



LONDON TRANSPORT GUIDE

ABSOLUTELY EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW
BEFORE TRYING TO NAVIGATE LONDON AND THE UK

LOVE + LONDON

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Click each section name to jump to it in the guide.

Welcome	3
Meet the London experts who made this guide	5
Video tutorial: Tube journey	6
Video tutorial: double decker bus journey	7
Chapter 1: How to pay for public transport within London	8
Chapter 2: Each London transport option, explained	17
Chapter 3: How much does transport cost?	30
Chapter 4: How to work out which route to take to get from A to B	35
Chapter 5: Taking children on public transport	46
Chapter 6: Accessibility on public transport	49
Chapter 7: How to get from the airport to your London hotel (and back)	65
Chapter 8: Are there toilets in Tube stations?	94
Chapter 9: What to do if there's a transport strike during your trip	96
Chapter 10: How to take public transport to the rest of the UK	102
Chapter 11: Transport etiquette and other final things to know	112

WELCOME

Part of what we do here at Love and London is help tourists like you to feel like you're exploring the city like us Londoners do.

And a huge part of feeling like a Londoner is feeling super comfortable and confident on public transport, especially as millions of us use the tube, bus or train *every single day*. Hopping on a tube line can sometimes feel like we're just going through the motions of life, like breathing.

But even though it's pretty simple for *us*, we've known for years how daunting the London transport system can be for newcomers to the city, especially ones who don't use transport in their day-to-day life back at home.

So the Love and London team decided it was time to create an in-depth, comprehensive guide to the city's transport system that will help our followers to feel confident using it before they even touch down in the city.

And here it is... *are you ready?*

We know it's not the smallest guide in the world, but we've covered **EVERYTHING**. No question of yours will be left unanswered once you're done reading and watching the included tutorial videos.

So you can cross "be nervous about taking the tube" off your list of things to do before your trip.

And one final thought... if you get to London and you **DO** mess something up, like you take a tube in the wrong direction, or forget you don't have to tap out on the bus, don't stress. Us Londoners, as confident as we are, still do mess things up every once in a while too. Nothing is irreversible, so you're all good.

We appreciate your purchase!

Jess and the Love and London team 

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PLEASE NOTE!

NOTE! If you're coming from outside of the UK, we do highly recommend that you have working internet access on your phone when in London, as it makes working out transport and walking directions MUCH easier.

Two simple ways we recommend to get your phone working in the UK:

- Check with your mobile phone provider if they can enable Roaming in the UK for you (be sure to ask about charges for that!)
- Buy an E-Sim. We recommend [Airalo](#).

MEET THE LONDON EXPERTS WHO MADE THIS GUIDE

Jess Dante, Founder

Jess is the founder of Love and London, starting the brand from her little Wimbledon flat not long after moving to the UK back in 2013.

Considered a travel expert by the likes of Forbes, Sky, and Newsweek, she's spent many years spreading her hard-earned London knowledge onto millions of London tourists every year. Jess knows this city like the back of her hand, and she also knows what it's like to come here knowing nothing, making her a true pro at helping London tourists at not only taking public transport with ease, but with planning the most life-changing trip to this magical city.



Eliza Rain (*they/them*)

Eliza is a disabled content creator who has lived in London for over 20 years, so they know all the best local spots to attend and the best weekend hangouts. They create content around all the top spots in London ([@DisabledEliza](#)) and rate how wheelchair accessible/disabled-friendly they are.

Eliza, who uses a wheelchair to navigate London's public transport, has firsthand experience and can offer invaluable advice to anyone with a disability. That's why we've asked them to develop the chapter on Accessibility on Public Transport in the London Transport Guide.

