

ENGLISH LEARNING FOR CURIOUS MINDS



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Episode #213

A Brief History of The Cost of Flying

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[00:00:00] Hello, hello hello, and welcome to English Learning for Curious Minds, by Leonardo English.

[00:00:12] The show where you can listen to fascinating stories, and learn weird and wonderful things about the world at the same time as improving your English.

[00:00:22] I'm Alastair Budge, and today we are going to be talking about the cost of flying and the economics of air travel.

[00:00:31] Air travel is something that has gone from being a [luxury](#)¹ available only to the richest in society to something that, at least in most parts of the developed world, is available to everyone.

¹ a pleasure enjoyed only rarely

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[00:00:45] This all happened over the space of less than 100 years. The first commercial flight happened in 1914. It cost today's **equivalent²** of thousands of dollars and less than a century later it was possible to buy a ticket on an aeroplane for less than 5 euros.

[00:01:04] So, how did this all happen, when and why did flying become so cheap, and how do airline companies actually make money, and how has this changed over time?

[00:01:17] We have a lot to get through in today's episode, so let's get started right away.

[00:01:24] On December 17th of 1903, the Wright brothers, Wilbur and Orville, of Dayton, Ohio, became the first people to ever successfully fly a powered aeroplane.

[00:01:38] It wasn't fast - it only went at around 50km per hour - and it wasn't long - it only lasted 12 seconds, but it did make history.

[00:01:51] The **potential³** use of the aeroplane was immediately obvious. It means you can go anywhere without relying on a road or rail network. You can go over seas, mountains, across rivers. You can transport people, **goods⁴**, letters, anything.

[00:02:09] Although commercial passenger flight got started in the 1920s, for several decades it remained the **preserve⁵** of only the richest in society.

² equal in value

³ the ability of future success

⁴ merchandise or possessions

⁵ something considered as being exclusive to certain people

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[00:02:21] Put simply, flying was a [luxury](#).

[00:02:24] The experience itself was a [luxury](#), but the service on board was also [premium](#)⁶.

[00:02:31] Passengers would have received [equivalent](#) service to what you might get in a [fancy](#)⁷ restaurant, with drinks and food being served to you.

[00:02:41] It wouldn't have been particularly comfortable, given that the planes travelled at a much lower [altitude](#)⁸ and therefore there would have been a lot more [turbulence](#)⁹, the plane would have moved up and down a lot, but perhaps the freely available alcohol would have helped the passengers manage this.

[00:03:02] As technology advanced, aeroplanes became larger and more comfortable, flight distances were increased, and as we get to the 1940s and 1950s it became the real [heyday](#)¹⁰ of [glamorous](#)¹¹ commercial flying. It was the era of Pan Am, the “golden age of flight”.

[00:03:24] It was still expensive, and flights were rarely full.

⁶ of high quality

⁷ expensive and impressive

⁸ height above sea level

⁹ unsteady or irregular movement

¹⁰ most successful period

¹¹ attractive and exciting

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[00:03:29] Passengers were a mix of individual and business travellers.

[00:03:34] There were only two classes of ticket: tourist class and business class. Tourist class, as you might expect, was slightly cheaper.

[00:03:44] But there was no difference in experience once you were on the plane.

[00:03:49] The difference was about how flexible the tickets were.

[00:03:54] Tourist class tickets weren't flexible at all. They were for a fixed date in the future. If you're going on holiday, you normally choose a date, and it doesn't [tend¹²](#) to change, so tourists don't really need flexibility.

[00:04:10] Business class tickets, on the other hand, were more flexible. You could simply arrive at the airport at the last minute and book a ticket, or you could book a ticket that could be used on different flights, both of which were useful for business travellers who might be called to a last-minute meeting.

[00:04:30] Airlines realised that they could charge more for this, and given that it was the company paying, not the individual, the individual passenger wouldn't care so much about the price being higher.

¹² to be likely to happen

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[00:04:44] The airline industry was also a highly [regulated](#)¹³ industry, especially in the US, because flight was considered to be a [public good](#)¹⁴, similar to the railways. This meant that routes, [fares](#)¹⁵, and [schedules](#)¹⁶ were all regulated by the government.

[00:05:02] If an airline wanted to add a new route or change its price, it would have to [seek](#)¹⁷ official approval to do so. This worked fine for the existing airlines, because their profits were [virtually](#)¹⁸ guaranteed—if you wanted to fly on certain routes, you didn't have many options and you just had to pay whatever the price was—but it meant that it was very hard for any new routes to be added, new airlines to be created, or for real improvements to happen.

