

Easy ticket guide



Easy
Read

Great Northern

GN

GATWICK EXPRESS

SOUTHERN

ThamesLink

WE'RE WITH YOU

Updated May 2026

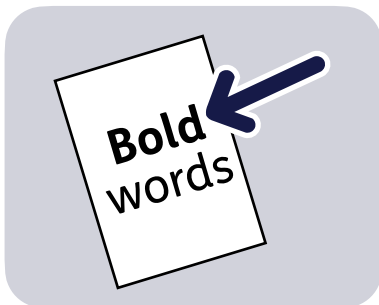
Easy Read



This is an Easy Read version of some information. It may not include all of the information but will tell you about the important parts.



This Easy Read booklet uses easier words and pictures than the original information. You may still want help to read it.



Some words are in **bold** - this means the writing is thicker and darker.



These are words that some people will find hard. When you see a bold word, we will explain it in the next sentence.



There are a lot of useful links to websites in this booklet.

They are [blue and underlined](#).



There will be a **QR code** next to each link.

You can use the camera on your phone to scan these to take you to the website.

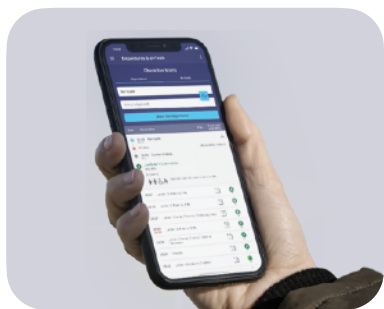
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About this booklet



This is information from train companies in South East England.



It is about how to buy and use train tickets.



We know that buying tickets might seem hard for many people.



So we have made this easy guide to help you.



If you have any questions, you can speak to our staff over the phone or face to face at train stations.

How can I plan my train journey?

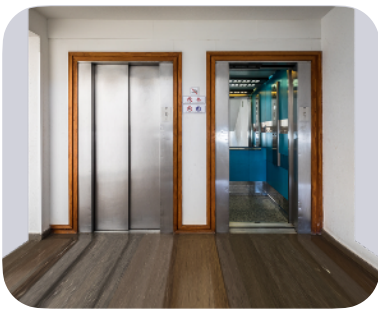


You can use our websites to help you plan your train journey.



On our websites, you can find out:

- If the stations you use have staff.



- If there are steps or a lift at the station.



- If there are any changes to the train times.



- How to get help with your journey if you need it.

Buying your tickets online



You can buy train tickets on our websites.

The websites will tell you:



- Types of tickets you can buy.



- The right ticket to buy for the time of day you are travelling.



You can buy both paper tickets and online tickets on our websites.

Online tickets (eTickets)



When you buy your ticket on our website, we will email it to you.



The email will have a special square pattern called a **barcode** on it.



You can keep the ticket email on your phone and take it with you.



You can scan the barcode at ticket gates, or show the email to train station staff.



You can keep the tickets on your phone or print them off.

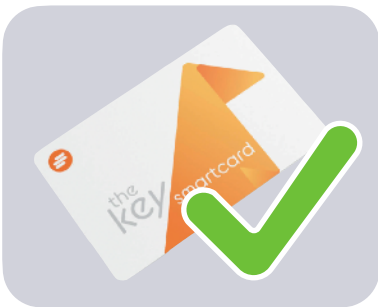
If you do not have a smartphone



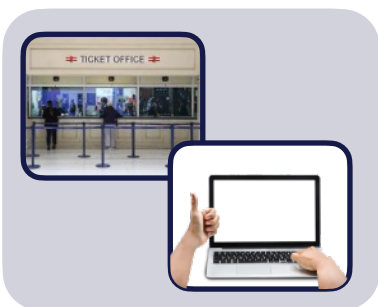
You can use a Key Smartcard if you cannot use your phone.



You can keep your ticket on the card instead of your phone.



Key Smartcards are also quicker and easier to use than paper tickets.



You can buy a Key Smartcard on our website or at ticket offices at our train stations.



You use these cards at the ticket gate by touching them on the yellow pad on the gate.

Buying your ticket at a ticket machine



Our ticket machines give you a choice of lots of different tickets.



You can see information on the machine screen about the cheapest ticket for your journey.



You can ask the train station staff to help you use the machines if you need help.



They are trained in how to help customers with disabilities.

Ticket Vending Machine Price Guarantee



The **Ticket Vending Machine Price Guarantee** is a promise to help you buy the cheapest ticket from our ticket machines.



If you buy a ticket, and find out you could have bought a cheaper ticket from the same machine, we can help.