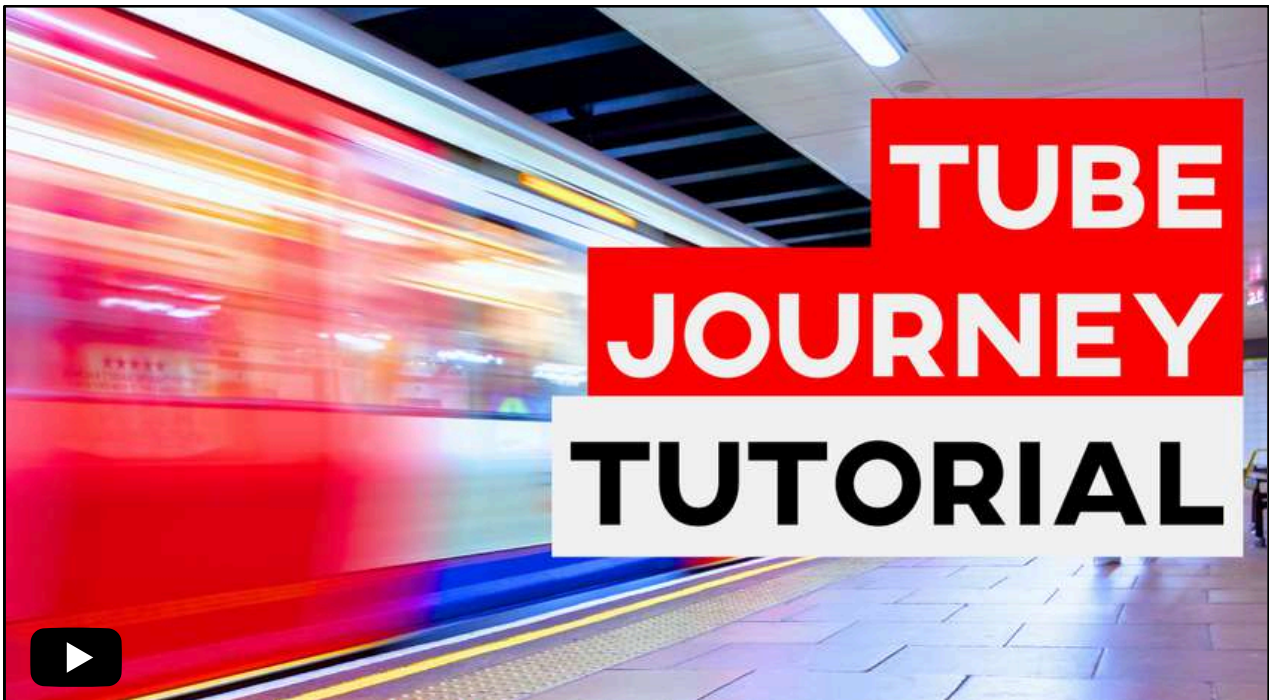


VIDEO TUTORIAL: TUBE JOURNEY

Here's the detailed video tutorial showing you step-by-step how to travel from point A to point B on the Tube.

You can [watch the video using this link](#). Please note that this is a private video and is only accessible to you through this link.

[CLICK HERE TO WATCH THE VIDEO](#)



VIDEO TUTORIAL: DOUBLE DECKER BUS JOURNEY

Here's the detailed video tutorial showing you step-by-step how to travel from point A to point B on a double decker London bus.

You can [watch the video using this link](#). Please note that this is a private video and is only accessible to you through this link.

[CLICK HERE TO WATCH THE VIDEO](#)



CHAPTER 1:

HOW TO PAY FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORT WITHIN LONDON



Let's start off with the three payment methods you can use for all of London's transport services (except for Uber Boat), so you can figure out which one will work best for your situation.

Option 1: Contactless Debit or Credit Card

You can use any contactless debit or credit card to pay for public transport in London. It works exactly like how you would use your card to pay at a shop or a restaurant. You'll see the majority of us Londoners paying for things around this city with contactless, or mobile pay.

If you're not sure if your credit or debit card has the contactless payment feature, check if it has this symbol on it. If it does, you're good to go. You can also contact your bank to check, and if it doesn't, they might be able to issue you a new card that has contactless payment built-in.



When using contactless, the transport system automatically calculates how many rides you take in a day and will charge you the correct amount once, early the next morning. With this method, you benefit from Daily and Weekly Caps, which are the maximum charges once you hit a few rides per day/week. More on this in a later section.

Option 2: Mobile Pay

This is Google Pay, Apple Pay, and Samsung Pay. If you don't know what these are, skip this option.

