



Would you like to jump off a building or leap from a car? Then maybe you should learn how to become a stunt artist at the Australian Action Academy.

READY, STEADY, ACTION!

Cassie Repton reports from Australia

It was seven o'clock in the morning and I was ready for my first lesson of the Stunt Artists Course at the Australian Action Academy. We were in the middle of a forest near the east coast of Australia and I was getting ready to leap from the top of a high tower. I had never felt more nervous.

My tutor on the Jump course was the actor and stuntman, Chris Handley. Chris is the director of the Academy and runs it with six other specialist tutors. He charges about \$1,500 for a 60-hour course. Darko Tuskan, a martial arts expert, teaches students how to fight and how to fall safely.

Fire stunts are another important part of the course. Fire tutor, Stuart Campbell, has ridden a burning motorbike through ten firewalls and has flown a hang glider with both his body and the glider on fire. The most important part is to learn how to set yourself on fire and then put out the flames, said Stuart. Of course, you have to wear protective fireproof clothes and put a special gel on your skin. There is also a water hose close by.

Stunt work can be risky, says Chris. People sometimes get burns and bruises and broken bones, but if it wasn't risky at all, people wouldn't come on the course. He says that the most difficult stunts are jumps. High falls are the most

dangerous. If you make a mistake, you'll hurt yourself.

Now why didn't he say that earlier? There was no escape now. Chris told me to get ready to jump. I took a deep breath, crossed my fingers and threw myself into space.



Before you read

What kind of things do stunt artists do in films?

What sort of personality do you need to be a stunt artist?

1 Read

a) Find words in the text that mean the same as the following:

- dangerous action
- jump
- instructor
- makes you pay
- burning
- a long flexible tube
- injure

b) Answer the questions.

- 1 What do you have to do in the first lesson of the course?
- 2 How long is the course and how much does it cost?
- 3 What are the students taught to do by the martial arts expert?
- 4 What sort of experience of fire stunts has Stuart had?
- 5 What sort of injuries must you expect to get on a course like this?
- 6 Which stunts are the most dangerous?

2 Speak

In groups, discuss the good and bad things about having a job as a stunt artist. Make notes under headings.

Good	Bad
<i>exciting</i>	<i>dangerous</i>

3 Listen

Before you listen

a) Check the meanings of these words.

- speed boat
- at full speed
- to spin
- current
- G-force
- rib
- padding

b) Listen to an interview with Sarah Donohue, a stunt artist, and answer T (true) or F (false).

- 1 She did the speed boat stunts on the latest Bond film.
- 2 She says that driving a boat is like driving a car.
- 3 She broke two fingers when she was practising the stunt.
- 4 She wears protective padding.
- 5 She thinks it's quite exciting to get hurt.

4 Write

Write a formal letter to the director of the Australian Action Academy asking if you can join the course.

- Say why you would like to go on the course
- Give some details about yourself and your education
- Say what dates you would like to come
- Ask for further information about the course
- Close your letter