

TRAVEL



TRAVELLING ON BUSINESS.

Tuning in

1. Do you like travelling?
2. What is travel for you?
3. What different kinds of travelling are there?
4. What are the good and bad things about travelling?
5. What's the best place you've ever been to?

Word study

1. How many words and expressions from the list do you know?

aisle seat	economy class	to land
baggage	first class	passenger
boarding pass	flight attendant	pilot
business class	gate number	to take off
to check in	jet lag	window seat

2. Complete the following story about a business trip by putting a compound noun from the box in each gap.

- boarding card *pass check-in-desk * departure lounge * duty free shop * hand luggage * information desk * passport control

The last time I came to this airport, I lost my passport. I was nice and early so there were no queues at the 1..... . I checked in my 2....., got my 3..... and went through 4..... all very quickly. Then, because I had so much time, instead of just sitting in the 5....., I decided to do some shopping. I wanted to get a present, so I was trying all the different perfumes in the 6..... . I don't know how it happened but I must have dropped my passport there. I went to the gate to board the plane and then I realized that I couldn't find my passport. At that moment, they called me over the loudspeaker. 'Will passenger Martinez travelling to Madrid please contact the 7.....?'

I felt so embarrassed!

Reading

Pre-reading task

1. What is the most important for you when choosing an airline to fly: cost, comfort, service?
2. Would your choice be different when travelling on business? Why?
3. Name advantages and disadvantages of flying and travelling by train for business trips. What means of travelling would you prefer?

Business travel

The other day my client told me that he had to be in London **on business** and consequently wouldn't be available for our next scheduled online lesson. The conversation naturally led to the topic of **business travel** and, particularly, the pros and cons of **travelling by air or by rail**.

Travelling by Rail

My client, who is based in Milan, often has to travel around Italy and more often than not **takes the train** to get to the main cities. If his meetings are in the city centres, he says travelling by train is the best option. Most train stations are located in the centre of cities and therefore, getting to clients' offices is a lot easier than from an airport which tends to be outside a city. Nowadays, with **high-speed trains** you can get to your **destination** in no time at all.

A further advantage of the train is that you don't have to arrive 2 hours before departure. I realise that with **domestic flights** the **waiting time** is less, but it is still longer than a train. If you're travelling by train, you only have to **arrive 30 minutes before departure**, **hop onto** the train and you're off!

Whether you are travelling **First Class** or **Standard Class**, you can select a **carriage** that has the facilities for you to work – **Wi-Fi connection** and **power access to charge** your laptop, tablet and phone. **Train travel** allows business travellers to work comfortably during their journey. The only snag, though, is that, unless you've booked a quiet carriage, you could end up sharing your carriage with some very noisy mobile phone users

Travelling by Air

Depending on your destination, you may have no alternative but to **travel by air**. For those of us who are lucky to travel in **Business** or **Club** class, there is nothing quite like the luxury of using the **First Class Lounge** at the airport after **check-in**. The comfortable seats, free drinks and food and relaxing environment **set you up** for the flight ahead.

My client and I joked about how great it feels to board the plane and **turn left** (Business Class) instead of right! The wide seats with **spacious legroom** are very comfortable. Soon after you're seated the **air hostess serves you a drink** (often alcoholic, unless it's an **early morning flight**). The food is served in **proper crockery** and not plastic trays. On **long-haul flights**, you are given a **goodies bag** with all sorts of things like a toothbrush, toothpaste, flight socks, an eye pad, and good quality earphones (for the films).

My client and I both agree that Club Class is essential when travelling long haul. On **short haul flights**, however, **Economy class** is bearable! You might not have the legroom, but on some flights you can ask for the **emergency exit seats** or **pay extra for more legroom**. A lot of the **budget airlines** like Easyjet give you the option to do just that. My husband is tall and I

always have to book the emergency exit seats. Of course, the budget airlines don't have Club Class so everyone is together. In these difficult economic times, most companies will not **approve business class travel** for their employees, especially for short haul flights.