You can also pay for transport using your phone or mobile pay on your smartwatch. Just tap your device on the card reader as you would for a physical card (more on this in a bit.)

When using mobile pay, the system automatically calculates how many rides you take in a day and will charge you one total amount once, early the next morning. With this method, you benefit from Daily and Weekly Caps, which are maximum charges once you hit a few rides per day/week. As mentioned, we'll talk more about this in a later section.





A word of caution about Options 1 and 2, if you are using a card that charges you hefty currency conversion fees, then this system of daily charges might not be the best option for you. Option 3, the Oyster, would be better. That being said, in this day and age, there's no reason to be traveling internationally with a card that charges you those big fees. We have a list of great card options without foreign transaction fees [here](#), otherwise we recommend doing a simple Google search for “travel-friendly cards” in your country and order one – this will save you a lot of money on your trip.

BE CAREFUL!



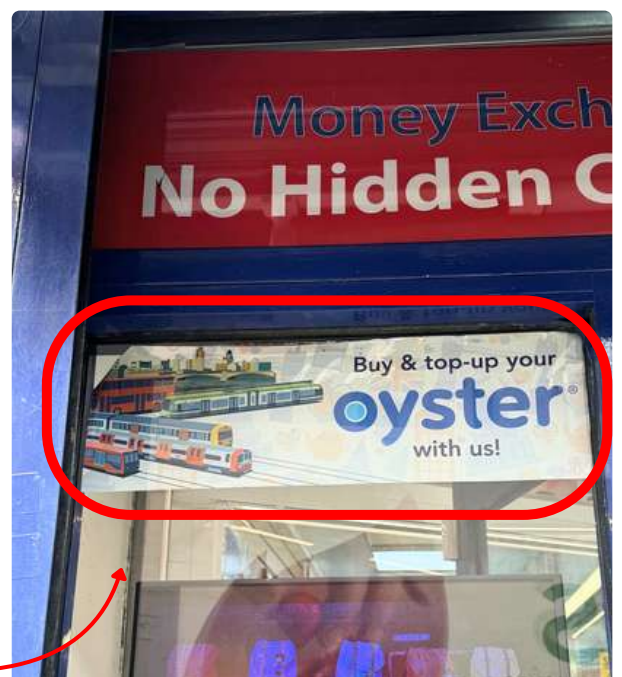
Even though your card on your mobile pay app and smart watch is the same as the physical one, the system counts them as three separate cards. So, choose one, and stick with it so you don't get overcharged. This also means you can use the same card for two people, if one uses mobile pay, and one uses the physical card.

Option 3: Oyster

The most “famous” option with tourists is the Oyster. This is a plastic card that you “top up” with credit at ticket machines in most tube stations, using cash or card. When your credit depletes, you have to add more. These cards cost £10.50 so the cost can really add up, considering rides costs the same on Oyster as the first two options.

You can buy Oysters at:

- **The airport:** many shops after you get out of baggage claim will have signs advertising them for sale, and you can usually buy them in the transport station via automatic machines or ticket windows. If you're struggling, just ask a member of staff and they'll be able to direct you to the right place, it's very easy.
- **Major Tube and train stations:** some machines sell them, otherwise you can buy them at the ticket counter.
- **Most convenience stores:** you'll see a sign in the window like this that shows they sell them and you can top up your credit there too.



If you have kids with you that are aged 11-15, you'll likely want to get them an Oyster, because you can add a Young Visitor discount to it. More on that in the Kids chapter.

Also, if you're coming from another part of the UK and have a discount railcard, get an Oyster, as you get your usual discount on your off-peak London travel.

There is such a thing as a Visitor Oyster Card but the added cost outweighs any benefit you get from ordering one to your home before you travel, so we generally say to skip these.



TWO KEY THINGS TO NOTE FOR GROUP TRAVEL

1. Each person over the age of 11 needs their own form of payment. For example, you can't touch in with the same Oyster three times for three people. Each person needs their own separate payment method (Oyster, contactless card or mobile pay).
2. Additionally, each person should stick to the same payment method for the entire trip. Why? It will ensure you don't get overcharged for an "incomplete journey", and to reach Daily and Weekly Caps. More on that later.



