

In-flight emergencies

Taking charge in an emergency

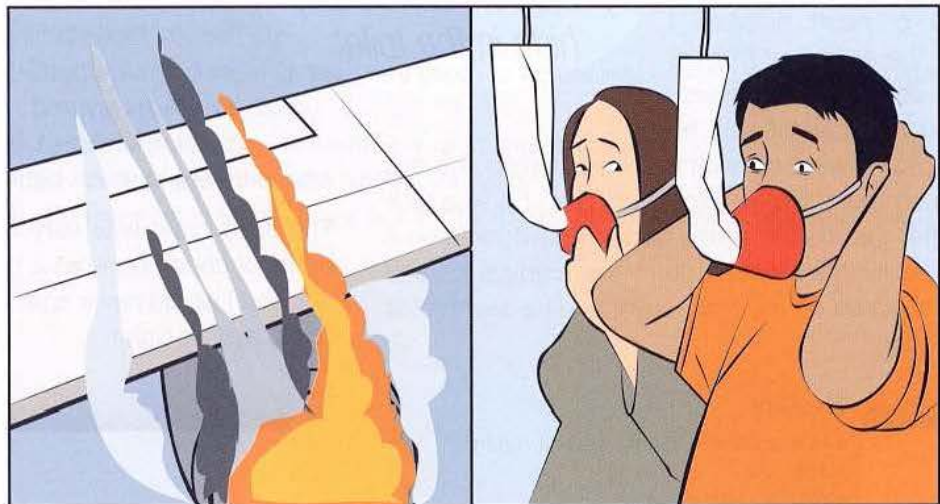
SPEAKING

- 1 Emergencies are all about *Safety first*, the most important part of the flight attendant's training. In an on-board emergency, which of these roles does the flight attendant take: diplomat, nurse, policeman, firefighter, referee, lifesaver? Discuss with a partner or in small groups. Which is the most important role?
- 2 Work with a partner. Look at the list of serious on-board events. Which are real emergencies? Which are the most serious? Which are the least serious? Can you add any more to the list?
 - a an engine on fire
 - b a passenger giving birth
 - c passengers fighting
 - d a sudden loss of cabin pressure and drop in altitude
 - e complete engine failure
 - f a PAN-PAN call as a result of a cardiac arrest
 - g a fire in the toilets
 - h lots of passengers suffering from nausea
 - i the pilot's PA announcement to prepare for ditching
 - j an aborted take-off (or go-around)

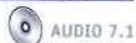
As you discuss the situations, think about these questions.

- Which is life-threatening to all on board?
- Which is a temporary problem?
- Which is a clear Mayday?
- Which is a PAN-PAN?

- 3 Which of these things would you do in an emergency situation?
 - a Discuss the situation with your colleagues.
 - b Wait for instructions from the purser.
 - c Ask the passengers for their advice.
 - d Give clear instructions to passengers on what to do.



LISTENING



- 4 Try to fill in the missing words in this sudden announcement from the purser. Then listen and check your answers.

Purser Ladies and gentlemen, this is an ¹ _____. This is an ² _____.
³ _____ in your seats with your seatbelts ⁴ _____. Remain ⁵ _____
 and ⁶ _____ these instructions. Pull ⁷ _____ the oxygen mask. Pull
⁸ _____ the oxygen mask. Put it ⁹ _____ your nose and ¹⁰ _____
 immediately and breathe ¹¹ _____.

Flight attendant Grab your mask. Pull it down and place it ¹² _____ your nose and
¹³ _____.

Purser Remain calm. Stay in your seats and ¹⁴ _____ a mask towards you. Place the
 mask over your mouth and nose like this and breathe normally, adjusting the
¹⁵ _____ to secure it. Do make sure your own mask is fitted properly
¹⁶ _____ helping anyone else.

LANGUAGE FOCUS

GIVING
INSTRUCTIONS

Study these instructions.

Stay in your seats.
 Remain calm.
 Pull down the oxygen mask.
 Pull it down over your nose and mouth.
 Breathe normally.

PRONUNCIATION



- 5 Listen and repeat the instructions in *Language focus*.