Travelling by air requires the passenger to arrive around 2 hours before departure for **check in**. Most airlines ask you to **check in online** before arriving at the airport. That way you already have your **boarding pass**. Unless you have **hold luggage**, you can go directly to security with your **carry-on (cabin) luggage** without queuing at the **check-in desks**. **Airport security** can be rather tiresome but it has become a part of flying and something that has to be tolerated.

If you are **flying short haul** and have arranged meetings for the day of travel, you may choose to catch an **early morning flight**. My client was catching the 7am flight today to London. That would have allowed him to attend his first meeting scheduled at 9am. With London being one hour behind, he would have arrived in London at 7.30am (UK) – 8.30am Italy.

When I give training workshops, I prefer to arrive at my destination the night before. So, I will take an **early evening flight** and stay overnight. That way I have time to prepare the venue and the equipment for the workshop the following day.

For the **long haul flights** some travellers prefer to travel **through the night** and arrive at their destination in time for their meeting. These are known as **red eye flights**. I am not sure I'd like that because unless you have a **great night's sleep** during the flight, you wouldn't be in a position to perform efficiently. You may also have **jet lag** to deal with depending on how many **time zones** you've travelled.

Business travel may sound glamorous with all that Club Class service and benefits, but it can also be exhausting. I used to do a lot of **business miles** on the road. While it allowed me to listen to the radio, it was exhausting and often very **time-inefficient**. I am very glad that part of my life is past me.

Post-reading task.

1. Answer the following questions:

1. What do you like or dislike most about business travel?
2. Do you travel for business?
3. Is it by train or air? Or do you drive?
4. What is your attitude to travelling by train?
5. When did you last travel by train?
6. How often do you travel by plane?
7. When did you last travel by plane?
8. Business travel can also be exhausting, can't it?
9. What facilities are important for you on your business trip?
10. Have you ever experienced any jet lag?
11. Could you share your business travel experiences?
12. Will there be a better alternative to air travel in the future?

2. Fill in the gaps with the missing word. Make the necessary changes.

- jet lag * non-stop flight * delayed * to declare an item * economy class ticket
* check-in counter * cancelled * arrival * to book a flight * first-class ticket
* departure

1. It's always cheaper if you _____ in advance. Booking a flight at the last minute can be expensive.
2. Our company rarely books us _____. They are more expensive, and we are trying to cut costs.
3. Airlines usually offer premium meals to passengers with _____.
4. I always buy _____ on short flights and business class tickets on long flights. I don't like sitting in a small seat for long hours.
5. Why is there such a long line? They should have more people working at the _____.
6. It took a long time to go through security because there were a lot of _____ scheduled at the same time.
7. How long is our flight _____ Does the screen say when the new departure time is?
8. They _____ our flight because of mechanical problems. We have to talk to the airline and find another flight to Paris.
9. We bought a lot of things when we were on vacation. We _____ everything so we wouldn't get in trouble.
10. I always get _____ when I fly to Hong Kong. The time difference is 12 hours.

3. Put the paragraphs in the correct order to describe

Travel Arrangements

() The first thing which the secretary should do is to learn about the destination and the exact dates of the trip. The dates and times of all the journeys, appointments, meetings and events should be listed carefully in the itinerary. She should be aware of the number of people who are going to travel and the budget allowed for the trip so that she could book tickets and hotel accommodation properly.

(1) Travelling is an essential part of any business. Even with new communications technology business people have to travel much as it's particularly important to establish good face-to-face relations with partners, suppliers and customers. The top priority for business travelers is good organization of their business trips.

() One more thing which is of great importance is the ability of the secretary to support her boss whenever needed when unexpected things happen. For example, when the flight is delayed or cancelled, she should be ready to make changes in the itinerary, reschedule the appointments and meetings, and inform the hotel about the problem.

() Most businessmen prefer air travel as it saves time. Calling a travel agency and booking a package tour which combines air tickets and accommodation is a common practice when making travel arrangements. The secretary should take care of the visas, passports and medical insurance in advance if travel arrangements are made without the involvement of a travel agency. The secretary organizes transfers from the airport to the hotel by using the

services of the hotel or the travel agent or the car rental company. The secretary should contact the secretary of the receiving side and to cross reference all the arrangements for a business trip. The cultural programme is organized by the secretary of the receiving side.