Please tell us, by:

- Talking to our staff at the ticket office.



- Checking our website.



- Calling us on the phone.

Ticket offices



Many stations have ticket offices.

They can tell you about tickets, including:



- Tickets that they can sell you.



- Tickets that you can put onto your Smartcard or eticket.

Getting a paper ticket



You can get a paper ticket if you want one.

You can buy paper tickets at train stations.



Or you can buy your ticket online, and collect your paper ticket. You can collect it from:

- The ticket office at the train station.



- A ticket machine.



You may need to bring the card that you used to pay for the ticket.

You can also buy paper tickets:



- At the station ticket office, if there is one.



- From staff on the train or at the end of your journey if you could not buy one before you got on the train.

How to use ticket gates



Most of our bigger stations have ticket gates.



You can see which gates to use as they will have a green arrow.



You should not try to use a gate with a red cross on it.



Train station staff can help you if you cannot use the ticket gate.



There are wider gates for people who need extra room to get through.



The wider gates also give people more time to go through the gate.



If there are no staff at the ticket gate and you need help, you can speak to staff using a ticket gate help point. Just press the assistance button for help.

Using paper tickets at the gates



Most paper tickets have a bar code printed on the top.



Put the ticket facing down on the glass on the front of the gate.



If the ticket is the right one for the journey, the gate will open.



If the ticket is not right for the journey, the gates will stay closed and a small red light will show.



Our staff are trained to help you if you cannot find the bar code on your ticket.

Using Smartcards and bank cards at the gates



You can hold your card on the yellow pad that is on the gate.



It will take a few seconds for the yellow pad to scan the card.



Then the gates should open.

Using online tickets at the gates



You will need to use the glass scanner at the front of the gate.



Hold your phone or printed out email ticket upside down so the barcode is above the glass scanner.



If the ticket you show is right, the gates will beep 1 time and open.



If the gate beeps 2 times, you will need to check your ticket with station staff.

Getting help from staff



Our helpful train station staff are there to support you.

If you cannot buy a ticket



If you cannot buy a ticket before you get on the train, you can speak to staff.



They will be able to check if there were no ticket machines or ticket offices that you could have used.



If there are no staff around, you can use the green button on a **Help Point** to get advice.

A **Help Point** is a machine at train stations that you can use to get help or advice from staff. It works like a phone.

If you buy the wrong ticket



If you buy a ticket from our ticket machine or ticket office, you can ask for your money back.



Go to any one of our ticket offices.



If you bought your ticket online, and you have not printed your ticket, you can get your money back online.



If you bought your ticket online, and you have printed your ticket, you can ask for your money back at our ticket offices.



There is also a form on our websites to get your money back called the online refund form.



If you bought your ticket from another train company, you will need to ask them for your money back.

Useful website links

Buying train tickets



Southern

www.southernrailway.com



Thameslink

www.thameslinkrailway.com



Great Northern

www.greatnorthernrail.com



Gatwick Express

www.gatwickexpress.com



National Rail

www.nationalrail.co.uk/

Help with travelling



Southern

www.southernrailway.com/travel-information/travel-help/assisted-travel



Thameslink

www.thameslinkrailway.com/travel-information/travel-help/assisted-travel



Great Northern

www.greatnorthernrail.com/travel-information/travel-help/assisted-travel



Gatwick Express

www.gatwickexpress.com/travel-information/travel-help/assisted-travel

Get help with travelling by phone or textphone



Southern and Gatwick Express:



- Phone 0800 138 1016
- Textphone 0800 138 1018



Thameslink and Great Northern:



- Phone 0800 058 2844
- Textphone 0800 138 1018

Support while you are travelling



Southern

www.southernrailway.com/travel-information/travel-help/assisted-travel/support-while-travelling



Thameslink

www.thameslinkrailway.com/travel-information/travel-help/assisted-travel/support-while-travelling



Great Northern

www.greatnorthernrail.com/travel-information/travel-help/assisted-travel/support-while-travelling



Gatwick Express

www.gatwickexpress.com/travel-information/travel-help/assisted-travel/support-while-travelling

Getting your money back for tickets



Southern

<https://www.southernrailway.com/tickets/buy-tickets/refunds-and-changing-your-ticket>



Thameslink

<https://www.thameslinkrailway.com/tickets/buy-tickets/refunds-and-changing-your-ticket>



Great Northern

<https://www.greatnorthernrail.com/tickets/buy-tickets/refunds-and-changing-your-ticket>



Gatwick Express

<https://www.gatwickexpress.com/tickets/buy-tickets/refunds-and-changing-your-ticket>