1. The first thing resembling a Bungee jump was carried out by hardy young men from Pentecost Island in the Vanuatu archipelago. They would throw themselves off wooden platforms with their legs attached to vines to prove their manhood.

2. Eccentric Oxford students carried out the first bungee jump with modern materials off the Clifton Suspension Bridge in Bristol on April Fool's Day 1979. Using nylon braided rubber shock cords and dressed in top hats and tails, four members of the Oxford University Dangerous Sports Club jumped off. They survived and were immediately arrested.

3. Bungee jumping is so named after the strong elasticated cords that are normally used to strap down luggage.

4. The highest commercial bungee jump in the world, according to the Guinness Book of Records, is 764 ft (233 m), off the Macau Tower in China. Jumpers experience four to five seconds of freefall at up to 125 mph.

5. James Bond film GoldenEye, starring Pierce Brosnan as 007, featured what was the largest bungee jump ever performed at the time in 2002. Stuntman Wayne Michaels jumped off the Verzasca Dam in Switzerland, a 720 ft (220 m) drop. That year it was voted the best stunt of all time in a Sky Movies poll.

6. In 1991 Andrew Salisbury jumped from a helicopter attached to a bungee over Cancun in Mexico. He fell 3,157 feet before the bungee reached full stretch.


8. Noel Edmonds' BBC programme The Late, Late Breakfast Show was scrapped in 1986 after Michael Lush, a member of the public who had volunteered to take part in a stunt, died in a bungee jump that went wrong. A clip came loose during the jump, sending him plummeting to the ground.

9. Despite its inherent risk, there have only been a handful of deaths from bungee jumping.

10. Frequent injuries have included dislocations, rope burn, back injuries and eye trauma.

11. One of the best places to bungee is off the Zambezi Bridge, covered in the mist from the thundering Victoria Falls just yards away.

12. While Britain has a plethora of gorges, high bridges and tall buildings, the country's main bungee site is off a 160 ft platform in Datchet, Berks, "one mile from junction 5 of the M4".

13. The 170 ft Middlesbrough Transporter Bridge is the UK's only regular bridge jump.

14. For $10,000 (£6,700) you can jump off a helicopter into the mouth of an active Andean volcano in Pucon, Chile. Breakfast buffet is included.

15. City traders refer to 'bungee bets' when an investment that initially appears doomed suddenly bounces back into profit.

16. Bungee operators use different cords. Most southern hemisphere outfits use an unbraided cord that gives a longer, softer bounce.

17. The catapult or reverse bungee involves a jumper standing on the ground attached to a stretched cord which is then shot up into the air.

18. Fitness fanatics have invented bungee running, where they try to prove their strength by running horizontally with a cord attached.