

# English for Aviation

for Pilots and Air Traffic Controllers

Sue Ellis  
Terence Gerighty

EXPRESS SERIES



OXFORD





# English for **Aviation**

for Pilots and Air Traffic Controllers

EXPRESS SERIES



Sue Ellis & Terence Gerighty

**OXFORD**  
UNIVERSITY PRESS



# OXFORD

UNIVERSITY PRESS

Great Clarendon Street, Oxford OX2 6DP

Oxford University Press is a department of the University of Oxford.  
It furthers the University's objective of excellence in research, scholarship,  
and education by publishing worldwide in

Oxford New York

Auckland Cape Town Dar es Salaam Hong Kong Karachi  
Kuala Lumpur Madrid Melbourne Mexico City Nairobi  
New Delhi Shanghai Taipei Toronto

With offices in

Argentina Austria Brazil Chile Czech Republic France Greece  
Guatemala Hungary Italy Japan Poland Portugal Singapore  
South Korea Switzerland Thailand Turkey Ukraine Vietnam

OXFORD and OXFORD ENGLISH are registered trade marks of  
Oxford University Press in the UK and in certain other countries

© Oxford University Press 2008

The moral rights of the author have been asserted

Database right Oxford University Press (maker)

First published 2008

2015 2014 2013 2012 2011

10 9 8 7 6

## No unauthorized photocopying

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced,  
stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any  
means, without the prior permission in writing of Oxford University  
Press, or as expressly permitted by law, or under terms agreed with the  
appropriate reprographics rights organization. Enquiries concerning  
reproduction outside the scope of the above should be sent to the ELT  
Rights Department, Oxford University Press, at the address above

You must not circulate this book in any other binding or cover  
and you must impose this same condition on any acquirer

Any websites referred to in this publication are in the public domain  
and their addresses are provided by Oxford University Press for  
information only. Oxford University Press disclaims any responsibility  
for the content

ISBN: 978 0 19 457943 8

Printed in China

This book is printed on paper from certified and well-managed sources.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*The publisher would like to thank the following for their kind permission to reproduce photographs and other copyright material:* Alamy pp 5 (pilot daytime/G P Bowater), (copilot/David R. Frazier Photolibrary, Inc.), (cabin crew/Picture Contact), (passengers/mediacolors), 8 (David Noton Photography), 9 (AGStockUSA, Inc.), 11 (runway/Richard Cooke), (aeroplane/Steven May), 13 (helicopter/Andrew Stevens), 19 (stormclouds/A.T.Willett), (earthquake crack/mediacolors), (snowdrift/Pixonnet.com), (rain/ImageState), (hail/Vadym Kharkivskiy), 20 (Picture Contact), 29 (aeroplane takeoff/Anthony Kay), 37 (biplanes/David Osborn), (weather balloon/David R. Frazier Photolibrary, Inc.), (fuel dumping/Dave Pattison), (in-flight refuelling/Transtock Inc.), 39 (plane on runway/Elmtree Images), (plane in flight/Anthony Nettle), (vintage plane/Mark Baigent), 44 (Coaster), 67 (A380/Anthony Nettle); Photo (c) BAA Limited pp 5 (air traffic controller), 13 (Airbus A300), (gulfstream jet), 29 (fog), (repairs), 53; Copyright (c) Boeing p 67 (boeing); Thomas Bracx p 60 (Transat); Courtesy Cessna Aircraft Company p 13 (Cessna Skycatcher); Corbis cover (aeroplane sunset/moodboard), (runway sunset/Bob Krist), pp 12 (moodboard), 19 (windswept trees/Jim Reed), 57 (George Steinmetz); Getty Images cover (cockpit/Michael Dunning); Norbert Gratzner p 55; Stephen Innes/Aerocorp International p 13 (amphibious plane); (c) iStockphoto.com pp 7 (kkgas), 19 (volcano plume/submontes), (sandstorm/pancaketom), 37 (explosion/icholakov), (hanglider/BirdofPrey), (skydiver/Fly\_Fast), 45 (halbergman), 67 (woman with scarf/VikramRaghuvanshi), (woman with grey hair/YinYang); (c) Jeppesen Sanderson, Inc. 2008 p 49; Reproduced with permission of Jeppesen Sanderson, Inc. NOT FOR NAVIGATIONAL USE; Heather Marsden p 43; Willem Johannes Meyer p 35; morgueFile pp 13 (Airbus A380/o0o0xmods0o0o), 19 (birds/rollingroscoe), (slush/Kevin Connors); Oxford University Press pp 37 (hot air balloons/Comstock), 67 (young man curly hair/Digital Vision), (older man/Photodisc), (young blond man/Gareth Boden), (brown haired boy/Steve Skjold); PunchStock p 5 (cockpit/image100).

