New simulators are helping astronauts train to fly the next generation of American spacecraft to the International Space Station. They are being developed as part of NASA's Commercial Crew program. Boeing built two part-task trainers in St. Louis that mimic the controls of the company's CST-100 Starliner. Programmed to react to situations as the real spaceships will the simulators let astronauts become familiar with normal operations plus safely train for the unexpected. "That's really what the part-task trainer does it gives you a chance to get the feel and look you know where to look how to use the procedures when you go to a screen in the background you know when I hit this button what's it gonna look like and so you can really take what you've been learning from books and from videos and those kind of things from the
instruction actually put it all together into one usable thing." Two of NASA's Commercial Crew astronauts chosen to train for flight tests ran simulations of launch, landing, and on-orbit operations including docking with the International Space Station. The trainers will be shipped to NASA's Johnson Space Center in Houston where they'll be joined by a full-size Starliner simulator early next year.