

## Risk and danger

by Adrian Doff

**Level:** Intermediate and above

**Time:** 20 minutes

**Aim:** – To use common expressions for talking about risk and danger.  
– To talk about whether or not you take risks.

**There are three ways of using this worksheet:**

- Give the worksheet to students to work through independently, and then in the next lesson go through the exercises and deal with any points that arise.
- Use the worksheet for an active classroom lesson. The notes below give ideas for doing this.
- Do not give the worksheet out in class but use it as the basis for your own lesson, getting ideas and phrases from the students and presenting language on the board (use the notes below to help you). Then give out the worksheet at the end, and ask students to do the exercises for homework.

### Warm-up

**Warm-up: Establishing the concept**

Ask students to think about their own job, and ask them whether they need to take risks. If so, what risks do they take?

**Larger classes**

Pairwork: Students exchange ideas with their partner. Then talk about them with the whole class together. Now hand out the worksheet.

### Worksheet

**Language focus**

1. **risk:** Look at dialogues A and B at the top of the worksheet, and discuss who is talking and about what.

Possible answers:

A: The manager of a company in Europe that exports goods to the USA - they are affected by the exchange rate.

Or possibly a government minister or an economist, talking about the country's exports.

B: The owner of an airline (probably a small low-cost airline) who is about to take a big risk (possibly starting a major new route, or branching out into a different field e.g. holidays).

Read through the examples in the section on 'risk'.

Ask students: *Think about this week. Did you take any risks in your work? What about outside your work? Did you run any risks? Did you do anything risky?*

**Larger classes:** Do this as a quick pairwork activity. Students ask each other. As a round-up, ask a few students what they found out from their partner.

2. **danger:** Look at dialogue C at the top of the worksheet and discuss who is talking and about what.

Possible answer:

The manager or chief designer of a fashion company (or possibly a fashion magazine) which needs to keep its position. If you like, ask students what companies they know which might be like this (e.g. Prada, Gucci; Elle, Vanity Fair) – this could lead to a brief discussion of what they think of these companies, whether they read fashion magazines, etc.

Read through the examples in the section on 'danger'.

Ask students to look back at all the sentences with *risk* expressions. Ask them to change them (if possible) into sentences with *danger*.

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Possible answers:

- There's a *slight danger* that the dollar may fall against the euro.
- We're *in danger of* losing exports to the USA.
- Saving money on safety equipment increases *the danger of* accidents.
- If interest rates stay high, *there's a serious danger that* people will go out of business.  
(or: ... people are *in danger of* going out of business).
- ... we are *in danger of* losing staff.
- ... we were *in danger of* losing all our money.

Ask students to think about their own country, and also the world. What dangers are there? What is in danger of happening?

**Larger classes:** Do this as a quick pairwork activity. Students ask each other. As a round-up, ask students what ideas they had, and build up a list of words on the board (e.g. *global warming, unemployment*). Get students to make sentences using phrases from the worksheet (e.g. *There's a serious danger that the world will get warmer; more people are in danger of losing their jobs*).

### Practice

#### 1. Talk or write:

Students write sentences. Then ask them to read out what they have written.

**Alternative:** Give students a few moments to think about the topic and possibly make a few notes. Then ask them in turn to talk about it.

**Larger classes:** Do this as pairwork, then ask a few students what they said.

#### 2. Exercises:

Let students do the exercise in pairs, thinking of as many possible answers as they can. Then go through it together. Possible answers:

- the company is in danger of losing... ; there is a danger that the company will lose...*
  - there is a danger that oil will become... ; oil is in danger of becoming...*
  - you risk losing touch... ; you run the risk of losing touch... ; there is a risk that you will lose touch...*  
(**Note:** We could also say *there's a risk of your losing touch...*)
- it's too risky*
  - in danger of losing contact*
  - to take a big risk*
  - we risk losing (or we run the risk of losing)*

**Other language areas you could explore:**

- Other expressions with *risk***
  - *to increase, decrease, minimize, spread risks*
  - *at the risk of + -ing; be at risk*
  - *high-risk, low-risk*
- Other expressions with *danger* and *dangerous***
  - *in serious/gravel/imminent danger; no danger (of); a real danger of*
  - *drive/behave/live dangerously; a dangerous driver*
- Ways of expressing future possibility**
  - *might, could*
  - *there's a (good) chance/possibility that*

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BUSINESS & ESP WORKSHEET

**A**  
'There's a **slight risk** that the dollar may fall further against the euro. If that happens, of course, we **run the risk of** losing exports to the USA.'

**B**  
'You can't run a successful airline without **taking risks**,' Danni Kazakis said last night. 'I've **taken risks** in the past, and I'm prepared to **take a big risk** now.'

**C**  
'Unless we can develop new ideas, we are **in serious danger of** losing our leading position in the fashion industry,' said Donna Dimambro.'

**risk**

noun	<b>risk</b>	If you don't insure your property, there's a <b>risk</b> that you might lose everything.
verb	<b>risk</b>	If you don't insure your property, you <b>risk</b> losing everything.
adjective	<b>risky</b>	It's very <b>risky</b> not to insure your property, because you might lose everything.

**risk** as a noun:

- a/the risk that** something will happen    *There's a **risk that** share prices might fall again as they did in 2000.*
- a/the risk of + noun or -ing**    *Saving money on safety equipment increases **the risk of** accidents.*

a	big great high serious	risk
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a	moderate low slight	risk
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Notice these expressions:

- take a risk** (or **take risks**)    →    *I decided to **take a risk** and invest in the gold mining sector.*
- run the risk of + -ing**    →    *If we don't improve our working conditions, we **run the risk of** losing staff.*

**risk** as a verb:

- risk + -ing**    →    *When we started our own business, we knew that we **risked** losing all our money.*

**danger**

We can often use **danger** in the same contexts as **risk**, with almost the same meaning:

- If you don't insure your property, there's a **danger that** you might lose everything.*
- There's a **danger that** share prices might fall again as they did in 2000.*


**be in danger of**

We can use this to talk about negative things that might happen:

- Many workers at the factory feel that they are **in danger of** losing their jobs.*
- Unless we work longer hours, we're **in danger of** missing the deadline.*

**Exercises**

1. Replace **might** in each sentence with an expression from this worksheet, using the word in brackets. How many different answers can you think of?

**Talk or write** 

Which of these statements is true of you?

- a) I like to take risks, and I quite often take risky decisions.
- b) I'm quite a careful person. I usually avoid taking risks.

Think of a few examples of things you have done.

- a) Unless we can increase production, the company **might** lose the contract with Rolls Royce. (**DANGER**)
- b) As supplies decrease, oil **might** become very expensive over the ten years. (**DANGER**)
- c) It's important to go to conferences, otherwise you **might** lose touch with the latest ideas. (**RISK**)

2. Correct the mistake in each sentence.

- a) I don't invest in the stock market – it's too risk.
- b) She travels too much. She's in danger to lose contact with her employees.
- c) I decided to make a big risk, and resign from my job.
- d) If we change our image too quickly, we risk of losing our old customers.