SPEAKING

- 6 In all emergencies, cabin crew must give clear instructions, calm the passengers and act quickly. Work with a partner. During an emergency situation, what would you say to these people? Choose from the sentences below. There may be several possible answers.

- a a worried passenger whose wife has just fainted
- b a pregnant woman experiencing contractions
- c a young boy running in the aisle to the toilet
- d a panicky hyper-ventilating passenger
- e a loud and noisy group who are not taking the emergency instructions seriously
- f a mother whose child is sick and vomiting
- g a woman with headphones who is listening to music

- Please keep quiet.
- Don't worry, you'll be fine.
- Listen, stop.
- Don't be upset. We'll take care of her.
- Keep quiet please – you are disturbing others.
- Don't shout, speak normally.
- Breathe slowly and deeply. That's it.
- Calm down now, please.
- That's enough – control yourself.
- Try to relax. I'll stay with you.
- Listen carefully, please, these instructions are for you.
- Wait until we land.

Preparing for an emergency evacuation

READING

- 1 Read about this emergency. Have you ever been in a situation like this? If so, what happened? Tell a partner.

Flight JWZ157 is in trouble. It is a Boeing 747 with 174 passengers and 14 crew. After experiencing severe turbulence and the start of a fire in one engine, the captain has decided to shut down the engine and make an emergency landing. The captain makes the announcement himself. The passengers are aware that all is not normal and they are nervous.



LISTENING



- 2 Listen to the captain's announcement to the passengers and fill in the missing words.

Ladies and gentlemen, your captain ¹_____. We have a ²_____ problem and for everyone's safety we've decided to land in the next ³_____ minutes at the nearest airport. The landing should be perfectly ⁴_____, but for safety reasons we will evacuate the aircraft using the ⁵_____. The cabin crew will now give you full instructions and ⁶_____ you for the landing. Please listen ⁷_____ to their instructions. Thank you.

SPEAKING

- 3 What do you think will happen after the captain's announcement? What won't happen? Put a tick (✓) or a cross (X).

The cabin crew will ...

- a secure everything in the galleys
- b continue the food and drinks service
- c help passengers to get their bags from the lockers to collect precious items
- d begin to go through the cabin saying 'fasten seatbelts'
- e make sure the toilets are empty
- f collect the headsets
- g make sure everyone returns to their seats immediately
- h wait for instructions
- i point out the emergency exits.

LISTENING



- 4 Listen to the purser giving further instructions to the passengers and fill in the missing words.



- a Ladies and gentlemen, as the captain has just told you, we shall be landing in 20 minutes. For safety reasons, after landing we shall be ¹ _____ the aircraft using the ² _____ slides. So please listen very carefully and do ³ _____ as instructed. Please return to your seats immediately and ⁴ _____ your seatbelt fastened securely.

(Later)

- b We are now ⁵ _____ to take you through our safety procedures. Please watch and listen carefully. The safety card in your seat pocket ⁶ _____ details of your escape routes, oxygen masks and life jackets. It also shows the ⁷ _____ position, which you must adopt in an emergency landing. Again, please listen carefully.

Emergency exits are on both ⁸ _____ of the aircraft. They are clearly ⁹ _____ and are being ¹⁰ _____ out to you now. On the main deck there are two exits at the rear of the First class cabin and two at the front and rear of each other cabin section. On the upper deck there is an emergency exit on each side, in the middle of the cabin.

Please take a moment now to ¹¹ _____ the exit nearest to you, bearing in mind that the nearest usable exit may be behind you. To help you find your way to the exits, ¹² _____ lighting is provided in the aisles at floor level.

(After landing)

- c Please remain seated and follow instructions given to you by your crew. Do not leave your seats until instructed to do so by your crew. When the seatbelt signs are switched off, make your way to your nearest exit. Leave all personal ¹³ _____ behind. I repeat, leave all personal hand-baggage ¹⁴ _____. Ladies, ¹⁵ _____ high-heeled shoes, as they may tear the slide.

LANGUAGE FOCUS

Study these sentences.

INSTRUCTIONS
NOT TO DO
SOMETHING

Do not leave your seats until instructed to do so by your crew.
Do not / Don't take anything with you as you leave the aircraft.
Do not / Don't take handbags or briefcases.

