

# Airport

Welcome back to the Republic of Learners, the podcast where we explore the world of language and culture through real-life situations. I'm your host, Amin Bahramlu, and in today's episode, we'll be taking you on a journey through the exciting, and sometimes stressful, process of air travel. From the moment you decide to buy a ticket until you step off the plane, we'll be discussing all the possible situations you might encounter, along with some common expressions, phrasal verbs, and phrases to help you navigate this experience with ease. So, fasten your seatbelts, and let's dive in!

## Part 1: Buying a ticket

First things first, when you decide to buy a ticket, you have several options: you can book online through the airline's website or a third-party website, call the airline directly, or visit a travel agent. You'll need to provide your full name, passport information, and sometimes your date of birth. Be sure to double-check all your information, as any mistakes can lead to problems later on.

During this process, you may hear or use some of the following common phrases

- "I'd like to book a round-trip ticket to New York." In case you don't know what a round-trip is, it's a type of travel where you go from one location to another and then return back to the original starting location using the same mode of transportation.
- "Can I choose my seat?"
- "Is there a layover, or is it a direct flight?" (A layover is a stop in between flights, while a direct flight is a flight with no stops or layovers.)
- "Can I book a one-way ticket to Paris?"
- "What's the cheapest fare available?" (The fare is the price paid for a ticket to travel on public transportation.)

- "Do you have any discounts for students or senior citizens?"
- "What are the available payment options?"
- "Can I reserve an exit row seat for extra legroom?" (Legroom refers to the space available for a passenger's legs.)
- "How many hours is the layover in London?"
- "Are meals provided on this flight?"
- "What is the baggage allowance for economy class?"
- "Can I change my reservation to an earlier flight?"
- "Is there an airport shuttle service available at my destination?"
- "What's the latest time I can check in for my flight?"
- "Can I request a special meal, such as vegetarian or gluten-free?"
- "What amenities are available in the airport lounge?" (Amenities are facilities or services that make a place more comfortable or enjoyable.)
- "Do you offer in-flight Wi-Fi, and if so, what's the cost?"

here are some common sentences you might hear while buying a ticket:

- "There's a special promotion for flights to New York this month."
- "You can save money by booking a connecting flight with a layover."
- "You have 24 hours to cancel or modify your reservation without any penalties."
- "If you book a flexible ticket, you can change your travel dates without incurring additional fees."
- "There are non-stop flights available on weekdays, but they may be more expensive."
- "Your fare includes one checked bag and one carry-on item."

As an example, imagine you're calling the airline to book a flight. Practice asking about the flight details and providing your personal information using the phrases above.

## Part 2: Preparing for your trip

Once you've booked your ticket, it's time to start preparing for your trip. This includes packing your bags, checking the airline's baggage policies, and gathering your travel documents. You'll want to make sure you have your passport, boarding pass, and any necessary visas.

It is essential to familiarize yourself with the following key phrases and expressions, as they will help you navigate various travel situations more effectively and ensure a smoother journey:

- "I need to pack my carry-on luggage."
- "What's the weight limit for checked baggage?"
- "How many carry-on items am I allowed to bring?" (A carry-on is a small piece of luggage that passengers can bring with them onto a plane and keep in the cabin during the flight.)
- "Are there any restrictions on the size of my carry-on luggage?"
- "What items are prohibited in my carry-on and checked baggage?"
- "How do I pack medications and medical equipment?"
- "Can I bring food and snacks on the flight?"
- "How can I secure my luggage to prevent theft or tampering?"
- "What should I do if my luggage is lost or damaged?"
- "Can I bring sports equipment or musical instruments on the flight?"
- "How early should I arrive at the airport to check in and drop off my luggage?" ("Dropping off luggage" means leaving your bags at a designated location for temporary safekeeping, such as an airline counter or a hotel reception.)
- "What are the rules for traveling with pets or service animals?"
- "How do I handle fragile or valuable items during my flight?"
- "Are there any additional fees for special or excess baggage?"

## Part 3: Navigating the airport

On the day of your flight, you'll arrive at the airport with your bags and travel documents in hand. You'll need to check in, either at a self-service kiosk or with an airline representative, and drop off your checked baggage. After that, it's time to navigate security.

Some useful expressions and phrases for this stage include:

- "Where is the check-in counter?"
- "Please remove your laptop and liquids from your bag."
- "Can I check in at the self-service kiosk or do I need to go to the counter?"
- "Where can I find a luggage cart or trolley?"
- "What time does the check-in counter close for my flight?"
- "How do I get to the security checkpoint from here?"
- "Do I need to remove my shoes and belt at security?"
- "Are there any priority lanes for families, elderly passengers, or those with disabilities?"
- "What's the procedure for a pat-down or body scan?" (Pat-down and body scan are security checks used to detect hidden items on a person's body, with pat-down being a manual search and body scan using electronic imaging.)
- "Are there any restaurants or shops near my gate?"
- "Is there a shuttle or train to get to my gate, or do I need to walk?"
- "Can I use the airport lounge with my ticket, or do I need to pay extra?"
- "What time is the last boarding call for my flight?"
- "The check-in counter for your flight is located in Terminal 1."
- "There's a security checkpoint on the left after passing the check-in counters."
- "Your gate is a 10-minute walk from the security checkpoint."
- "The airport has a free shuttle service between terminals."
- "There is a food court near your gate with various dining options."
- "You can find a currency exchange and ATM in the main terminal area."

