

Fear of flying is irrational-or is it? - AvvoStories

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NEWS

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There was a time when fear of flying referred to the anxiety that one's plane would crash before reaching its destination. That fear is quite irrational, considering that the odds of dying in a plane crash are 1 in 11 million—significantly less than your chances of being killed by a shark.

Forget plane crashes. Instead, worry about the many *other* things that are more likely to go wrong on a flight. Things like:

Getting Lost

You would think that the exhaustive—and exhausting—security measures put in place since 9/11 would at least guarantee that no one ever boards the wrong plane again. But you would be wrong.

After visiting relatives in the United States, [Lucie Bahetoukilae](#), who only speaks French, passed through security in Newark with her return ticket to Charles de Gaulle airport in France. Unfortunately, the last-minute announcement that her flight had been moved to a different gate was only made in English. So Bahetoukilae boarded the plane at the gate listed on her boarding pass.

Instead of arriving in Paris 7.5 hours later, her trip lasted more than 28 hours and involved a night's stay in San Francisco. United has since settled a confidential [lawsuit](#) over the incident. Mix-ups involving individual passengers are surprisingly [common](#), but far more frightening is the possibility of the whole plane flying to the [wrong airport](#).

Violence

Flying is stressful, and sometimes it's hard to stay calm under stress. But resorting to violence only makes things worse. Just ask the passengers on a Delta flight to Atlanta, whose attempts to deplane were held up by two women fighting—until the [pilot](#) came back and punched one of them.

An All Nippon Airways flight from Narita to Los Angeles was delayed for over an hour and a half when one passenger [flipped out](#) and [assaulted](#) another passenger and the airline employees who tried to intervene. Another man ended up in jail in Burbank, California after starting a [fist fight](#) on a Southwest Airlines flight to Los Angeles.

But air rage isn't limited to the runways. Cancelled Spirit Air flights led to a [riot](#) among stranded passengers in Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport.

Animals

Although pet lovers feel much [safer](#) when they can bring their dogs and cats on board with them, many other passengers, especially those with allergies, dread such seatmates. And more exotic animals sometimes [find](#) their way into the [cabin](#) as well. And no one wants to see a [scorpion](#) crawling on the seat next to them, let alone on their clothes. That's actually happened twice in American airports just this year.

Maybe [travel insurance](#) is worth it after all?

Tagged [safety](#), [terrorism](#)

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