SPEAKING

- 5 In groups of three, practise speaking the three parts of the announcement made by the purser. Then say them again from memory or short notes.

Reporting an evacuation

READING

Airline accidents are very rare and fatal accidents even more so. In 2010 the Polish president and many top public figures died when their jet crashed en route to a war memorial service in Russia. This was one of the most notable crashes in recent time, along with the Concorde crash in 2000 in Paris. In both these incidents there were no survivors and there is nothing that the cabin crew could have done to avert disaster. Cabin crew were, however, able to play an important part in an incident involving US Airways flight 1549 in February 2009. You are going to read a newspaper article about this incident.

1 Look at the photograph below. Describe what you can see in the picture.

2 Read the headline. What do you know about this incident?

UNBELIEVABLE



BUT TRUE

US Airways Flight 1549 lost both engines following a massive bird-strike three and a half minutes after take-off and made an emergency landing in the Hudson River yesterday in the late afternoon. There were 150 passengers and five crew members, including the captain, first officer and three flight attendants, on board. All 155 survived.

The plane ditched at exactly 15.31, less than seven minutes after take-off. Four minutes later all the passengers and crew had been evacuated on to the wings

of the floating aircraft or into the slightly submerged slides. They were then taken to safety on Hudson River ferries. Before leaving the aircraft himself, the captain made one last check inside to see that no one was left behind. There were no serious injuries.

Many are calling this a miracle. However, aviation authorities are saying that the real reason for the success of the landing and evacuation was the first-class training of the pilots and cabin crew. They knew what to do and did it superbly.

SPEAKING

3 This incident has been described as the most successful ditching in aviation history. Do you agree? What do you know about the actions of the cabin crew and flight crew that day?

READING

4 Read the newspaper report and answer the questions.

- 1 What caused the engine failure?
- 2 Where did the plane land? On water or on land?
- 3 How many people were injured?
- 4 Who was the last person to leave the aircraft?
- 5 What reason do aviation authorities give for the 'miracle'?

VOCABULARY

5 Match words from the newspaper report with these definitions.

- 1 very big _____
- 2 an attack _____
- 3 to live after a bad accident _____
- 4 to land a plane on water _____
- 5 not sinking under the water _____
- 6 just a little _____
- 7 under water _____
- 8 physical harm _____
- 9 very, very good _____
- 10 very well _____

LANGUAGE FOCUS

Study these sentences.

REPORTING
INSTRUCTIONS

Captain to crew: 'Prepare the cabin for an emergency landing.'

The captain **told** the crew **to** prepare the cabin for an emergency landing.

Flight attendant to passengers: 'Take off your shoes.'

The flight attendant **told** the passengers **to** take off their shoes.

Flight attendant to passengers: 'Don't get anything from the overhead lockers.'

The flight attendant **told** the passengers **not to** get anything from the overhead lockers.

Purser to passengers: 'Don't worry.'

The purser **told** the passengers **not to** worry.

PRONUNCIATION



AUDIO 7.5

6 Listen to these sentences and notice how the weak **to** /tə/ is not stressed.

- The captain told the crew **to** prepare the cabin for an emergency landing.
- The flight attendant told the passengers **to** take off their shoes.
- The flight attendant told the passengers **not to** get anything from the overhead lockers.
- The purser told the passengers **not to** worry.

Now listen again and repeat the sentences.

SPEAKING

7 Work with a partner. Imagine what happened inside the aircraft in the Hudson River incident and take turns to tell the story, using questions and answers. Give and get as much detail as possible. Talk about the instructions that were given and all the things the crew and passengers had to do.

Some questions from the reporter might be: *What happened? What did you do? How did the passengers / crew react? Then what happened?*

Situation 1: Student A is a TV reporter; Student B is a crew member.

Situation 2: Student A is a passenger; Student B is a TV reporter.

