Most large planes have an autopilot. This is a device operated by a computer. It will fly the place without the pilot's touching the controls. These autopilots can even control take offs and landings.

The principle of an automatic pilot is similar to the automatic steering of ships, but here three gyroscopic sensors and their associated equipment are used to control the three variables in aircraft position. These three variables are yaw, pitch and roll. The complex autopilot system uses an airborne computer which activates servomotors for introducing necessary corrections. A radio or radar link to the computer allows control from the ground for automatic takeoffs and landings.