upright, two-handed adult about 1.7 metres standing. Your actual reach or mobility could change the fittings.

The exact instrument cases and time between resupply stops are still undecided. For now, the porch holds compact folding field gear, and the under-berth and service storage have no claimed capacity.

I've used fictional compact power, propulsion and cabin gravity to keep this genuinely spacecraft-sized rather than make the machinery dominate your home.

More about this ship

A closer look

Far Margin

I've kept your ship roughly within a large delivery van's envelope: provisionally about six metres long, including the stern machinery. The living spaces share one floor rather than squeezing you between stacked decks. The forward face carries a shuttered exterior window; the aft face carries the entry hatch and a physically separate propulsion block. Fold-out radiators sit outside the pressure hull, clear of the entry. A narrow overhead window brings a second direction of light into the home area.

Instrument porch and airlock

The aft starboard airlock doubles as your instrument porch, so cold equipment doesn't have to cross the bed or kitchen. An upright adult-sized suit hangs empty in a recessed support shell beside the outer hatch. Opposite it, padded slide-out trays hold a folding tripod, sample tools and compact mapping instruments. A low bracing bench and reachable tether rail help with dressing and handling cases. A restrained cleaning tray catches loose frost and grit; its residue stays in a lidded removable catch pot here. The inner sliding hatch opens directly into the living bay. Interlocked hatches and a pressure-recovery connection separate this exterior-working space from your home.

Service keel and stern machinery

A shallow underfloor service keel and insulated stern cabinet keep noisy machinery outside the main living volume. They hold replaceable power packs, air treatment, fresh-water storage, protected return reserves and the ship's fictional cold-ion propulsion equipment. A compact fictional gravity unit supplies a steady cabin down direction while coasting. Wash greywater stays in a removable holding tank until a suitable offload point is available. Sealed sanitation waste stays in a separate removable cartridge. Dry-side cabinet doors expose these containers without opening the wet cubicle. Lift-out floor panels serve the air and water modules; propulsion and radiator servicing use exterior panels. The reserve navigation battery remains independent of the main distribution bus.

Drawn in ink and watercolour

Layout, access and drawing details

How the ship is organised

Parts within parts · design organization, not measured geometry

Far Margin Whole spacecraft and protective envelope · whole vessel

Forward chart cockpit Piloting, observation, chart work and return navigation · inside Far Margin

Central living bay Cooking, eating, stretching and leisure · inside Far Margin

Curtained sleeping recess Full-length rest and seated retreat · inside Central living bay

Aft wash cubicle Private washing and sanitation · inside Central living bay

Instrument porch and airlock Exterior access, suit preparation and instrument storage · inside Far Margin

Service keel and stern machinery Power, environmental support, storage and propulsion · inside Far Margin

Connections aboard

Central living bay → Forward chart cockpit Open passenger passage along the single cabin floor

Central living bay → Curtained sleeping recess Open seated access through a soft curtain

Central living bay → Aft wash cubicle Passenger access through a sliding wet-zone door

Central living bay → Instrument porch and airlock Passenger and carried-instrument access through the inner pressure hatch

Central living bay → Service keel and stern machinery Maintenance-only access through lift-out floor panels and dry-side cabinet doors

Service keel and stern machinery → Forward chart cockpit Main electrical supply; independent reserve battery remains at the chart station

Service keel and stern machinery → Central living bay Separate utility runs for electrical power, fresh water and conditioned air

Service keel and stern machinery → Curtained sleeping recess Supply and return ventilation ducts with a local adjustment

Service keel and stern machinery → Aft wash cubicle Fresh-water supply and electrical service

Aft wash cubicle → Service keel and stern machinery Dedicated drain into the greywater holding tank

Aft wash cubicle → Service keel and stern machinery Sealed sanitation transfer into its separate cartridge

Instrument porch and airlock → Service keel and stern machinery Pressure-recovery line to the air-treatment module

Service keel and stern machinery → Instrument porch and airlock Controlled repressurization supply and electrical service

Forward chart cockpit is supported by Service keel and stern machinery.

