

How to behave in case of emergency

Flight attendants are in charge of security, and passengers' safety is their principal concern.

Approximately one hour before the take off they attend a safety briefing with the pilots; after that, they inspect the aircraft to ensure all the emergency equipment is in place and working properly. After the passengers' boarding, they conduct a demonstration to help travellers familiarise with the basic safety features of the aircraft.

Flight attendants are given specific training for the aircraft which they work in, since they must be able to deal with various and sometimes serious emergency situations such

as: sudden turbulence, technical breakdowns, smoke and fire in the cabin, depressurisation, emergency landings and evacuation of the cabin or on board medical situations.

To prevent hijacking or terrorist attacks, attendants are also trained to monitor people on board so as to detect and point out suspicious behaviour, and they may also be provided with basic courses in martial arts.

Passengers' reactions to highly stressful and disorienting circumstances on board are many and different: they may range from panic to total immobility and inaction. Attendants must handle all these irregular situations with a behaviour that aims at encouraging passengers to follow instructions and to work collaboratively avoiding confused and uncontrolled situations. When facing an emergency, cabin crew must be assertive in their message, and their vocal and body language should communicate efficiency even if a threat is perceived by passengers.



Flight attendants training

Emergency: How to keep a situation under control RULE NUMBER ONE: BE ASSERTIVE TO PREVENT DISORDERLY SITUATIONS

DO'S

- Delivery to passengers should be given in a clear, calm, slow and quiet way
- To calm passengers, keep calm yourself first
- Give passengers constant updates on the emergency situation
- Monitor passengers in order to identify people who may need individual help
- Appear confident and competent despite any feeling you may have

DONT'S

- Don't show concern
- Your voice, manners and body language shouldn't show the least emotion: be as natural and professional as possible
- Don't be rude, answer all the questions even if they have already been asked a hundred times
- Don't inform passengers about a breakdown if it is not so evident and relevant for their safety
- Don't look after the most demanding and anxious passengers only: in emergency any traveller needs some help

Remember:

- keeping passengers comfortable is easy, but keeping them safe is harder
- emergency training saves lives
- emergency procedures are successful if passengers follow safety instructions in an orderly way