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Safer Than Driving? A Look at Air Safety

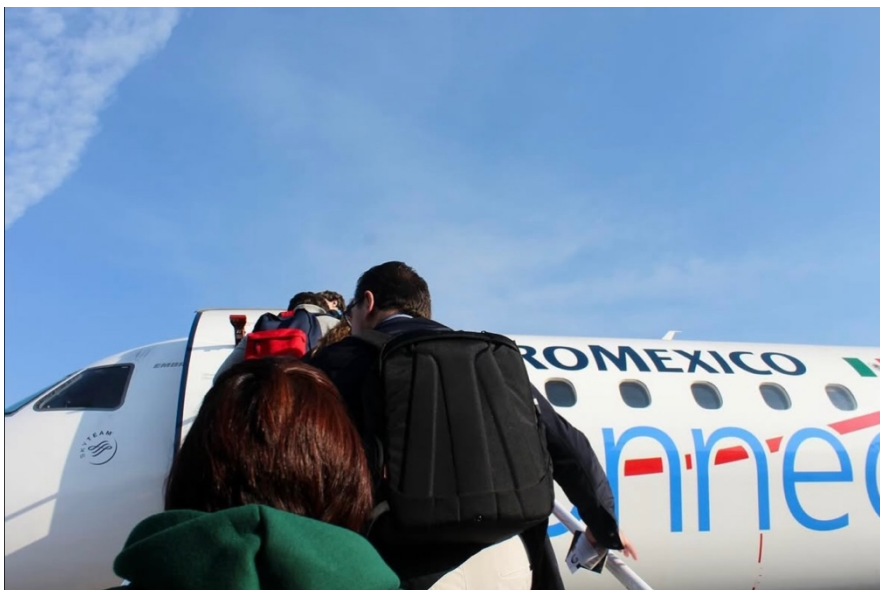
DAYTON, Ohio— Spring break is one of many opportunities for Americans to travel, and with summer on the horizon, thousands of airports across the country prepare themselves for those busy few months of flying.

Nearly 4.5 billion people were scheduled passengers boarded by the global airline industry in 2023 according to [Statistica](#). The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) [found](#) that 2.9 million passengers flew in and out of U.S. airports that same year. The number of flights globally has only [increased](#) since the 2000s.

But as Americans begin to pack their suitcase, some are considering alternative travel methods after what's felt like a nonstop news cycle of aviation accidents. [AP Style](#) covered more than 10 fatal crashes, accidents, and close calls nationally and globally that grew negative attention to air travel.

Of these fatal crashes in the U.S. include a commuter plane that crashed in western Alaska in February and killed all 10 on board, and an American Airlines passenger jet that stunned the country when it collided with an Army helicopter in late January where both parties were all killed.

University of Dayton student David Albrecht traveled on four different airlines on a trip to Thailand, Singapore, and Indonesia over his spring break. He admitted to seeing many of the recent crashes online but expressed that for his itinerary, no other travel option was viable.



“Probably every time you get on an airplane there’s always that thought in your mind, especially during takeoff and landing, of oh my god what if something goes wrong... but if you’re committed you just accept that that’s the risk of using that mode of transportation...”

United Airlines
Captain and Chairman of the
Fatigue Risk Management
Systems for the Airline

Pilots Association Chapter of United Airlines Kirk Koenig in an interview gave his reassurance of the safety of today's airlines compared to that of the past.

“I put my kids and wife on planes all the time, and I wouldn't do that if I thought it wasn't safe. And in the past, when I started forty years ago, were the airlines as safe as they are now? No, they were not. But that's the improvement we've had.”

Indeed, according to a [study](#) from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the risk of fatality from commercial air travel has decreased over the decades globally. What used to be a risk of one in every 7.9 million passenger boardings from 2008 to 2017 became one in every 13.7 million boardings from 2018 to 2022.

Koenig described the multi-step, rigorous process airports take for flights every day, counting on people from airplane mechanics to ticket holders for the success of every single flight.

“People really have no idea how complicated the operations are. Thousands of people did their job that day to make your flight work and make it seem so routine... people forget that that's just pretty incredible.”

Source Sheet

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