Case study

READING

1 Read *Crew's response to take-off incident criticized* opposite and answer the questions.

- Put these events from the incident into the correct order.
 - Conditions in the cabin got worse.
 - The flight crew heard a bump.
 - The aircraft landed safely.
 - The passenger oxygen system was deployed manually.
 - A passenger received medical assistance.
 - Nine oxygen masks failed to deploy.
 - The flight crew continued climbing and pressurizing the cabin.
 - The cabin supervisor banged on the cockpit door.
- How did the flight attendants try to help when some of the oxygen masks did not deploy?

SPEAKING

2 Work with a partner. Answer the questions and discuss the emergency in the text.

- What kind of training do flight attendants get for such emergencies?
- Would you have done things differently if you had been on this flight? What would you have said to the passengers and the other crew members? Who is responsible for talking to the captain?

LISTENING



3 Listen to Shon Davis as she answers these questions. Make notes about what she says.

- 'What was the most serious emergency you experienced?'
- 'Did you ever have to evacuate passengers?'
- 'What special qualities as a flight attendant do you need in emergencies?'

4 Listen again and answer the questions.

- Describe the Lusaka experience. What does Shon say about these things?
 - > V1
 - > braking
 - > her senior crew member
 - > people in the Business class section
 - > communication from the flight deck
- Tell a partner the story of the evacuation. What does Shon say about these things?
 - > the announcements from the captain
 - > the fuel tanks
 - > the tyres on the aircraft
 - > passengers behaving selfishly
- Complete what Shon says about dealing with an emergency. Do you agree with her analysis? 'I think all flight attendants have to be able to ¹_____ with pressure and ²_____. They have to be able to demonstrate a calmness and they have to also be ³_____ and feel confident about what they are doing and what their role is, and what their responsibility as a safety officer on board is, and if you can be ⁴_____, if you can absorb your training and know your ⁵_____ as to what to do in any given situation, particularly emergency, then the training will automatically take over and your calm ⁶_____ plus your training will help you deal with the situation in the best way possible.'

SPEAKING

5 Work with a partner. Discuss these questions.

- Are you surprised by how the flight attendants reacted during and after the Lusaka evacuation?
- In emergencies, do you wait for orders or follow your training and act quickly? Do you think your training prepares you for emergency incidents?
- What was your worst experience of an emergency, either as a flight attendant or as a passenger?

Crew's response to take-off incident criticized

Nine oxygen masks failed to deploy and cabin crew had to bang on the cockpit door to alert the pilot during a serious incident on a flight from Dublin to London, according to an air accident investigation.

Six crew and 148 passengers were on the flight to London Stansted. At take-off, the flight crew heard a bump, but were not sure what had happened. The tail of the aircraft had hit the runway during take-off, but it was four minutes before the cabin crew could confirm that a tail-strike had occurred. During this time the flight crew decided to continue climbing and pressurizing the cabin, even though the nature of the problem was not known.

As part of the standard procedures after such an event, the flight crew opened the pressurization outflow valve and this caused the cabin to depressurize quickly. Environmental conditions in the cabin then rapidly deteriorated, and the cabin supervisor tried unsuccessfully to speak to the flight crew on the intercom.

When the supervisor failed to reach the captain by phone, she

banged on the cockpit door and established communication. 'I ran to the front. I needed to inform the captain that we were having a rapid recompression.'

After this, the passenger oxygen system was deployed manually, but some masks did not deploy. 'The passengers in the row in front of me did not have masks on and were striking the overhead lockers with their hands to try and get them to open,' one passenger told the investigation. Cabin crew helped them to move to spare seats where the masks had deployed, and even used their ID cards in an effort to open the units where oxygen masks were stored.

The aircraft landed safely after 21 minutes in the air and one passenger received medical assistance. The investigation report said that while the tail-strike was not serious, what followed caused a serious incident which upset many passengers.

The airline, which has accepted what the report says, has already made changes to its training procedures in response to the incident. It said the report showed that the tail-strike was minor, and that the aircraft returned to Dublin as a precaution.

'Passengers were striking the overhead lockers with their hands to try and get them to open.'



Glossary

to deploy to use; to come into use

tail-strike when the aircraft tail hits the ground on take-off

pressurization outflow valve something that regulates the amount of air needed to be released from the cabin in order to maintain the required amount of pressurization

to deteriorate to get worse

rapid very fast

manually by hand; not automatically

a precaution a safety measure