[00:05:36] In the late 1970s this all changed, for a few reasons.

[00:05:42] [First off](#)¹⁹, an [initiative](#)²⁰ was led by an economics professor named Alfred E. Kahn, who would later be given the nickname “The Father of Airline [Deregulation](#)²¹”.

¹³ controlled by means of rules

¹⁴ benefit of the public

¹⁵ money paid

¹⁶ lists of planned flights including dates and times

¹⁷ try to get

¹⁸ almost, nearly

¹⁹ firstly

²⁰ new plan or action

²¹ removal of government control or rules

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[00:05:55] He changed the [legislation](#)²² to [do away with](#)²³, to get rid of most of this [regulation](#)²⁴ that he felt was [stifling](#)²⁵ competition, that was getting in the way of competition.

[00:06:09] The result was that [all of a sudden](#)²⁶ airlines could do what they wanted, [within reason](#)²⁷ of course. They could open up new routes without government approval, they could change their prices, they could do whatever they wanted in order to attract customers and maximise profits.

[00:06:28] It also meant that it was far easier for new airlines to enter the market, offering new routes, new prices, and new services.

[00:06:38] As any good student of economics knows, when there is an increase in competition this typically results in lower prices for consumers.

[00:06:48] [Deregulation](#) meant that it was possible to find much cheaper tickets, especially for international routes.

²² set of laws

²³ get rid of

²⁴ rules and control

²⁵ holding back, getting in the way of

²⁶ very quickly, suddenly

²⁷ within reasonable or not extreme limits

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[00:06:55] For example, a return flight from London to New York in 1970 cost the **equivalent** of almost €3,000. Today you can find tickets for around €300, about 10% of the cost.

[00:07:12] The second development was the arrival of the 747 aeroplane. It was simply a much bigger plane, taking up to 500 passengers. This meant that airlines could experiment with different seating classes, and they started adding more expensive seat types with more space, **reclining**²⁸ seats, the seats that go back, and some even a **lounge**²⁹ area with a piano!

[00:07:41] Airlines did invest into **differentiating**³⁰ their ticket types, changing their aeroplanes to allow for first and business class areas.

[00:07:51] Although business and first class were the most **profitable**³¹ category of seats, as we'll come to discuss in a minute, several airline history experts have suggested that the airlines didn't fully **commit**³² to turning their new aeroplanes into first and business class **paradises**³³ because they thought something else was coming, a new technological invention: Concorde.

²⁸ able to have the back moved into a nearly horizontal position

²⁹ space where people could relax

³⁰ separating

³¹ making a profit

³² devote or dedicate themselves

³³ places of great happiness

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[00:08:17] As a reminder, Concorde was a **supersonic**³⁴ plane, a plane that could travel at over twice the speed of sound, meaning it could travel from London to New York in 3.5 hours, half what normal planes would do it in.

[00:08:34] The airlines thought that Concorde would become the new version of first class, that passengers who were currently travelling in First Class on a normal plane would soon **switch**³⁵ to travelling in a Concorde.

[00:08:49] After all, the cost of a Concorde ticket could be less than the cost of a first class ticket on a normal flight, and if **money were no object**³⁶ wouldn't you rather get to your destination twice as fast than have a couple of extra glasses of champagne in the air?

[00:09:07] I know I certainly would.

[00:09:09] As we know, Concorde didn't work out, and this caused these **legacy**³⁷ airlines to **rethink**³⁸ their **premium** offerings completely, as we'll come to discuss in a minute.

³⁴ faster than the speed of sound

³⁵ change, shift

³⁶ money were not something to be worried about

³⁷ older, recognised and accepted

³⁸ think again about

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[00:09:21] Another factor that **disrupted**³⁹ the **legacy** airline carriers was the arrival of private jets.

[00:09:29] In fact, in the US at least private jets had really been in existence since after the Second World War, as military pilots and large amounts of fighter planes returned back home.

[00:09:43] Former military pilots would offer to fly these planes privately, and it was an **alternative**⁴⁰ to travelling on a commercial flight, especially going to and from less popular destinations.

[00:09:57] In the early days, these weren't particularly comfortable but in the 1960s private jet companies realised that they could **cater**⁴¹ for a **time-poor**⁴² and **cash-rich**⁴³ traveller.

