AIRLINE STAFF REVEAL WHY WINDOW SHADES MUST BE KEPT OPEN DURING TAKEOFF AND LANDING

News / Airlines

Lifting the shades on the windows during take-off and landing might seem like a trivial ask to many aeroplane passengers. Some travellers believe that this to prepare them for the jolty landing moment when the wheels hit the concrete below.

But experts have now revealed the reasons why it is much more important to passenger safety than you would think.

Aviation Safety Officer, Saran Udayakumar told Quora users that in cases of emergency the cabin crew only have 90 seconds to evacuate the aeroplane. In order to make this possible the crew prepare the passengers and the aircraft so if anything does go wrong they can evacuate quickly. This also means emergency personnel outside can see into the cabin to assess the situation.

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He explains: “Passengers are curious; hence they are perfect extra eyes to see if something goes wrong out there. Usually passengers report stuff right away.”

“In case of sudden emergencies, every second counts. Therefore if shades are open crew can easily see outside conditions to help them in planning the evacuation - which doors to use for evacuation.”

David Robinson, an Aeronautical Industry Professional provides a further explanation.

“If you've somewhat acclimatized to low light conditions before an unfortunate incident occurs, you'll have a visual capacity which initially may exceed 1,000 times better compared to if you were suddenly plunged into the darkness and had 90 seconds to disembark from the aircraft”.

Airline pilot, Kare Lohse says: “There have been cases where passengers have noted technical problems by looking out on the wing or engines for instance. Of course, it happens very rarely”.

Passengers are also asked to fold up their tables and straighten their seats during take-off and landing in the case of an emergency to ensure a quick exit.

The best advice air crew staffs recommend in the case of an emergency is to take control. In January 2009 the passengers of Flight 1549 landed on the Hudson River in what the Mayor called a “miracle on the Hudson”. The 150 passengers on board survived and worked together with the crew to assess the situation and ensure the safety of their fellow passengers.

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