

## WORST-CASE SCENARIO.

# HOW TO SURVIVE AN AIRPLANE CRASH

## TO DECREASE THE ODDS OF A CRASH

- 1 Take a nonstop flight, if possible.**

Most accidents happen in the takeoff and landing phases of flight; the fewer stops you make, the less chance of an accident.
- 2 Watch the skies.**

Many accidents involve severe weather. As takeoff time approaches, check the weather along the route, particularly in places where you will land. Consider delaying your flight if the weather could be severe.
- 3 Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants made of natural fibers.**

Radiant heat and flash burns can be avoided if you put a barrier between you and the heat. Avoid easy-care polyester or nylon: most synthetic materials that aren't specifically treated to be fire resistant will melt at relatively low temperatures (300 to 400 degrees Fahrenheit). Synthetic fabrics will usually shrink before they melt, and if they are in contact with skin when this happens, they will make the burn—and its treatment—much more serious. Wear closed-toe, hard-soled shoes; you might have to walk through twisted, torn metal or flames. In many cases, people survive the crash, but are killed or injured by post-impact fire and its by-products, like smoke and toxic gases.

**4** Select a seat on the aisle, somewhere in the rear half of the cabin.

The odds of surviving a crash are higher in the middle-to-rear section compared to the middle-to-front section of the cabin. An aisle seat offers the easiest escape route access, unless you are sitting right next to an emergency exit: If you can get a window seat right next to the emergency exit, this is a better choice.

**5** Listen to the safety briefing and locate your nearest exits.

Most airplane accident survivors had listened to the briefing and knew how to get out of the plane. Pick an exit to use in an emergency, and an alternate in case the first one is not available.

**6** Count the seats between you and the exits in case smoke fills the plane and you cannot see them.

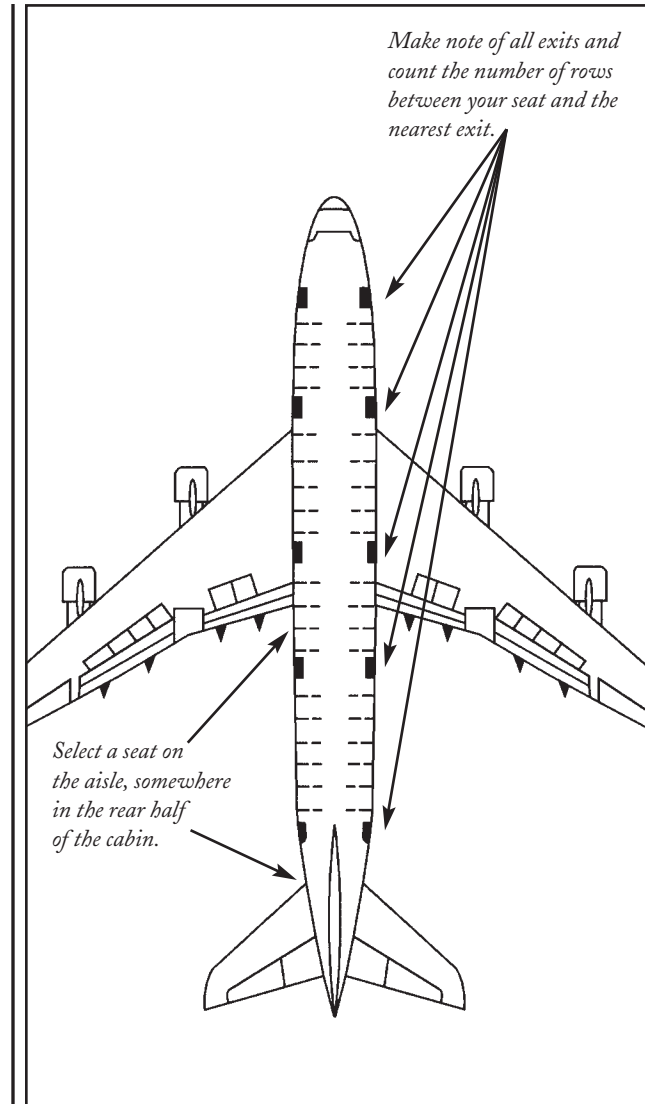
Make sure you understand how the exit doors work and how to operate them.

**7** Practice opening your seat belt a few times.

Many people mistakenly try to push the center of the buckle rather than pull up on it.

### TO PREPARE FOR A CRASH

**1** Make sure that your seat belt is tightly fastened and that your chair back is fully upright.



**2** Bend forward with one arm across your knees.

**3** Place your pillow in your lap and hold your head against the pillow with your free arm.

**4** Push your legs forward and brace for impact by placing your feet or knees against the chair in front of you.

If you are over water, loosen your shirt (and tie) so that your movement is not restricted when you attempt to swim. Be ready for two jolts: when the plane first hits water and when the nose hits water again.

**5** Stay calm and be ready to help yourself.

The vast majority of crash survivors were able to get out either under their own power or with the help of someone already on the plane. Fire and rescue personnel are unlikely to enter the airplane to pull you out.

**6** Do not take anything with you.

If you have something you absolutely cannot part with, you should keep it in your pocket and not in your carry-on baggage.

**7** Stay low if the plane is on fire.

Follow the exit procedures described in the safety briefing. Illuminated floor lights should indicate the exits: the lights are red where exit rows exist.

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