

PILOT



WHAT DO PILOTS DO?

Pilots are skilled professionals who fly aircraft safely from one destination to another. They are responsible for operating planes, communicating with air traffic control, and ensuring passengers or cargo reach their destinations on time.

There are different types of pilots — commercial airline pilots, cargo pilots, helicopter pilots, and military pilots. Each has a unique role, but all require high levels of concentration, responsibility, and technical skill.

WHY THEIR WORK IS IMPORTANT

Pilots play a vital role in connecting people, businesses, and countries around the world. They help transport millions of passengers every year and deliver essential goods like medicine, food, and mail. Without pilots, global travel and trade would be much slower and less efficient.

SKILLS AND QUALITIES NEEDED

Flying an aircraft demands both mental and physical ability. A successful pilot needs:

- **Strong communication skills** – for talking to crew and air traffic control.
- **Excellent hand–eye coordination** – to control the aircraft smoothly.
- **Good decision-making** – to handle unexpected situations calmly.
- **Teamwork** – working closely with co-pilots, cabin crew, and engineers.
- **Focus and discipline** – following strict safety and flight procedures.
- **Good health and eyesight** – every pilot must meet medical standards.

HOW TO BECOME A PILOT

There are two main routes to becoming a pilot in the UK and many other countries:

1. **Integrated Training** – This is a full-time course, usually lasting around **18–24 months**, combining ground school study with flying lessons. You'll finish with a **Commercial Pilot Licence (CPL)** and often an **Airline Transport Pilot Licence (ATPL)** (frozen until enough flying hours are gained).



2. **Modular Training** – This allows you to train in stages, often while working at the same time. It can take longer but is more flexible and sometimes cheaper.

Both routes require:

- A minimum age (usually **18 or older**).
- At least **five GCSEs** including English, maths, and science.
- Often **A-levels** or equivalent qualifications.
- A **Class 1 medical certificate** proving you are fit to fly.

Some people also join the **Royal Air Force (RAF)** to train as military pilots before moving to commercial aviation later.

WHERE PILOTS WORK

Pilots can work for:

- **Airlines** (e.g. British Airways, Emirates, Ryanair).
- **Cargo and freight companies.**
- **Private jet operators.**
- **Helicopter services** (such as search and rescue, police, or medical flights).
- **The armed forces.**

Many pilots travel internationally, spending time in different countries and cultures.

A DAY IN THE LIFE

A pilot's day can start very early or finish late at night, depending on flight schedules. Before take-off, pilots check weather reports, flight paths, and aircraft systems. During the flight, they monitor controls, communicate with air traffic control, and ensure passengers are safe and comfortable. After landing, they complete reports and prepare for the next journey.

FUTURE OUTLOOK

Air travel continues to grow, and the aviation industry needs new pilots every year. With modern aircraft and sustainable aviation technology developing, the career is constantly evolving. However, training can be expensive, so many aspiring pilots plan carefully or apply for airline-sponsored programmes.



Find out more

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc/quizzes/pilot-quiz>

https://kids.kiddle.co/Aircraft_pilot

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YTfTVrawl20>

Example Questions

- What are pilots responsible for?
- What would happen without pilots?
- How many routes are there to becoming a pilot?
- True or False. Pilots only work early in the mornings.
- Where can pilots work for?