



# AIRLINE PILOT

**Lots of people want to be Airline Pilots. They see the excitement, glamour and world travel. But what is really like to be a Pilot?**

As an Airline Pilot you may fly long haul (global), short haul (Europe/ Scandinavia etc.) or domestic (UK) flights. Pilots have to work their way up through the ranks.

The Captain has responsibility for the safety of the aircraft, crew and passengers. Most large aircraft will have at least two Pilots, a Captain and a First or Second Officer (or Co-Pilot). Small aircraft, with less than ten passengers, will have one Pilot.

All of that responsibility means there's lots that goes on behind the scenes before the aircraft can take-off. Pilots report for duty one or two hours before a flight. They will check the route, the loading and weight of the aircraft and they will make sure they have the right amount of fuel.

Then there's the pre-flight checks on the aircraft, its navigation and operating systems. It's the Pilots job to brief the Cabin Crew. Air Traffic Control gives the start-up time, and then it's time for push-back, taxi clearance and take-off. Take-off and landing are the most

demanding parts of any flight. The Pilot is in contact with Air Traffic Control, airline headquarters, Aircrew and passengers throughout the flight; being able to multi-task is essential. At the end of a flight, the Captain completes a technical log and records any problems.

A Pilot's job is exciting, but it comes with a lot of responsibility. It also comes with unsocial hours and jet leg.

## IF YOU WANT TO BE AN AIRLINE PILOT

### You'll need

Every Pilot has an Airline Transport Pilot Licence (ATPL). It is essential and there are different ways of achieving this.

A full-time integrated course at an approved Civil Aviation Authority training school.

- This may take up to 18 months and provides 195 hours flying training and 750 hours ground training on technical subjects such as: principles of flight, instrumentation, navigation, meteorology, human performance and limitations, and aviation law and signals.
- It leads to a 'frozen' ATPL which qualifies you to work as a Co-Pilot and start to build-up to the 1,500 flying hours required for a full ATPL(A). Full-time training courses cost between £50,000 and £65,000.

A part-time CAA approved modular training course – advancing from the Private Pilot's Licence (PPL) through to a Commercial Pilot's Licence (CPL) and beyond.

- This course is more flexible and less expensive than the integrated course. Some airlines prefer candidates who have completed the integrated course.

There are airline sponsored training schemes. To be accepted you have to impress on top of being:

- Physically fit with normal colour vision and good eyesight and hearing and pass a Class 1 medical examination
- Height between 1.58m (5ft 2 inches) and 1.91m (6ft 3 inches). Requirements can vary between airlines
- Aged 18 years to be a Pilot and at least 21 years old to be issued with a full ATPL.

Airline sponsored training schemes are very limited, highly competitive and extremely difficult to get on. Around only 1 in 11,000 applicants actually succeed.



**An aircraft landing at East Midlands Airport**

# TO BECOME AN AIRLINE PILOT

## You'll be

- Capable of processing a lot of data with speed and accuracy
- Able to interpret maps and 3D displays
- Self-confident and able to take the lead.

## You'll have

- Good hand-to-eye coordination
- The ability to stay calm under pressure and in emergencies
- Excellent communication skills and the ability to give clear instructions.

## You can expect to earn in the region of:

- The basic salary starts at £25,000
- A First Officer earns between £36,000 to £48,000
- A Captain with a medium sized airline can earn between £57,000 and £78,000
- Those employed by major airlines can earn a lot more.