

The Naughtiest Airline Passengers of 2021

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The Year's Worst Travelers

The past year saw air travel return to pre-pandemic levels but with it, there was an alarming rise in disruptive and sometimes violent behavior that diverted flights and kept the No Fly List growing in some cases. As the year comes to a close, here's a look back at some of the most despicable airline passenger behavior of 2021.

Frustrated Passenger Makes Fake Bomb Threat

On January 31, a passenger frustrated by flight delays at Oakland International Airport made matters far worse when they caused an entire terminal to be shut down for two hours after issuing a fake bomb threat.

Ryanair Passengers Goes on Drunken Rampage

A 24-year-old man went on a drunken rampage aboard a Ryanair flight in January, refusing to wear a face mask, making threats, touching a female flight attendant and even headbutting another crew member. The flight couldn't be diverted due to pandemic-related closures but did land 25 minutes early in Manchester, England.

Rowdy Passenger Zip-Tied After Trying Cabin Door

In February, a passenger had to be subdued with zip ties after allegedly assaulting a flight attendant and trying to open a cabin door on a Delta Air Lines flight from Atlanta to Boston. "Basically the remainder of the flight, he was just screaming, 'Let me out of here, this isn't my home,'" passenger Mark French told WCVB.

Unruly Passenger Attacks Flight Crew, Cockpit

A passenger forced an Air France flight to make an emergency landing in March after becoming incredibly disruptive. The man allegedly got into verbal altercations with other travelers, assaulted a flight attendant and even ran at the cockpit, attacking the door with his hands.

Passenger Gets Physical, Pees at His Seat

An Alaska Airlines passenger was arrested in March after refusing to wear a mask, pushing a flight attendant, exposing himself and urinating in a bag at his seat. What's more, the incident occurred while pilots were battling a mechanical issue that forced an emergency landing back in Denver.

Passenger Tries To Bite Seatmate's Ear Off

A Miami-bound United Airlines flight was diverted to Charleston, South Carolina in March after a passenger possessing methamphetamine allegedly punched his seatmate and attempted to bite his ear off. The 45-year-old

was eventually restrained with zip ties and a belt.

TSA Finds a Surprise Inside of a Burrito

Security officials find all sorts of bizarre things as passengers pass through checkpoints. In April, TSA officers in Houston busted a passenger attempting to smuggle crystal meth inside of a breakfast burrito.

Woman Goes Berserk Over Failing Phone Charger

A passenger on an American Airlines flight from Tokyo to Dallas caused a “Level Three Lockdown” and diversion to Seattle in May after she became irate when her phone wouldn’t charge at her seat outlet. The woman had to be restrained with plastic handcuffs after allegedly shouting at and assaulting a flight attendant and banging on the flight deck door.

Airline Employee Threatens Flight

In a bizarre incident aboard a Delta Air Lines flight in June, an off-duty airline employee allegedly threatened to “take down the plane” and attacked two flight attendants, forcing pilots to make an emergency landing. Fortunately, no injuries were reported and the flight was able to resume on its scheduled path after the man was removed.

Disgusting Anti-Mask Outburst

A 23-year-old woman was forced off of a flight at Southwest Florida International Airport in Fort Myers over the summer after refusing to wear a mask, becoming aggressive toward the flight crew and allegedly spitting on other passengers. The woman was hit with several charges, including interfering with aircraft operations, resisting officers and trespassing after being escorted off the plane by police.

Crew Uses Duct Tape To Subdue Unruly Passenger

The morality of duct-taping unruly passengers to their seats was brought into question in 2021 after several headline-grabbing incidents, including one involving a belligerent passenger on an American Airlines flight from Dallas to Charlotte in July. The woman apparently had a breakdown before physically attacking the flight crew and attempting to open an exterior door in mid-air, leaving the crew with little choice but to restrain her in her seat until the flight could land.

Man Turns Baggage Fee Beef Into Bomb Threat

A 74-year-old Canadian man caused quite the stir at Fort-Lauderdale Hollywood International Airport in July when he grew frustrated with Air Canada’s baggage fee policy, telling an employee that he had a bomb in his bag, resulting in a “complete shutdown of airport operations for over four hours.”

Passenger Charges Cockpit, Chokes Crew Member

In September, a JetBlue passenger was hit with federal charges after allegedly charging the cockpit, demanding to be shot and choking a flight attendant with his tie. The incident occurred after the man tried and failed to make a phone call with about 30 minutes left in the flight from Boston to San Juan, Puerto Rico. The crew used “four seat-belt extenders, a new pair of flex cuffs and a uniform necktie” to restrain the man.

Man Commits Laundry List of Despicable Mid-Flight Acts

The FAA recently proposed a \$40,823 fine for a man accused of committing a bevy of crimes aboard a

Southwest Airlines flight in April. The out-of-control passenger was caught drinking alcohol he brought on board before allegedly sexually assaulting a flight attendant, locking himself in a restroom and smoking marijuana. He even resisted arrest when police boarded the flight upon landing in San Diego.