Bonus option: Weekly Travel Card

There's also the option to get a weekly unlimited pass, which covers all transport modes except Uber Boat. The idea is that you'll pay for five days of travel but get seven. The amount you save depends on how many zones you buy the travel card for (this is what gets a little confusing for tourists) and whether you have an Oyster already or not. If you don't, you'll need to buy one to put your travel card on, which partially negates the savings.

About the different zones... most tourists stay in zones 1-2, the centre of the city, so if you buy a travel card for those zones, it will cost you £44.70, which saves £17.60, or £7.10 if you had to buy an Oyster. This calculation is based on the max you would pay at the Daily cap (we didn't calculate it based on the Weekly Cap, as that applies Monday-Sunday, which might not match your travel days), but as already mentioned, we'll explain that in further detail a bit later (check [Chapter 3](#)).

Here's the full breakdown of Weekly Travel Card costs, just using one of the three options mentioned earlier.

Cost comparison: Weekly Travel Card vs. Contactless or Mobile Pay (for seven days of travel)

	Cost of Contactless/Mobile Pay (Daily Cap x7)		Cost of Weekly Travel Card		Savings
Zone 1	£62.30	–	£44.70	=	£17.60
Zone 1 – 2	£62.30	–	£44.70	=	£17.60
Zone 1 – 3	£73.50	–	£52.50	=	£21
Zone 1 – 4	£89.60	–	£64.20	=	£25.40
Zone 1 – 5	£107.10	–	£76.40	=	£30.70
Zone 1 – 6	£114.10	–	£81.60	=	£32.50

Cost comparison: Weekly Travel Card vs. Oyster

(for seven days of travel)

If you choose Oyster and don't have one yet, factor into the previous table, the £10.50 charge to get a card.



Note that you can **get a refund** from most ticket machines of the unused credit left on your Oyster, but only up to £10. The cost of the card (£10.50) is non-refundable.

If you buy a Weekly Travel Card and need to travel outside of the zones you bought, say, to Heathrow Airport which is Zone 6, you can add normal credit to your Oyster and the system will deduct from that instead.



CONFUSED?! Totally normal, these travel cards are not easy to understand. If you're not sure about the Weekly Travel Card, you won't lose out much by just using one of the three options mentioned earlier. Sometimes, simplicity is worth having to spend a few extra pounds.

ATTENTION!

NEVER buy a Day Travel Card. You will spend almost double what you would if you used one of the previous options. RIP OFF ALERT!



So which option is best for you?

Generally, we think that the first two options are best and easiest for most adults, as you don't have to pay £10.50 for an Oyster and you don't have to deal with topping up the card when your credit runs out. But, at the end of this chapter, we've given you a tool to help you work out what's going to be best for YOU.

Ok, now how do you actually PAY?

On the Tube or Overground train

1. At the start of your journey (aka, one ride to get from A to B) you'll enter a station and get to the grey barriers, they look like this (see the picture below).
2. Tap your method of payment onto the yellow card reader (this is called "touching in"), and it will beep and open the gates.
3. Head down to the Tube platform.
4. If you need to change Tube lines, you won't need to touch in again. If you're going from an Overground train (the orange line) to the tube, you'll see people tapping the PINK card readers near the platforms when changing lines, do that too. Don't stress too much about this though, most tourists won't encounter this.
5. When you're at your last stop, ready to leave the system and get back into the city, you'll reach the barriers again, where you'll do the same thing - "touch out" in the yellow reader. Even if the barriers are open, it's really important you still touch out so the system knows how much to charge you for that ride. That's it!



Picture of the Pink Card Readers



Picture of the Grey Barriers

On the bus

The bus is really simple.

