

Video Zone: Record-breaking skydive – transcript

Transcript for **Record-breaking skydive**

- Presenter:** ‘Sometimes you have to go up really high to see how small you really are’: the words of Felix Baumgartner, who fell 128,000 feet from the edge of space. He broke the sound barrier and the record for the highest ever skydive. Millions watched nervously, perhaps none more so than the retired American fighter pilot Joe Kittinger, who set the previous record and was directing last night’s attempt. Jonathan Rudman reports.
- Commentator:** Now, here we go! There’s the bubble rising, there’s the tail going out ...
- Reporter:** From start to finish it was an incredible journey, this helium balloon taking over two and a half hours to lift fearless Felix Baumgartner four times as high as the cruising height of a passenger jet. His mother down below, wondering if she’d ever see her 43-year-old son again. And from mission control, the voice of the Austrian’s 84-year-old mentor speeding him on his way.
- Joe Kittinger:** Doing great, Felix, doing great in that cabin. You’re doing great. Everything looks green and you’re on your way to space.
- Reporter:** Twenty-four miles up, Baumgartner reads his checklist for the last time. The door to his pod opens and he releases his seat belt.
- Joe Kittinger:** Attaboy, that’s good. Start the cameras! And our God and angels will take care of you.
- Reporter:** Sometimes you have to go up really high, he says, to understand how small you really are. And in the daredevil’s greatest dare yet, he jumps into the void from the edge of space. He’s in freefall for over four terrifying minutes, spinning supersonically through the stratosphere. Up to 834 miles an hour, faster than the speed of sound, in less than a minute. It’s all being broadcast online worldwide. There’s even a camera fixed to his spacesuit, though there’s a 20-second video delay in case Baumgartner’s blood exits from his body through his eyeballs and he doesn’t survive. As planet Earth approaches, the spinning stops. The air’s density slows him down. And when his parachute opens, fearless Felix begins his sweep into the history books. After the highest manned balloon flight, the first supersonic freefall and the biggest jump ever from 128,000 feet. Then, a confident touchdown, followed by relief that he hadn’t died in front of his family.
- Felix Baumgartner:** When I was standing there on top of the world, you become so humble, you do not think about breaking records any more, you do not think about gaining scientific data. The only thing that you want is that you want to come back alive, you know, because you do not want to die in front of your parents, your girlfriend and all these people watching this. This became the most important thing to me when I was standing out there.
- Reporter:** The stuntman says he plans to become a helicopter rescue pilot and to settle down, because nothing is likely to top the giddy heights of this. An extraordinary leap into the unknown, and head-first for much of the 24-mile journey home.