[00:10:11] If you didn't want to go through a normal airport, and you wanted to be able to go anywhere at any time of day, well, a private jet was an option. Many large

³⁹ prevented them from continuing as expected

⁴⁰ another available option

⁴¹ provide, attend to the needs of

⁴² having a little time to spare

⁴³ having a lot of money

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businesses bought their own jets, and companies **sprung up**⁴⁴ that would offer seats on private jets.

[00:10:31] The growth of the private jet industry put a limit on how much a commercial airline could charge for its business and first class tickets. If it was too much then it wouldn't be **competitive**⁴⁵ against the option of hiring or even buying a private jet.

[00:10:50] Now, moving on to a very different type of passenger, the 1970s and 1980s also saw the arrival of the **so-called**⁴⁶ “low cost airlines”, starting with SouthWest in the United States and followed by companies such as Ryanair and EasyJet in Europe after EU **deregulation** in 1992, as well as others such as AirAsia in southeast Asia.

[00:11:19] These companies realised that what people really wanted from a flight was to get from one place to another, and the extra cost that came from providing things like free drinks, being able to choose your seat, free bags, and so on, the cost of all of this **outweighed**⁴⁷ the value of it.

[00:11:41] In other words, people would rather pay less for their ticket and have a more basic experience than pay more and have included baggage, check-in, on-board drinks and so on.

⁴⁴ came into existence

⁴⁵ as good as others when compared to them

⁴⁶ as they were called, without being necessarily true

⁴⁷ was more than

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[00:11:55] So, these low-cost carriers looked at all of the costs that went into transporting someone from A to B and gradually stopped including them in the cost of the ticket.

[00:12:07] In terms of things that a customer would see, as I'm sure you know, with Ryanair for example you have to pay extra to take luggage, to choose your seat, for any food or drink [on board](#)⁴⁸, to print your boarding pass, even to get an SMS confirmation of your flight details.

[00:12:26] The CEO of Ryanair has even publicly joked about charging passengers to use the toilets [onboard](#)⁴⁹ the aeroplane.

[00:12:36] And in terms of things that we, customers, don't see, Ryanair's behind the scenes [cost-cutting](#)⁵⁰ is [extensive](#)⁵¹.

[00:12:45] It only buys one type of plane, the Boeing 737-800, and it buys this plane in large quantities, which leads to discounts on the price. It means the planes can be [customised](#)⁵² to be very basic so they rarely need to be repaired, and it means staff don't need to be trained on how to operate different types of plane.

⁴⁸ used aboard or on the plane

⁴⁹ aboard, or on

⁵⁰ reducing of costs

⁵¹ large in amount or scale

⁵² changed or modified to suit a particular need

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[00:13:10] Ryanair and all of these other **budget**⁵³ air carriers, these low cost air carriers also **negotiate**⁵⁴ hard with airports for **favourable**⁵⁵ prices to land and take-off, essentially telling an airport that they will bring millions of passengers through the doors, all of whom will spend money in the airport and create jobs in the local area.

[00:13:34] Anyone who has taken a Ryanair flight and arrived at “London” Luton or the Paris “Vatry” airport will have **found out the hard way**⁵⁶ that the airline also saves money by using airports that are generally further away from the city. From Paris Vatry airport it takes a similar time to drive to the centre of Paris as it would take you to drive to the Belgian, Luxembourg and even German border!

[00:14:03] There are all sorts of other reasons that low-cost airlines cut costs that we, as consumers, are often **unaware**⁵⁷ of: they often hire staff on short term contracts, meaning their employment costs are lower, they don't do **transit**⁵⁸ flights, so they don't need **infrastructure**⁵⁹ on the ground, they **turn around**⁶⁰ their planes more quickly, so

⁵³ cheap

⁵⁴ have discussions with them in order to reach an agreement

⁵⁵ to their advantage

⁵⁶ learned from unpleasant experiences

⁵⁷ not realising or knowing

⁵⁸ connecting, not direct

⁵⁹ systems and services

⁶⁰ send towards a new direction

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they aren't sitting on the [tarmac](#)⁶¹ doing nothing, they have much fewer staff to every passenger, and they are better at selling their tickets directly to consumers, so they don't have to pay agency fees or commissions.

[00:14:42] Now, that is a very brief summary of how we have got to where we are today, but now let's [delve into](#)⁶² the actual numbers of how airlines work.