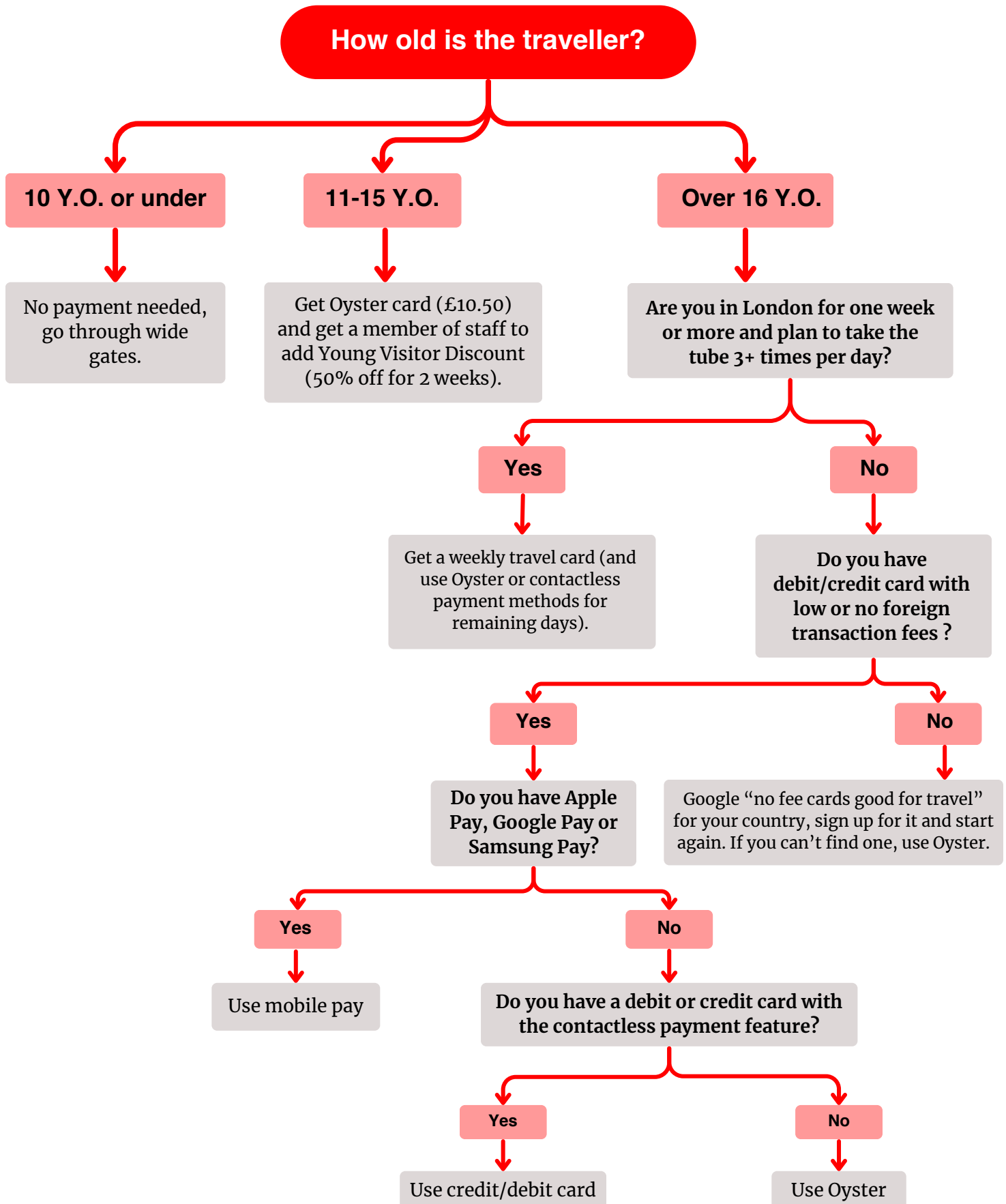
1. Get on the bus at the front door.
2. Tap your payment method on the yellow card reader next to the driver.

That's it! No need to "touch out" like you do for the tube.



“HOW SHOULD I PAY?” GUIDE

Answer the questions to work out which payment method is best for each traveller’s situation.



CHAPTER 2:

EACH LONDON TRANSPORT OPTION, EXPLAINED



Also called “the Underground”, but most Londoners tend to call it the Tube since it’s shorter. It was the world’s first underground train system, first opened in 1863. The Tube is generally efficient and easy to use once you get the hang of it, we promise! It’s likely you will use the Tube the most out of all of the transport options. Depending on where you’re going, the Tube is usually the fastest mode too.