Central living bay is supported by Service keel and stern machinery.

Curtained sleeping recess is supported by Service keel and stern machinery.

Aft wash cubicle is supported by Service keel and stern machinery.

Instrument porch and airlock is supported by Service keel and stern machinery.

Figures in the illustration plan

Solo cartographer: 1

These are illustration targets, not the ship’s population or a verified count in the painting.

Who fits, and how they use it

How the designer imagines the occupants using these spaces. The fit and access notes describe intentions, not measurements.

This is your ship alone, with no hidden crew. You pilot it, map from it and maintain its accessible modules. I've assumed an upright adult body with two grasping hands and two walking legs because your request doesn't specify anatomy. The empty suit in the porch is equipment, not another occupant.

Scale: Show one coherent whole-vessel cutaway at approximately delivery-van scale. All occupied spaces share one floor and one perspective. Keep the assumed adult body, full-length berth, seat, work surfaces and standing wash cubicle at a consistent local scale. Underfloor machinery is shallow service space, not another occupied deck. These are illustration and fit intentions, not an engineering certification.

Solo cartographer: Provisionally an upright adult biped with two grasping hands, two walking legs and a forward-facing head; anatomy is explicitly revisable. Scale basis: Assumed about 1.7 metres standing; the berth provides full-body length with clearance beyond head and feet. Movement: Walks along the cabin floor, sits at supported stations and uses handholds while suited or during changes in thrust. Role: Owner, pilot, comet cartographer and field-instrument operator Planned visible figures: 1 (not a count verified in the painting) Too small if: The seated adult would be undersized if the crescent desktop rose above the shoulders or the low hand-control arc lay beyond an extended forearm from the supported seat. Too large if:

The adult would be oversized if the thighs could not fit beneath the crescent desk or the upright head rose into the forward window's upper structural frame while seated normally.

Sliding supported seat, crescent desk and low hand-control arc — The seated body has knee space beneath the desk, back support and controls within forearm reach; the map surface and forward window are visible without standing.

Waist-level galley and folding meal table — Two hands can prepare food at the lidded pan and sink; the leaf folds clear of the standing route.

Full-length couch-berth with upright edge seating — The adult can lie straight or sit with feet on the cabin floor; the curtain, light and ventilation control are reachable from the mattress.

Standing wet cubicle with folding perch and hand spray — Provides standing headroom and elbow room, with a seated washing option and hand-operated fittings.

Recessed suit shell, low bracing bench and slide-out instrument trays — The suit shell supports dressing; gloved hands reach tray latches and a tether rail while feet stay on the lock floor.

Personal shelf, dimmable lights and bounded leisure screen — Offers changeable light, reading and leisure without appropriating the navigation displays.

Dry-side module doors and removable floor panels — Kneeling access exposes hand-sized connectors and removable containers; the meal table folds away before floor panels are lifted.

Pilot, compare instrument views and compile comet charts.

Solo cartographer · Forward chart cockpit

Intended approach: Instrument porch and airlock → Central living bay → Forward chart cockpit

Fit: The inner hatch and central aisle admit the assumed adult carrying a compact instrument case; the cockpit seat slides aft for entry.

Reach and visibility: Map controls lie within seated forearm reach; the exterior window and separate instrument display are above the desk.

Working space: Seat travel stays inside the cockpit; the chart panel hinges without occupying the home aisle.

Maintenance: A hinged desk fascia exposes the archive and return-navigation modules from the seat opening.

Prepare food, eat and use the shared floor for stretching.

Solo cartographer · Central living bay

Intended approach: Forward chart cockpit → Central living bay

Fit: The adult stands between the galley and berth with the table folded.

Reach and visibility: Pan, sink, food drawer and table latches are reachable from the galley stance.

Working space: The meal leaf opens into the shared floor only when needed; it folds before stretching or lifting service panels.