## **Part 4: At the check-in counter**

When you arrive at the airport, one of the first stops will be the check-in counter. Here, you'll confirm your flight information, drop off any checked baggage, and receive your boarding pass if you haven't already done so online. It's important to communicate clearly and effectively with the airline staff to ensure a smooth process.

Phrases and expressions to remember at the check-in counter:

- "Hello, I'm here to check in for my flight to [destination]."
- "Can I please have a window/aisle seat?"
- "How much does it cost to check an extra bag?"
- "Is my flight on time?"
- "What time do I need to be at the gate?"
- "Are there any upgrades available?"
- "Can I get a seat with extra legroom?"
- "Here's my passport and booking confirmation."
- "Could you please attach a 'Fragile' tag to my luggage?"
- "Please place your checked luggage on the scale for weighing."
- "Your boarding pass has been printed; please keep it with you at all times."
- "Your flight is currently on schedule." It means there are no known delays or issues that would cause the flight to be postponed or cancelled.

With a friend or family member, practice a conversation at the check-in counter, using the phrases above. Take turns playing the role of the passenger and the airline representative. This will help familiarize you with the various questions and requests that may come up during the check-in process.

## **Part 5: Boarding the plane**

Once you've made it through security and found your gate, it's time to board the plane. Listen for announcements about boarding groups and make sure to have your boarding pass and ID ready.

In this part I am going to give you the most important and the most common phrases you may want to use or hear, make sure you learn them.

- "Please have your boarding pass and ID ready."
- "When will boarding begin for my flight?"
- "Can I pre-board if I have young children or need assistance?"
- "What is the procedure for boarding with a stroller or wheelchair?"
- "Are there any specific boarding requirements for pets or service animals?"
- "What is the best way to store my personal item during the flight?"
- "Are there any last-minute upgrades available before boarding?"
- "We will begin boarding with priority passengers and families with young children."
- "Please have your boarding pass and ID ready for inspection."
- "We're now boarding groups A and B."
- "We are experiencing a short delay in boarding due to a late-arriving aircraft."

## **Part 6: In-flight**

As the plane takes off, you'll need to follow the crew's instructions, like fastening your seat belt and putting your electronic devices in airplane mode. During the flight, you may want to request a beverage or snack, ask about in-flight entertainment, or request assistance from the flight attendants.

Let's take a look at some of the most common phrases you may need to use or hear in this situation.

- "Please fasten your seatbelt and put your tray table up." (A tray table is a small foldable table attached to the back of a seat in an airplane, train, or bus, providing a flat surface for various activities.)
- "Can I have a glass of water, please?"
- "Excuse me, can I have a blanket?"
- "How do I connect to the in-flight Wi-Fi?"
- "Is there a charging port for my electronic devices at my seat?"
- "Are alcoholic beverages available for purchase?"
- "What time will the in-flight meal be served?"
- "How do I adjust the air conditioning vent above my seat?"
- "What is the estimated arrival time at our destination?"
- "Do you have any pillows or eye masks available?"
- "Is there a reading light at my seat, and how do I turn it on?"
- "How do I recline my seat without disturbing the person behind me?"
- "How do I access the in-flight entertainment system?"
- "We'll be dimming the cabin lights for the duration of the flight."
- "Please refrain from congregating in the aisles or near the lavatories." ("When the airline representative says 'Please refrain from congregating in the aisles or near the lavatories,' it means passengers are asked not to gather or linger in these areas during the flight for safety reasons.")
- "If you have any questions or need assistance, don't hesitate to ask a flight attendant."
- "Ladies and gentlemen, the captain has turned on the fasten seatbelt sign."
- "We'll be serving complimentary beverages and snacks shortly." it means that the drinks and snacks will be provided to passengers for free.
- "Please ensure your electronic devices are in airplane mode."

## **Part 7: Arrival and disembarking**

Once the plane has landed and reached the gate, you'll need to wait for the crew's instructions before you can disembark. Make sure to gather all your belongings and check your seat pocket for any personal items.

### **Helpful expressions and phrases:**

- "Please remain seated until the seatbelt sign is turned off."
- "I need to collect my carry-on luggage from the overhead bin."
- "Thank you for flying with us."
- "Where can I find the nearest restroom after leaving the plane?"
- "Where can I find the baggage claim area for our flight?"
- "Is there a shuttle or train to the main terminal or connecting flights?"
- "Can I request a wheelchair or assistance for deplaning?"
- "How do I find my connecting flight's gate?"
- "Where can I find an information desk or customer service counter if I need help?"
- "Where can I find a currency exchange or ATM in the airport?"
- "Can I purchase a local SIM card or Wi-Fi access at the airport?"
- "Are there any airport lounges or rest areas available for passengers?"
- "How do I find the airport's lost and found if I misplaced something?" (Lost and found is a designated area at an airport where lost items are stored until they are claimed by their rightful owners.)
- "Please be careful when opening the overhead bins, as items may have shifted during the flight."
- "Please keep the aisles clear until the seatbelt sign has been turned off."
- "If you require assistance with deplaning, please remain seated until other passengers have exited."



## **Conclusion:**

And there you have it! We've walked you through the entire air travel process, from booking your ticket to stepping off the plane. We hope you now feel more confident navigating airports and flights, armed with these useful phrases and expressions. Remember, practice makes perfect, so be sure to rehearse these situations before your next trip. Thank you for joining me on this episode of the Republic of Learners podcast. Until next time, safe travels and happy learning!