() Travel arrangements involve booking tickets for a plane or a train, transport to and from the airport, booking accommodation, making appointments and arranging meetings. If the boss is going on holiday the secretary should book a resort hotel. If the boss is going on business, the secretary should book a business hotel. On a business trip the boss will need a fax-machine, a personal safe, free Internet connection and a full range of multimedia equipment for meetings and presentations at the hotel.

4. Develop the idea.

1. Nowadays travel management is becoming more and more important.
2. New benefits for business travellers have appeared.
3. Some factors influence further development of business travel.

5. Read the text and speak about the changed attitude to business travel.

Business travel

Travelling on business has been one of the growth sectors of the travel industry in the past decade. Yet a decade ago many business travellers were still being forced to share aircraft cabins with squalling children and laid-back tourists.

Now the trend is to pamper the executive not only with his or her own compartment away from tourists but to give business travellers greater control over their environment - eating when they want to, for example - as well as acknowledging the demands of work.

Being able to make international telephone calls from the cabin of a Jumbo jet at 30,000 feet, for example, will increasingly be seen as an essential part of international business travel.

Yet the business travel industry is not simply about those executives who jet-set to New York and back in a day on Concorde.

The bulk of business travel is carried out on a more mundane level: virtually all employees at a managerial or executive level within companies travel at some time on company business.

Most often this will be via a train or company car and the type of hotel used will be more modest than Claridge's or the Savoy. In fact, fastest growth is seen in the mid-price sector - such as Marion's Courtyard hotels or Holiday Inn's Garden Court. Both these budget-value chains have proved a success in the US and are being introduced into the UK and continental Europe.

Leading international hotel chains now find that business travellers account for over 60 per cent of their occupancy, a significant rise on a decade ago when business travellers accounted for under 50 per cent of average international hotel occupancy.

But while business travel of any type seems glamorous to those back in the office or at home, most surveys of frequent travellers on business show that stress is common.

The Hyatt hotel chain, for example, surveyed 700 international travelling executives and found that while many found travel stimulating, at least in part, most were of the belief that the only certainty about business travel was that 'something will go wrong.' The survey found that most travellers became stressed as a result of losing their individual corporate status. Travellers relinquish office status for anonymity among the mass of other business travellers,' the survey reports.

'Stress is seen as a reaction to separate isolated circumstances such as airport crowds, airline or hotel mishaps, or the separation from home or family,' it adds.

The report pointed out that the only way to overcome such loss of individuality when travelling was to take on the trappings of importance, such as flying first class, having a personal limousine, and staying in expensive hotel suites.

Surprisingly, however, that frequent business travellers were no better at coping with the stress of travel than infrequent travellers. Another thing is that the majority of executives felt their companies were not doing enough about travel management to relieve stress.

"The travel agent had booked me on the wrong flight, leaving me stranded in Jamaica when I should have been in Puerto Rico", -commented one executive.

Improved travel management is one of the areas of most corporate interest as the benefits of controlling business travel costs become more apparent.

American Express points out that business travel costs are part of a cycle of activity: this starts with planning travel, physical arrangements of the trip and the travel itself; payment; reviewing the cost; and reconciliation of the costs.

Thomas Cook's corporate travel division suggests companies should continue to focus on expense containment.

The introduction of computer reservation systems to book airline seats means that they offer the best travel arrangements for individual travellers without favouring one airline over another.

The new computer systems offer a real prospect of further improving the efficiency of business travel booking and the service they provide truly meets the customers' needs.

The benefits of an international chain of business hotels are part of the reason for the move to buy world-wide hotel chains.

The importance of computer technology in both the airline and hotel industries is paramount.

Although the state of the world's economy is clearly a large determinant for business travel, there are also other factors that influence its development. The creation of the European single market, the opening up of Eastern Europe has led to a considerable increase in business travel. A number of leading hotel chains are developing business hotels in Poland, Hungary and Moscow to meet the demand.

As the world's economies become ever more integrated, and the ability to travel becomes both cheaper and easier, business travellers are increasingly wooed by a travel industry anxious to win their custom.

(adapted from the Financial Times)