[00:14:53] The easiest way to think about this is by [splitting](#)⁶³ airlines into two categories: the [legacy](#) carriers, which are the older, more [established](#)⁶⁴ airlines, which normally offer higher levels of service and more expensive tickets.

[00:15:09] By this I mean carriers such as British Airways, Air France, Iberia, KLM, and so on.

[00:15:17] And the low-cost carriers, companies that offer what's called "[no frills](#)⁶⁵", cheap tickets with nothing extra included in the price.

[00:15:27] Companies like Ryanair, EasyJet, Norwegian Air, and so on.

[00:15:33] So, firstly, the [legacy](#) carriers.

⁶¹ material used for making roads and runways for aeroplanes

⁶² study it in detail

⁶³ separating

⁶⁴ recognised and accepted

⁶⁵ basic, without extra details

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[00:15:36] The interesting point to note here is that many of these carriers still offer the [luxury](#) options of the 1950s and 60s, and really it is exactly the same type of people who are buying the [luxury](#), [premium](#), tickets as those who travelled in the “normal”, or tourist or business, class tickets of 50 or 60 years ago.

[00:16:00] The only [addition](#)⁶⁶ is of an “economy” class, of the type of person like me and perhaps like you who is prepared to save money on the cost of their flight by [opting for](#)⁶⁷ a slightly less comfortable experience.

[00:16:17] So, the [legacy](#) carriers, companies such as British Airways, are [split into](#)⁶⁸ sometimes up to 4 different classes on a plane: Economy, [Premium](#) Economy, Business and First.

[00:16:32] Where it gets really interesting is what this actually means in terms of where the airlines make money.

[00:16:40] Despite the [majority](#)⁶⁹ of passengers on an airline travelling in economy class, on the cheapest ticket, these passengers typically represent a [minority](#)⁷⁰ of the revenue, less than 50% of the cost of the tickets.

⁶⁶ the action of adding something to something else

⁶⁷ choosing

⁶⁸ separated

⁶⁹ greater number

⁷⁰ smaller amount

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[00:16:58] Airlines don't often release the [breakdowns](#)⁷¹ of where all of their revenue comes from, but some [estimates](#)⁷² have up to two-thirds of the money a [legacy](#) airline makes coming from the [premium](#) tickets.

[00:17:13] Tickets for business and first class can be ten times more expensive than economy, and in the case of [long-haul](#)⁷³ flights this can be thousands if not tens of thousands of Euros. The cost to deliver that [premium](#) service might be a few hundred Euros more, so it's with these [premium](#) ticket offerings that these [legacy](#) carriers can really make their money, make their profits.

[00:17:41] If you're interested in this, there's an amazing video on YouTube called "The Economics of Airline Class".

[00:17:48] Now, let's move onto the low-cost carriers, because the way they operate is very different.

[00:17:55] And just because their tickets might be cheap, it certainly doesn't mean that they aren't able to be incredibly profitable. Ryanair, for example, is one of the most profitable airlines in the world, despite selling tickets that are [alarmingly](#)⁷⁴ cheap.

⁷¹ explanatory information or analyses

⁷² guesses

⁷³ lasting for a long time or going a long distance

⁷⁴ in a worrying way

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[00:18:12] Well, as anyone who has flown Ryanair before, they might look **alarmingly** cheap before you actually buy them, but if you want to do anything more than travel from A to B, such as sit next to your friend or take a bag, the costs start to **rack up**⁷⁵.

[00:18:32] Indeed, Ryanair makes an average of just under €15 per passenger on these extra charges, which is around 7 million Euros a day, and **makes up**⁷⁶ around 35% of its total revenue. And a lot of this is pure profit - it costs **fractions**⁷⁷ of a penny to send a text message, for example, and a passenger pays €3 to receive it.

[00:18:59] Combined with **cutting costs**⁷⁸ on planes, training, and staff, this has meant that Ryanair is an incredibly profitable organisation, despite selling **cut-price**⁷⁹ tickets.

[00:19:12] Now, let's take a minute to reflect on **the lie of the land**⁸⁰ today, and what we might see in the future.

[00:19:20] In the one corner there are the legacy carriers which **cater** to both the **premium** traveller and the **cost-conscious**⁸¹ traveller. For a **hefty**⁸² fee, for a lot of

⁷⁵ gradually get more

⁷⁶ forms or constitutes

⁷⁷ small part

⁷⁸ reducing costs

⁷⁹ less expensive than the usual prices

⁸⁰ the way the situation is developing

⁸¹ careful about spending

⁸² large amount of

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money, you can travel in [luxury](#), and for a more reasonable price you can simply get from A to B.