- **Sunday to Thursday:** 5am – midnight
- **Friday and Saturday nights:** select lines run all night via the Night Tube: Central, Jubilee, Northern, Piccadilly and Victoria lines.

The video tutorial that came with this guide will show you all of the steps to take, but here are the basics.

It's pretty simple, make your way to a station of the line you need, touch in with your payment method, and then follow the signs to reach the correct platform. If you're not sure which direction you need to go, there are usually big signs showing the entire line which will help you work out which direction you need to go in.

When in doubt, ask someone. Fellow Tube users are generally happy to help if they can.

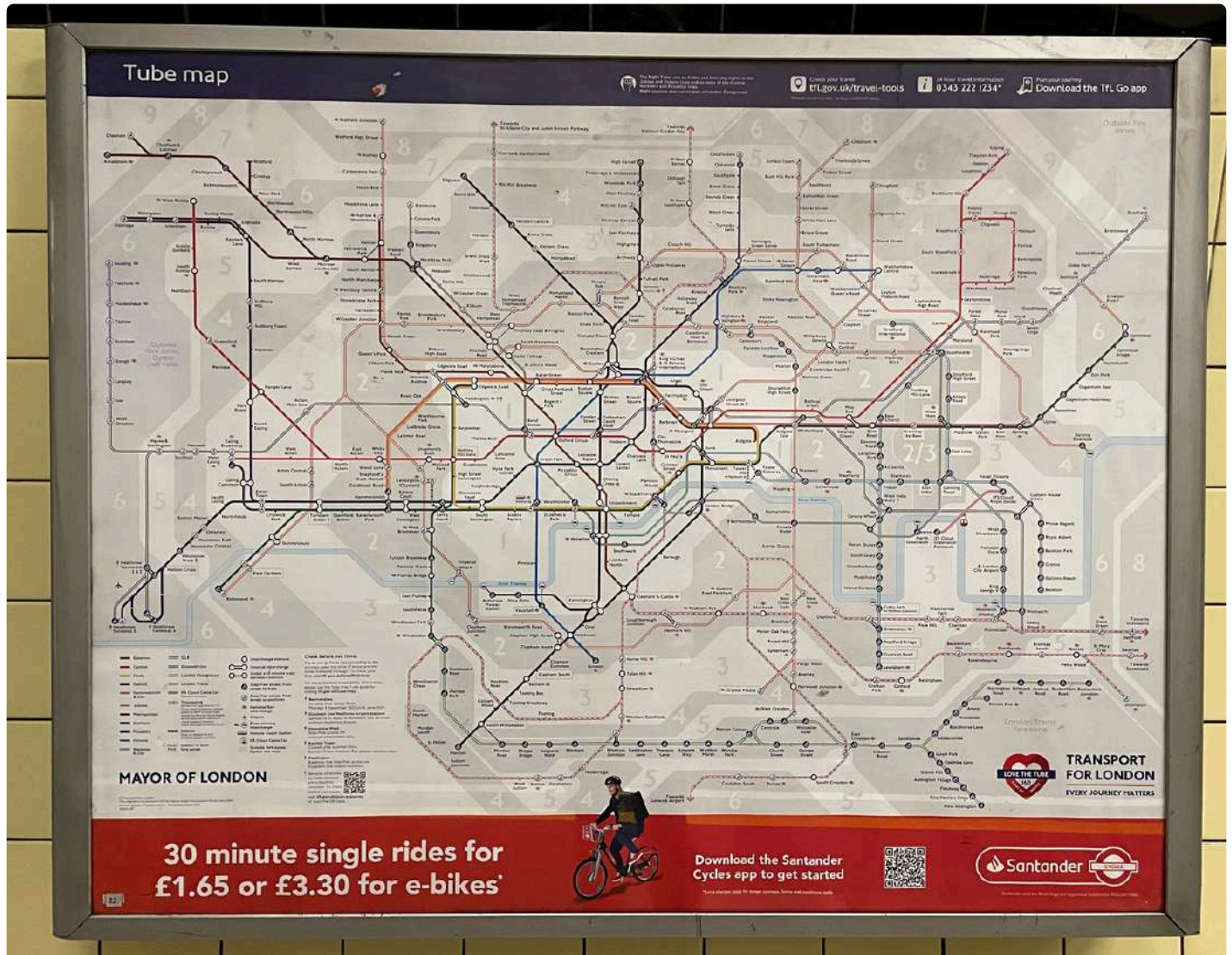
Then, when a train arrives, let any exiting passengers off and hop on. If it's rush hour you may have to wait for a couple of trains to pass before you can squeeze on.



