



## **DID YOU KNOW?**

### **Why are shutters kept open for take-off and landing?**

For many of us, onboard announcements and safety presentations are nothing but white noise as we page through our inflight magazine and eagerly await take-off. Lift your tray table, switch your phone off (even if it's in flight mode) and put your seat upright are mantras you could almost say in your sleep. Ever wondered why they exist in the first place?

For those of us rudely awakened by the announcement to open our window blinds upon landing so that the rising sun streams through the cabin and almost blinds you, the Association of Southern African Travel Agents (ASATA) has this explanation to help you #TravelwithPeaceofMind...

For your safety

While air travel is one of the safest modes of transport, take-off and landing are considered the most critical in aviation when most accidents tend to happen.

For this reason, an open window blind forms part of a long process to prepare the cabin for sudden emergencies.

Passengers are asked to take this step so that cabin crew members can look out of the windows to assess which side of the aircraft is safest to disembark from in case of a sudden and unexpected emergency.

It goes without saying that every second counts during an emergency. If shades are open the crew can see the outside conditions, and this will help them in planning an evacuation, such as determining which doors to use (as, for example, one side may be on fire).

As a general rule of thumb, most passengers in their nature are curious, and are the ideal look-out companions with 'extra eyes' to see if something goes wrong out there, like with one of the engines. Usually passengers report any untoward incidents right away.

It is also a fact that during the daytime, opening window blinds and putting cabin lights on full blast, will make the eyes more used to the light. Thus, if something goes wrong and people need to be evacuated quickly there will not be a sudden change in light contrast, which might lead to temporary blurred vision.

The same reasoning applies to night flights - window shades are open and cabin lights are dimmed to assist ground emergency personnel outside to see what's happening on the inside of the cabin if something goes wrong.



Raising window blinds also gives rescue personnel better visibility inside the craft.

The 90 second rule

In aviation, the evacuation process itself should not take more than 90 seconds regardless of the size of the aircraft or the number of passengers.

For this reason, the crew will prepare the flight in advance to make this 90 second rescue possible.

This includes the opening of the blinds, along with folding up tray tables and putting seats in an upright position, which will help cabin crew evacuate all passengers in the given timeframe

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