*Illustrations by:* Peter Richards pp 40, 42, 71, 73; Peters & Zabransky UK Ltd pp 14, 15, 17, 21, 22, 23, 25, 27, 29, 31, 32, 34, 47, 59, 61, 62, 63, 64, 70, 72

*The authors and publishers would like to thank the following teachers and aviation professionals who assisted in the development of this book:* Dilso C. de Almeida, Aviation English Teacher, DCA Learning; Cécile Blazejczak-Boulegue, B-737 First Officer, Europe Airpost; Alexandra Burow, English Language Lecturer, Emirates Aviation College; Yuliya Cheprassova, Pseudo-pilot for ATC simulators training; Cybele Gallo, Language Rater, Brazilian CAA, and aviation English teacher; Teresa Greco, Istituto Tecnico Orion; Stephen Innes, Chief Pilot, Aerocorp International, and International Operations and Planning, Bombardier Aerospace; Ron Jenkins, Consultant to the Joint Aviation Authorities, and Director, Global Aviation Language Limited; Robert Mathews, Coordinator, Qatar Aeronautical College; Gábor Sipos, language expert, Budapest; Nancy Young, English Trainer, French Civil Aviation

*The authors would like to thank Lewis Lansford for all his help in the preparation of this course.*



# ICAO Operational Level 4

## PRONUNCIATION

*Assumes a dialect and/or accent intelligible to the aeronautical community.*

Pronunciation, stress, rhythm, and intonation are influenced by the first language or regional variation but only sometimes interfere with ease of understanding.

## STRUCTURE

*Relevant grammatical structures and sentence patterns are determined by language functions appropriate to the task.*

Basic grammatical structures and sentence patterns are used creatively and are usually well controlled. Errors may occur, particularly in unusual or unexpected circumstances, but rarely interfere with meaning.

## VOCABULARY

Vocabulary range and accuracy are usually sufficient to communicate effectively on common, concrete, and work-related topics. Can often paraphrase successfully when lacking vocabulary in unusual or unexpected circumstances.

## FLUENCY

Produces stretches of language at an appropriate tempo. There may be occasional loss of fluency on transition from rehearsed or formulaic speech to spontaneous interaction, but this does not prevent effective communication. Can make limited use of discourse markers or connectors. Fillers are not distracting.

## COMPREHENSION

Comprehension is mostly accurate on common, concrete, and work-related topics when the accent or variety used is sufficiently intelligible for an international community of users. When the speaker is confronted with a linguistic or situational complication or an unexpected turn of events, comprehension may be slower or require clarification strategies.

## INTERACTIONS

Responses are usually immediate, appropriate, and informative. Initiates and maintains exchanges even when dealing with an unexpected turn of events. Deals adequately with apparent misunderstandings by checking, confirming, or clarifying.



# Contents

PAGE	UNIT TITLE	TOPICS	USEFUL LANGUAGE AND STRUCTURES
5	<b>1 Introduction to air communications</b>	Setting the scene Basics of radio communication Introduction to non-routine situations	ICAO alphabet and numbers Asking for repetition Questions and short answers Talking about imaginary situations
13	<b>2 Pre-flight</b>	Pre-flight checks Delays and problems Local conditions	Asking for more time Giving a reason Saying what you're going to do Saying there's a problem Requesting action
21	<b>3 Ground movements</b>	Airport markings and airside vehicles Taxiing and holding Weather problems	Permission, obligation, prohibition Explaining problems Saying a problem has been solved
29	<b>4 Departure, climbing, and cruising</b>	Take-off Encountering traffic Warnings about hazards	Checking and asking for an alternative Using prepositions of position Saying how much Warnings and requests Time expressions Giving reasons
37	<b>5 En route events</b>	Operational situations Unusual events Medical situations	Comparing things Talking about probability
45	<b>6 Contact and approach</b>	Descent Weather conditions Approach and landing problems	Talking about time Explaining changes in plans Talking about cause and effect Requests
53	<b>7 Landing</b>	Landing incidents Circuit joining Landing hazards	Reported speech Making suggestions Offering help Giving advice or opinions
61	<b>8 On the ground</b>	Taxiing Getting to the gate Clear communication	Explaining what happened Saying what will happen
PAGE	APPENDIX		
68	<b>Test yourself!</b>		
70	<b>Partner Files</b>		
74	<b>Answer key</b>		
84	<b>Transcripts</b>		



## About the book

**English for Aviation** has been developed specifically for people who work in the aviation industry and need to comply with the International Civil Aviation Organization's (ICAO's) language proficiency requirements. It supports standard phraseology and builds upon it to help improve plain English in the skill areas specified by ICAO: pronunciation, structure, vocabulary, fluency, comprehension, and interactions.

**English for Aviation** covers a range of subjects associated with flying and the aviation industry. The book is organized in the sequence of a flight, starting with an introductory unit, followed by pre-flight, ground movements, departure, cruising, en route events, contact and approach, landing, and end-of-flight ground movements. Pilots and air traffic controllers will find the book useful for improving their plain English, but anyone working in aviation – ground staff, emergency services, or administrators, for example – who wants to improve their English ability will benefit from **English for Aviation**. Units from the book work independently and can be selected according to the needs and interests of the course participants. **English for Aviation** is also ideal for self-study.

