



UP, UP
& AWAY!



QUEEN'S
UNIVERSITY
BELFAST

George Best
BELFAST
CITY AIRPORT

  @AUTISMINTHEAIR



AUTISM
IN THE AIR

TRY BEFORE YOU FLY!

So, you are getting on a plane. It might be for the first time, or you've done it before. You might be nervous. That is ok. Feeling nervous is something that many people experience, even those who would call themselves 'frequent flyers'. This leaflet will help you by giving you some information on what you might expect when getting ready to fly.

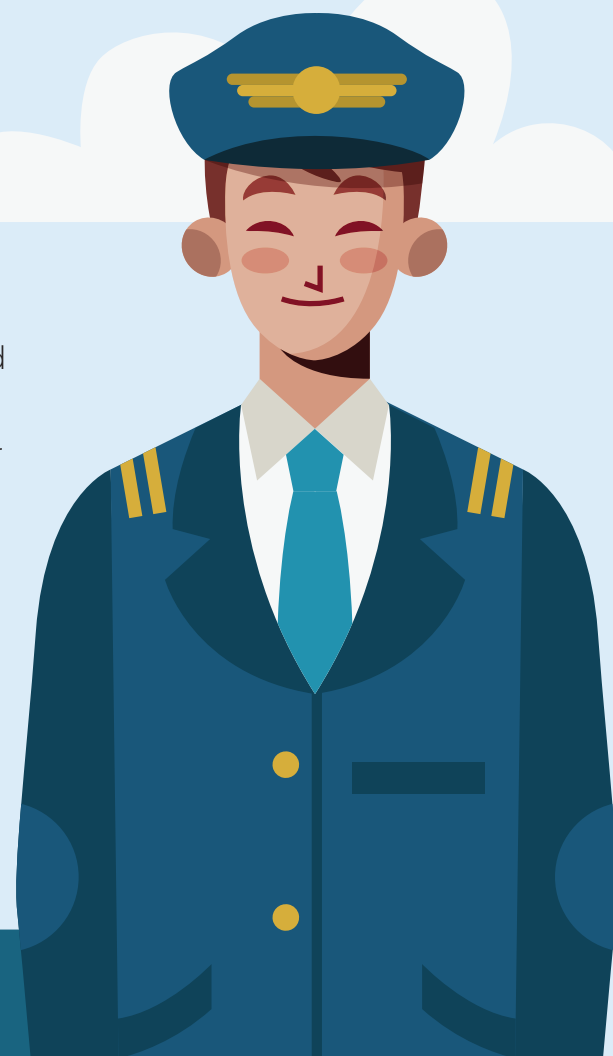


First, the airport. It will be quite noisy as there will be lots of other people waiting to get their flights also. If you find it too noisy you could listen to some music through your headphones or if you have a pair, wear your ear defenders.

Remember, you will need to take them off if a staff member of the airport is asking you a question. You will know that they work at the airport as they will be wearing a uniform or a brightly coloured orange waistcoat.

You may also have a green necklace, called a lanyard, around your neck. Wearing this will help the airport staff know that if you are finding things difficult that you might need some help.

You might be 'checking in' a bag for your flight. Don't worry, your bag will be at the airport when you get off the plane! The airline will take very good care of your clothes and other things that you have in your bag. Remember, keep your tablet, mobile phone, treats and other things that you enjoy in a bag that you will bring with you on to the plane. No full bottle of juice or water can go in this bag until you pass through security.



Departures



Security can be a bit stressful but try not to worry. It is like this to make sure that everyone who is planning to get on a plane is safe. Listen to the people who are giving instructions or watch to see what others are doing. You will have to put your belongings into a tray that will go through a cool scanner. You will get those after YOU go through a cooler scanner! This will not hurt you. It might beep but this is ok.

One of the staff may have to check you by putting their hands on your clothing, do not worry or panic. This is a check that many people must do, and it does not mean that you have done anything wrong or that you are not allowed to fly.



Once you have collected your bag, coat, and any other things you can now head to the Departure lounge. This is where you wait until your aircraft arrives for your flight. You can look around the shops, get a snack or a drink or look out a window at the planes. Relax and just remember to listen to the announcements about your flight.

If at any time you find it difficult, speak to someone, there may a quiet area in the airport where you can go to relax in a safe manner.





Before boarding the aircraft, you will have to show your passport and boarding pass again to the staff at the gate. This is another check to make sure you, and everyone else, is boarding the correct plane. Once this has been done, walk down the walkway to enter the plane.