[00:19:38] The [premium](#) travellers might make up [the lion's share](#)⁸³ of the profits, but there is a [cap](#)⁸⁴ on how much airlines can charge for this, given that another option for the wealthiest of travellers is to go by private jet.

[00:19:54] In the other corner there are the low-cost carriers, companies that [cater](#) for people who simply want to go from A to B and will choose the cheapest option, people for whom flying is simply a [commodity](#)⁸⁵.

[00:20:09] These low-cost carriers have opened up flying to the average person, and made international and [long-distance](#)⁸⁶ travel an option that simply was too expensive 50 years ago.

[00:20:22] We'll [touch on](#)⁸⁷ some of the problems that have come with this in a minute, but low-cost flight has been a great [equaliser](#)⁸⁸ in terms of who is able to travel - it is no longer the [preserve](#) of the rich; anyone can fly, at least anyone in the developed world.

⁸³ the largest part

⁸⁴ limit

⁸⁵ a basic, interchangeable good

⁸⁶ relating to distant or far-away places

⁸⁷ mention quickly

⁸⁸ something that makes people equal

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[00:20:41] The one thing that unites the **legacy** carriers and the low cost carriers is that they have become incredibly efficient at making as much money from each flight as possible.

[00:20:53] Their approach to this is, of course, **vastly**⁸⁹ different.

[00:20:56] For low-cost carriers like Ryanair, they simply want to get as many people onto the plane as possible, which is why you can find tickets for even 5 or 10 Euros. It knows exactly how much it can charge on each route at each time, so it has become incredibly efficient at filling its planes.

[00:21:18] That's why, by the way, it can claim to be "**environmentally friendly**⁹⁰", because on a per person basis Ryanair flights typically burn less fuel than most other airline carriers.

[00:21:32] Now, when it comes to the legacy carriers, they aren't always so concerned about **filling**⁹¹ every seat, especially the most expensive ones. Historically they would sell very few First class tickets, and instead would **upgrade**⁹² loyal travellers from

⁸⁹ to a great extent, a lot

⁹⁰ that causes the least environmental problems, the least pollution possible

⁹¹ putting people into, using

⁹² raise to a higher standard

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Business class to First class, [thus](#)⁹³ making them more loyal and likely to book again, especially if their company was paying.

[00:21:59] Most airlines have got better at selling their more expensive tickets, knowing what is the most that they can charge for a ticket before it becomes [uncompetitive](#)⁹⁴, but still keeping them priced [sufficiently](#)⁹⁵ high that they are [aspirational](#)⁹⁶, and that people want to continue to fly with that airline to collect [loyalty points](#)⁹⁷ and hopefully, one day, be [upgraded](#)⁹⁸ to first class.

[00:22:25] Of course, both legacy and low-cost carriers [alike](#)⁹⁹ were [blindsided](#)¹⁰⁰, they were [hit hard](#)¹⁰¹ by COVID, as flights were [grounded](#)¹⁰². People simply couldn't travel, and airlines had to look to the government for [bailouts](#)¹⁰³.

⁹³ in this way

⁹⁴ not as good as others when compared to them

⁹⁵ to a satisfying degree, enough

⁹⁶ giving hope to people who want to belong to a higher social class

⁹⁷ rewards for loyal customers

⁹⁸ raised to a higher standard

⁹⁹ in a similar way

¹⁰⁰ taken by surprise

¹⁰¹ affected badly

¹⁰² prevented, kept on the ground

¹⁰³ financial assistance

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[00:22:40] While analysts suggest that the low-cost operators will recover more quickly, given that they have a more healthy cost structure and they are less [reliant](#)¹⁰⁴ on business travellers, the future isn't bright for many of the [legacy](#) carriers, and many have already gone bankrupt.

[00:22:59] They [rely](#)¹⁰⁵ heavily on business travellers, their most profitable customer [segment](#), and COVID has shown that a lot of business travel was simply unnecessary, or not nearly as necessary as people had believed it to be.

[00:23:15] There are serious question marks about if at all the business travel [segment](#)¹⁰⁶ will recover to pre-COVID levels, as people have realised that they can save a lot of time and money by simply having a virtual meeting rather than jumping on an aeroplane.