Each unit begins with a **Starter**, which consists of a short exercise or a quiz and serves as an introduction to the topic of the unit. Practical exercises, listening extracts, industry-specific texts as well as numerous photos and illustrations help you to acquire key vocabulary and expressions. Realistic role-plays give you the opportunity to put all you have learned into practice. Each unit closes with an **Output** activity, an article related to the topic of the unit followed by questions for reflection and discussion. The book finishes up with a fun quiz to **Test yourself!** on some of the facts and figures discussed over the previous eight units.

**English for Aviation** is accompanied by two disks. The **Audio CD** contains all the listening for the book. The **Audio CD** can be played through the audio player on your computer or through a conventional CD player. The **CD ROM** contains interactive exercises to practise **structure, vocabulary, and listening comprehension**. There is also an A–Z word list with all the key words that appear in the book. Visit [www.oup.com/elt/express](http://www.oup.com/elt/express) for ICAO compliancy practice tests.

In the appendix of **English for Aviation** you will find the **Partner Files** for the role-plays and the **Answer key** so that you can check your own answers if you are working alone. There are also **Transcripts** of the listening extracts.



# Introduction to air communications

## STARTER

Use arrows (↔) to link the people who talk to each other.

PILOT G-SC27



PILOT FLIGHT 71



CABIN CREW FLIGHT 71



TOWER CONTROLLER



CO-PILOT FLIGHT 71



PASSENGERS FLIGHT 71

AUDIO



1

## COMPREHENSION

**Air communications are vital for the safety of air travel. Listen to the two exchanges and answer the questions.**

- 1
  - a Which stand is 363 on?
  - b Where does the controller think 363 is?
  - c Which numbers and letters are incorrectly pronounced?
- 2
  - a Which flight level is X7420 climbing to?
  - b What is the altitude of X7420?
  - c What two words does the controller confuse?

**Look at the six language areas on page 2. Listen again to the two exchanges and look at the transcripts on page 84. Find an example of a difficulty with each language area.**



## Discuss these questions with a partner.

- 1 Have you had any similar experiences?
- 2 What communication problems have you had when talking to foreign pilots or controllers?

### PRONUNCIATION

AUDIO



3

## 2 Listen and repeat.

### ICAO ALPHABET AND NUMBERS

A	Alpha	K	Kilo	U	Uniform
B	Bravo	L	Lima	V	Victor
C	Charlie	M	Mike	W	Whiskey
D	Delta	N	November	X	X-ray
E	Echo	O	Oscar	Y	Yankee
F	Foxtrot	P	Papa	Z	Zulu
G	Golf	Q	Quebec		
H	Hotel	R	Romeo		
I	India	S	Sierra		
J	Juliett	T	Tango		
0	<u>zero</u>	4	<u>fower</u>	8	ait
1	wun	5	fife	9	<u>niner</u>
2	too	6	six		
3	tree	7	<u>seven</u>		

oo (hundred) hundred  
 ooo (thousand) tousand  
 . (decimal) dayseemal

#### British CAA

FL 100 = flight level  
 one hundred

#### ICAO/Global

FL 100 = flight level one  
 zero zero

AUDIO



4

## 3 Listen to the sample message and repeat.

*London Control, Express 164. Flight Level 100.  
 Heading 345. ETA Belfast 0839.*

### INTERACTIONS

**Work with a partner to pass and record messages. If you are not sure about the message, ask for clarification. Repeat *Say again* until you have understood.**

#### ASKING FOR REPETITION

##### Repeat entire message

Say again.

##### Repeat specific item

Say again flight level.  
 Say again all before heading.  
 Say again all after flight level.  
 Say again flight level to ETA.

#### PARTNER FILES

Partner A File 1, p. 70  
 Partner B File 8, p. 72

AUDIO



5

**Listen and check. Then compare what you wrote with the information your partner read.**



## STRUCTURE

### QUESTIONS AND SHORT ANSWERS

Are you on stand C63 or C61?	I'm/We're on stand C61.
Is the radio on the correct frequency?	Yes, it is./No, it isn't.
Have you set the QNH?	Yes./Yes, I have./No, I haven't.
Has the weather improved?	Yes, it has./No, it hasn't.
Do you have the flight plan?	Yes, I've got it here./No, I don't.
Do you know where John is?	Yes, I do./No, I don't.
Did the bird strike cause any damage?	Yes, it did./No, it didn't.

## 4 Put the words in the right order to make questions. Then answer them.

- 1 you a a controller pilot Are or ?
- 2 speak other languages you Do any ?
- 3 abroad ever you been Have ?
- 4 plane travel last When by you did ?
- 5 your provide training company courses English Does ?
- 6 English in minutes the ten your last improved Has ?

**American English**  
airplane

**British English**  
aeroplane

## FLUENCY

## 5 Match the two parts of the sentences to make six reasons why international communications may be difficult.

- |                                      |                                 |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 ATCOs and pilots may speak         | a English words are used.       |
| 2 There may be very poor reception   | b in their own language.        |
| 3 Extra and unnecessary              | c or no standard phraseology.   |
| 4 ATCOs or pilots may sometimes      | d on the radio.                 |
| 5 Non-routine situations have little | e use plain English.            |
| 6 ATCOs or pilots may not understand | f standard English phraseology. |