How to get off the Tube

There's no need to push a button to get the train to stop, they stop at every station. Just listen out for the stop you want, and hop off once the doors open. Then follow the signs to the next line that you need, or to the exit. Remember that you **MUST** touch out at the barriers at your final destination, even if the gates are open, so that your ride cost is properly calculated.

Have a look at [the Tube Map here](#).



How to make sure you travel in the right direction and take the right branch

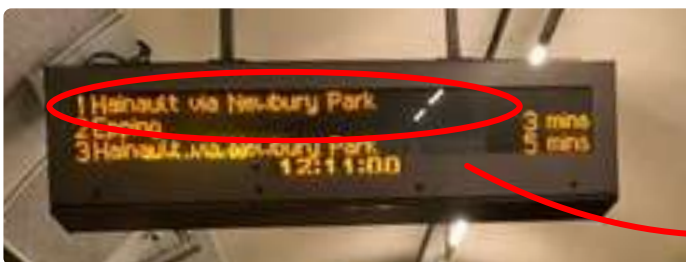
As you can probably imagine, at a tube station, each line runs in opposite directions. Generally, lines will be northbound, southbound, eastbound or westbound, and you might see signage pointing you in separate directions depending on which direction you need.



How do you know which you need? Two ways – your transport app will tell you (more on that later) or you can usually find a line map pretty easily, one for each direction, and you just need to find which stop you're going to on either map and then follow that direction.

Some lines, like the Northern Line, also have multiple branches to them. It might seem complicated at first but there are two key things to know.

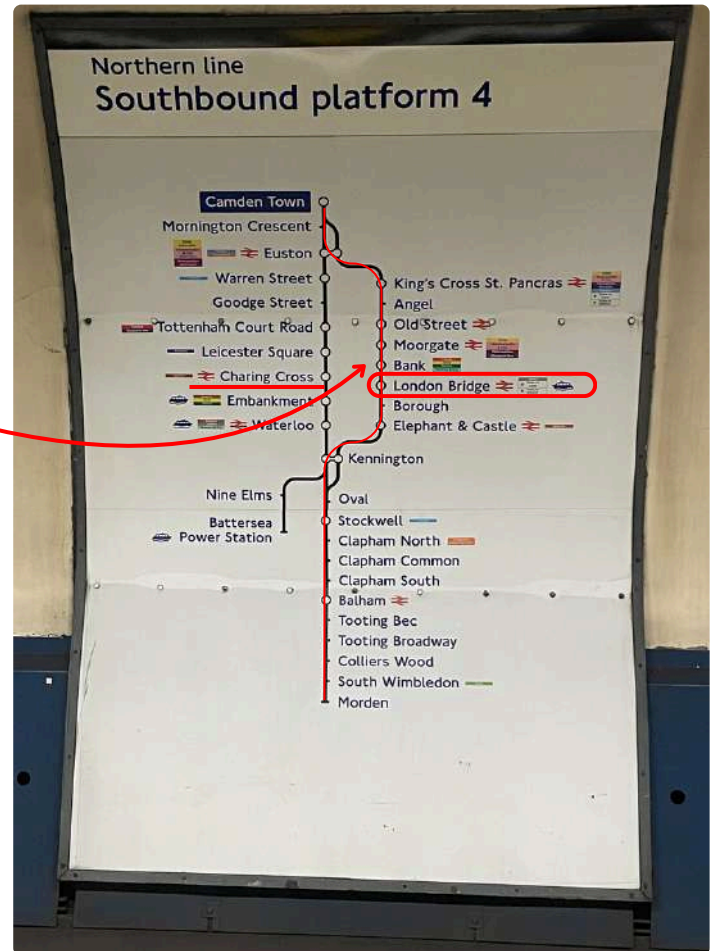
When you get to the platform, you will look up and see a digital sign with the upcoming train arrivals. For lines without branches, you'll just see one station name for each upcoming train, that station indicates the last stop for that specific train.