[00:23:34] Now, it would be [negligent](#)¹⁰⁷ to not mention some of the negative consequences that have come from the mass availability of commercial flight, the greatest of which is of course its impact on global warming.

[00:23:47] Approximately 2.4% of all global emissions come from aeroplanes.

¹⁰⁴ dependent on

¹⁰⁵ depend

¹⁰⁶ group

¹⁰⁷ failing to give proper attention

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[00:23:53] Although this might sound like a small amount, flying frequently is one of the individual largest [contributors](#)¹⁰⁸ to someone's carbon footprint.

[00:24:03] A return flight from London to San Francisco on economy is responsible for 5.5 tonnes of CO2. That's more than twice the emissions produced by driving a petrol-powered car every year, you would save an equivalent amount of CO2 by recycling for 25 years or switching to a meat-free diet for almost 7 years.

[00:24:28] You might be thinking - surely if the emissions are so large, is it really only 2.4%? Well, yes it is, and this is because it's estimated that less than 20% of the world's population has ever been on an aeroplane.

[00:24:45] And talking specifically in terms of the cost of flying and the economics of air travel, the worrying factor is that the most profitable customers, those travelling in First and Business class, are the largest [emitters](#)¹⁰⁹ of CO2. Because the seats, and often even full beds, in First and Business class can take up to 7 times as much space as those in Economy, the carbon footprint of those tickets is seven times more.

[00:25:17] To help you visualise this, with our example of the return flight from London to San Francisco, the carbon footprint of that one flight in First Class would be the same as what you would save by eating a [meat-free](#)¹¹⁰ diet for almost 50 years!

¹⁰⁸ factors in the existence of

¹⁰⁹ things that spread or give out

¹¹⁰ not containing meat

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[00:25:36] So, what's next for air travel?

[00:25:39] Obviously that is the billion, or probably even trillion dollar question. While there have been significant improvements in fuel efficiency, the reality is that we power aeroplanes in a similar way to how we always have - with large amounts of fossil fuels - and that doesn't look like it is going to change that much in the near future.

[00:26:02] And the airlines have two main ways of making money.

[00:26:06] Either they offer **premium** service to high-paying customers, meaning the aeroplanes are relatively empty, or they fill their aeroplanes with as many people as possible, **enticing**¹¹¹ passengers with low ticket prices, so that more and more people decide to take planes as a mode of transportation.

[00:26:28] Neither of which **bodes well**¹¹² for the planet.

[00:26:31] There are all sorts of political and economic options that have been proposed, such as increased taxes on tickets that would go towards green **initiatives**¹¹³, but if that happens then the cost of flying will go up, meaning a **retreat**¹¹⁴ to the days where it was a **luxury** that only the richest in society could afford.

¹¹¹ attracting, tempting

¹¹² shows that the future will be better

¹¹³ new plans or actions

¹¹⁴ act of moving back

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[00:26:52] Perhaps this is the price that is needed to be paid for a [sustainable](#)¹¹⁵ future, but it would cause huge [disruption](#)¹¹⁶ to the travel and tourism industries that have grown dependent on flying being something available to all.

[00:27:08] For the time being at least, there seems to be little that will stop the growth of air travel, and for as long as tickets are cheap and [exotic](#)¹¹⁷ new destinations are only a short trip away, then there is not much that will stop passengers from travelling, and the airline companies making a lot of money in the process.

[00:27:30] OK then, that is it for today's episode on the cost of flying and how airlines make their money.

[00:27:37] I hope it's been an interesting one, that you've learnt something new, and whether you are a frequent flier, either on one of the [legacy](#) carriers or on a low-cost carrier, or you've never been on an aeroplane in your life then it's made you think about air travel in a slightly different way.

[00:27:56] As always, I would love to know what you thought of this episode.

[00:27:59] What do you think the future holds for the airline industry?

¹¹⁵ able to continue or be maintained

¹¹⁶ problems or disturbance

¹¹⁷ unusual, exciting because of being far away

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[00:28:03] Were you surprised by how much money airline companies make from their first class tickets?

[00:28:09] If you have flown on Ryanair or one of the other low-cost airlines, do you love or [loathe¹¹⁸](#) them?

[00:28:17] I would love to know, so let's get the discussion started.

[00:28:20] The place for that is our community forum, which is at community.leonardoenglish.com.

[00:28:26] You've been listening to English Learning for Curious Minds, by Leonardo English.

[00:28:32] I'm Alastair Budge, you stay safe, and I'll catch you in the next episode.