Maintenance: Galley fronts open toward the clear central floor; sink service is accessible beneath the basin.

Sleep, read and sit away from the working station.

Solo cartographer · Curtained sleeping recess

Intended approach: Forward chart cockpit → Central living bay → Curtained sleeping recess

Fit: A full adult body lies straight; the open edge supports sitting with feet down.

Reach and visibility: Light, shelf, curtain and ventilation adjustment are within reach from the berth.

Working space: The curtain closes within the recess boundary and leaves the central route usable.

Maintenance: Mattress sections lift from the open edge; the ventilation grille removes from inside the recess.

Wash and use sanitation in a private wet zone.

Solo cartographer · Aft wash cubicle

Intended approach: Curtained sleeping recess → Central living bay → Aft wash cubicle

Fit: The assumed adult has standing headroom and space to turn beside the folding perch.

Reach and visibility: Hand spray, basin controls and sanitation lid are usable standing or from the perch.

Working space: The door slides within its wall; the splash lip is a deliberate small step, not a level accessible threshold.

Maintenance: Drain access is inside the cubicle; holding containers are removed through dry-side service doors.

Prepare exterior instruments, dress and transfer through the pressure boundary.

Solo cartographer · Instrument porch and airlock

Intended approach: Forward chart cockpit → Central living bay → Instrument porch and airlock

Fit: The lock is sized for the assumed adult in a fitted suit, with trays stowed during turning.

Reach and visibility: Gloved hands can reach the tether rail, hatch controls and tray latches from the bracing bench.

Working space: The inner hatch slides; the outer hatch opens outward. The suit support recess and stowed trays leave a central dressing volume.

Maintenance: Pressure seals are reachable from inside; cleaning residue leaves in the porch's removable catch pot.

Exchange accessible service modules and inspect stored water and waste.

Solo cartographer · Service keel and stern machinery

Intended approach: Central living bay → Service keel and stern machinery

Fit: This is a kneeling service reach from the cabin, not a passage into an underfloor room.

Reach and visibility: Lift-out panels and dry-side doors expose module handles and isolation controls.

Working space: The table folds and the standing area is cleared before panels or containers are removed.

Maintenance: Exterior propulsion and radiator panels require a suited excursion through the airlock; internal access does not imply access to every component.

Design rules and where they came from

I spend months alone mapping comets and ice drifting far from any settlement

From your description (exact quote) · Far Margin, Forward chart cockpit, Service keel and stern machinery

somewhere to sleep, cook, wash and work on my charts

From your description (exact quote) · Curtained sleeping recess, Central living bay, Aft wash cubicle, Forward chart cockpit

room for the instruments I take outside

From your description (exact quote) · Instrument porch and airlock

a way to stay sane and comfortable on long stretches by myself

From your description (exact quote) · Central living bay, Curtained sleeping recess

It should be barely bigger than a delivery van, so every corner has to earn its place.

From your description (exact quote) · Far Margin, Central living bay, Service keel and stern machinery

a safe way back

From your description (exact quote) · Forward chart cockpit, Instrument porch and airlock, Service keel and stern machinery

Use one occupied floor with a consistent keelward down direction, a port sleeping recess, a starboard galley and separate aft wet cubicle and airlock.

AI proposal · Far Margin, Central living bay, Curtained sleeping recess, Aft wash cubicle, Instrument porch and airlock, Service keel and stern machinery

Provide a shuttered forward exterior window, an independent return-navigation unit and battery, protected return reserves, and interlocked airlock hatches.

AI proposal · Far Margin, Forward chart cockpit, Instrument porch and airlock, Service keel and stern machinery

A fictional design imagined with AI — not engineering. The painting may differ from the design notes.

This dossier keeps its illustrations and notes together and opens without a new AI request. The full technical JSON record is available separately from the app’s Design notes; editable import is not supported.

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This edition keeps the saved illustrations and written notes. Interactive layout diagrams are available in the online dossier.