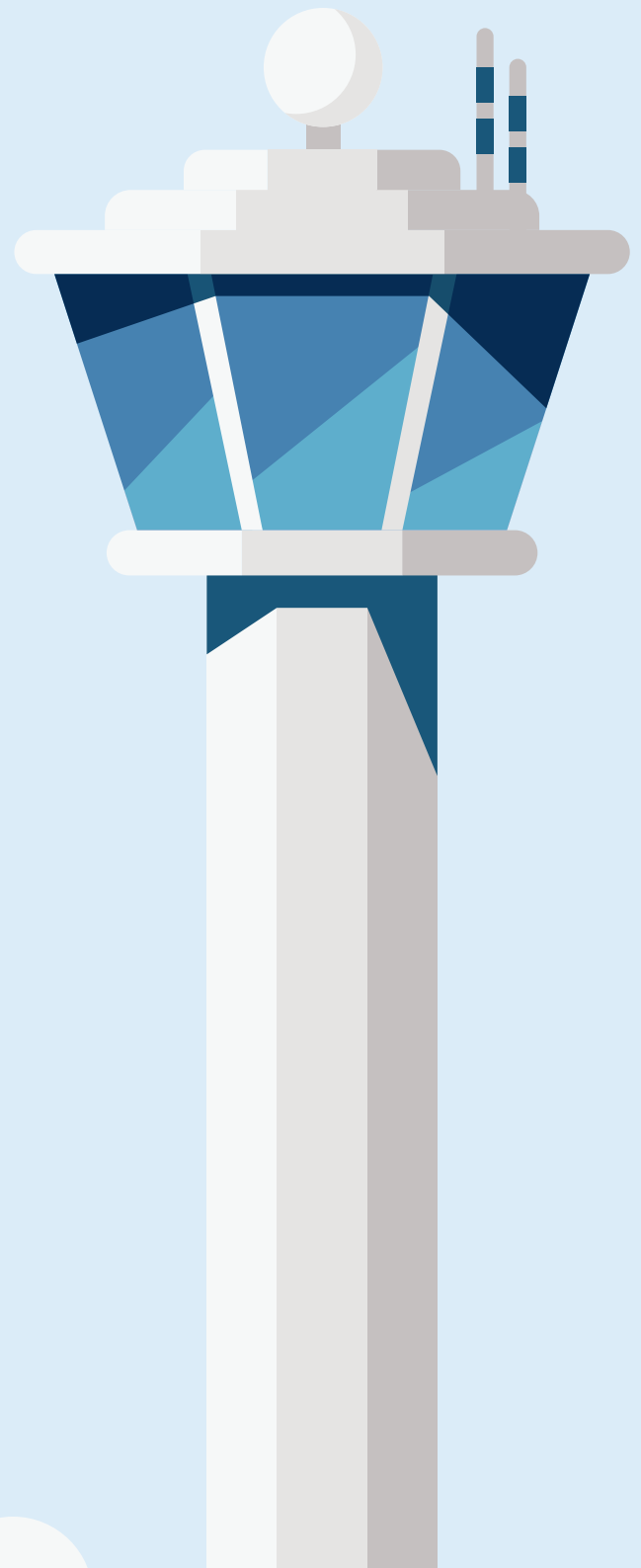
On your boarding pass will be your seat number. You will find seat numbers above the seats as you walk down the aircraft. Above your seat is a locker, put your bag in here but remember to take out anything you might need for your flight.



Sometimes you might need to put your bag in a locker that is not above your seat. This is ok, on busy flights there may be a lot of bags and things get moved.

Sit down in your seat and put your seatbelt on. It is different from a car seatbelt and might feel strange on your legs. The little table in front of you must stay up until the plane is in the air.

Once everyone is seated, the cabin crew will start preparing the aircraft for taking off. Listen and watch their announcements as they will give important safety instructions for the flight.



You will hear loud noises, this is normal. They are noises that the engines of the plane make while it is getting ready to fly. You can look out the window or listen to some music if this helps.



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As the plane moves it will start to get faster and as it prepares to take off you will feel pressure pushing you back in your seat, don't worry. Once the plane has reached a suitable height in the sky the pressure will stop, and it will feel like you are on a bus or train!

Your ears may hurt. This is pressure from the plane taking off that causes this. Wearing headphones, sucking on a sweet, or yawning might help this. Do not worry, this will go away after a while.

You can get up from your seat during the flight to go to the bathroom or get something from your bag. However, there might be times that you are not allowed for safety reasons, but the cabin crew will let you know.

For the journey, sit and enjoy. Watch a movie or TV show and have some snacks to pass the time.

When the aircraft is getting ready to land you will hear more announcements throughout the plane. These will involve sitting back in your seat, putting your seatbelt on, and putting your table back to where it should be. There may be other things that you have to do so make sure to listen!

You will feel the aircraft getting lower and closer to the runway where it will land. Again, like earlier, you will hear loud noises from the engines which are normal. Like a car, a plane has breaks, and as it lands the pilot will use the breaks to help the plane stop. There may be some pressure pushing you back in your seat, but this will end as soon as the plane stops.

As soon as the plane stops people will stand up and reach to get their bags from the lockers. You can do this, or you can wait a while, so you don't get pushed or nervous. It will be ok if you wait until the crowd is smaller.



Once you get your bag, make sure you have lifted all your belongings and exit the plane. You may have to walk into the airport or there may be a bus for you and the other passengers, follow what the others are doing.

The next stage of your journey will bring you to the arrivals hall of your holiday airport. Here you will be able to pick up your bag that you last saw before you got on the plane. You will also have to go through passport control. This is where your passport will be checked by guards to allow access to the country. Everyone must do this. Stand in the queue until called forward, give your passport when asked, wait, and then go through the door or gate.

Wait for your luggage and enjoy your holiday!



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