[END OF EPISODE]

¹¹⁸ hate

Key vocabulary

Word	Definition
Luxury	a pleasure enjoyed only rarely
Equivalent	equal in value
Potential	the ability of future success
Goods	merchandise or possessions
Preserve	something considered as being exclusive to certain people
Premium	of high quality
Fancy	expensive and impressive
Altitude	height above sea level
Turbulence	unsteady or irregular movement
Heyday	most successful period
Glamorous	attractive and exciting
Tend	to be likely to happen

A Brief History of The Cost of Flying

Regulated	controlled by means of rules
Public good	benefit of the public
Fares	money paid
Schedules	lists of planned flights including dates and times
Seek	try to get
Virtually	almost, nearly
First off	firstly
Initiative	new plan or action
Deregulation	removal of government control or rules
Legislation	set of laws
Do away with	get rid of
Regulation	rules and control
Stifling	holding back, getting in the way of
All of a sudden	very quickly, suddenly
Within reason	within reasonable or not extreme limits

A Brief History of The Cost of Flying

Reclining able to have the back moved into a nearly horizontal position

Lounge space where people could relax

Differentiating separating

Profitable making a profit

Commit devote or dedicate themselves

Paradises places of great happiness

Supersonic faster than the speed of sound

Switch change, shift

**Money were no
object** money were not something to be worried about

Legacy older, recognised and accepted

Rethink think again about

Disrupted prevented them from continuing as expected

Alternative another available option

Cater provide, attend to the needs of

Time-poor having a little time to spare

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Cash-rich	having a lot of money
Sprung up	came into existence
Competitive	as good as others when compared to them
So-called	as they were called, without being necessarily true
Outweighed	was more than
On board	used aboard or on the plane
Onboard	aboard or on
Cost-cutting	reducing of costs
Extensive	large in amount or scale
Customised	changed or modified to suit a particular need
Budget	cheap
Negotiate	have discussions with them in order to reach an agreement
Favourable	to their advantage
Found out the hard way	learned from unpleasant experiences
Unaware	not realising or knowing

A Brief History of The Cost of Flying

Transit	connecting, not direct
Infrastructure	systems and services
Turn around	send towards a new direction
Tarmac	material used for making roads and runways for aeroplanes
Delve into	study it in detail
Splitting	separating
Established	recognised and accepted
No frills	basic, without extra details
Addition	the action of adding something to something else
Opting for	choosing
Split into	separated
Majority	greater number
Minority	smaller amount
Breakdowns	explanatory information or analyses
Estimates	guesses

A Brief History of The Cost of Flying

Long-haul	lasting for a long time or going a long distance
Alarmingly	in a worrying way
Rack up	gradually get more
Makes up	forms or constitutes
Fractions	small part
Cutting costs	reducing costs
Cut-price	less expensive than the usual prices
The lie of the land	the way the situation is developing
Cost-conscious	careful about spending
Hefty	large amount of
The lion's share	the largest part
Cap	limit
Commodity	a basic, interchangeable good
Long-distance	relating to distant or far-away places
Touch on	mention quickly

A Brief History of The Cost of Flying

Equaliser	something that makes people equal
Vastly	to a great extent, a lot
Environmentally friendly	that causes the least environmental problems, the least pollution possible
Filling	putting people into, using
Upgrade	raise to a higher standard
Thus	in this way
Uncompetitive	not as good as others when compared to them
Sufficiently	to a satisfying degree, enough
Aspirational	giving hope to people who want to belong to a higher social class
Loyalty points	rewards for loyal customers
Upgraded	raised to a higher standard
Alike	in a similar way
Blindsided	taken by surprise
Hit hard	affected badly
Grounded	prevented, kept on the ground

A Brief History of The Cost of Flying

Bailouts	financial assistance
Reliant	dependent on
Rely	depend
Segment	group
Negligent	failing to give proper attention
Contributors	factors in the existence of
Emitters	things that spread or give out
Meat-free	not containing meat
Enticing	attracting, tempting
Bodes well	shows that the future will be better
Initiatives	new plans or actions
Retreat	act of moving back
Sustainable	able to continue or be maintained
Disruption	problems or disturbance
Exotic	unusual, exciting because of being far away

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Loathe

hate

We'd love to get your feedback on this episode.

What did you like? What could we do better?

What did you struggle to understand?

Let us know in the forum community.leonardoenglish.com