

First Officer's Statement
UAL 1181 LAS-IAH
October 24, 2024
Dept: LAS 1454Z/0754L
Position: Pilot Monitoring

I was the First Officer on United 1181 on 24 Oct 2024, from LAS to IAH, and acted as pilot monitoring. Reviewing the flight release, I saw three MELs for this aircraft: autobrakes, the antiskid system and one coffee maker. I completed the exterior inspection and found nothing unusual regarding the tires or brakes. We reviewed the weather to ensure suitable conditions at LAS and IAH for the deferrals. Before departure, the Captain and I discussed the threats involved in having no autobrakes and no antiskid as the threats related to departure. I noticed that the takeoff data message automatically returned advertising max-thrust takeoff numbers, as required by the MEL. The departure was otherwise nominal and uneventful.

As we approached the top of descent, we began preparing for the arrival and discussing how to include the many items required by the two MELs into our approach strategy. Some of these requirements included the need to land on a dry runway, have no tailwind, land with flaps 40, have a minimum of 7,700 feet of landing distance available, use maximum reverse thrust (which must operate normally), and extend the speed brakes manually. After a thorough approach brief, we verified again that we were in compliance with all these requirements. I noted that per the ATIS and landing data, runway 26L in Houston showed a slight left quartering tailwind with a tailwind component of approximately four knots. I asked Houston Center if we could coordinate an opposite-direction landing because of a system failure. We could not accept any tailwind. They said Houston Approach could not accommodate due to traffic volume and airspace restrictions due to airshow rehearsal nearby, but that winds were now reporting as calm.

We continued with our approach, which was a normal and uneventful radar vector to final for a visual to Runway 26L. A final wind check with the tower controller showed a direct left-to-right crosswind relative to the runway, at 8 knots. After touchdown, I noted that the speed brakes automatically deployed despite not being armed, per the antiskid MEL. Immediately after that, I felt what I thought was the aircraft skidding. The thrust reversers were deployed normally, and the aircraft speed was reduced at a rate similar to a normal landing. However, the skidding turned into grinding, and as the ground speed decreased to below 10 knots, the aircraft did not roll smoothly. It felt like we kept rolling over something with each rotation of the tires on the right side. At this point, I also felt the aircraft leaning right wing down. The Captain was able to steer the plane off the runway, and we exited onto the high-speed taxiway NF. Tower said they saw smoke and asked what was going on. I told the tower that we needed to stop and assess our ability to taxi and that we suspected a blown tire. I asked them to roll the fire trucks because they said there was still some smoke.

We came to a full stop, and the Captain made an announcement to the passengers, updating them on the current situation. At the same time, an airside operations vehicle informed us that both tires on the right main landing gear were completely gone. This information was the first confirmation we received that the tires had failed. At that time, we started the APU, shut down the engines, and completed the after-landing flows and parking checklist. The Captain and I began to coordinate between operations and ground control for air stairs and buses to transport the passengers and crew. Deplaning started approximately 45 minutes after landing, and all passengers safely exited the aircraft. While this was happening, the Captain and I completed the applicable parts of the termination checklist. We then rode back to the Chief Pilot's Office in an operations vehicle.