If the line has branches, it will also say “via STATION NAME”. This indicates which branch it will go via. Knowing that, you can then look at the line map and see if that branch works for where you're trying to go.

Here's an example:

Let's say you're at Camden Town station, ready to take the Northern Line to London Bridge.



Your app tells you know you need to go southbound but aren't sure beyond that.

You look up at the digital sign on the platform and it says the next train is "Morden/Battersea via Charing Cross".

You then look at the line map across from the platform. Morden is past London Bridge so it doesn't terminate before your stop. But then you see Charing Cross is on the opposite side of the line that London Bridge is on. So, you can't take that train.

You see the one after is instead "via Bank", and checking the line map, Bank is along the same line of London Bridge. So you're good to go!

And when in doubt, ask a fellow passenger or TFL staff member for help.

The Bus

While being an icon of the city, London's famous red double decker buses are also used by millions of Londoners and commuters every single day. They're cheap to ride and allow you to do a little sightseeing while going from Point A to B. That being said, they can be slow during peak traffic times and sometimes it could take a while for one to show up at your departure stop.



When can you take a bus?

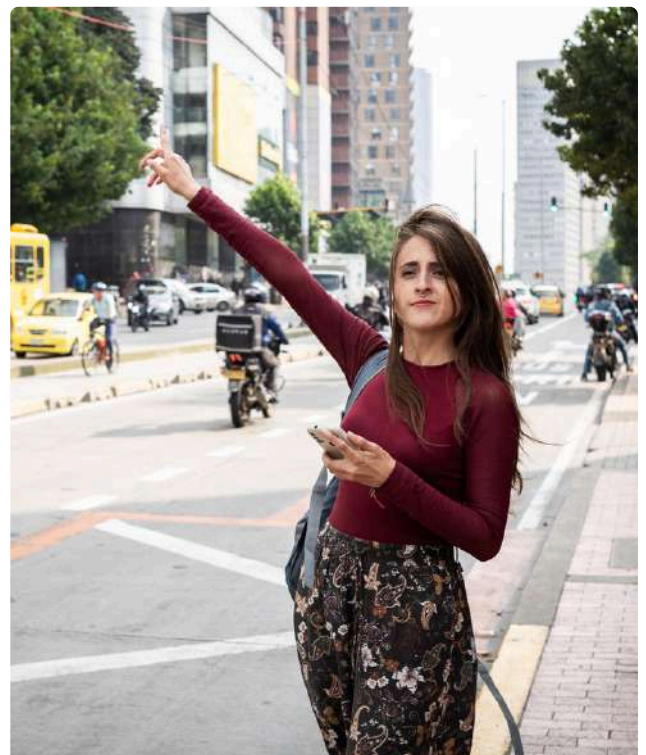
- Buses tend to run most frequently during rush hour but are also the least reliable during that timeframe as they get stuck in traffic.
- “Normal” buses run from around 5am till about midnight, then some routes switch to “Night Buses”, which run all night. You’ll see an “N” in front of the number if you’re hopping on a Night Bus. These are generally safe. Your transport app will tell you if one of these is your best option (more on the apps we recommend later).

How to call and get on a bus

The video tutorial that came with this guide will show you all of the steps to take, but we’ve written the basics out too.

When you’re at a bus stop (make sure you’re going in the right direction, each stop will have a letter on top of the sign that should match what your app indicates, more on that later), when you see the bus you want coming, put your hand out to your side so that the driver knows you want it to stop. Buses don’t automatically stop at every stop, so this is important.

Hop on the bus, pay at the front as we show you in the video and described earlier, and find a seat. If it’s crowded on the ground level, you can also make your way upstairs. Once on the upper deck, try to snag the front seats, they’re great for views!



How to get off the bus

There are digital signs on the ground level, behind the stairs, and at the front of the bus on the upper deck, that show the next stop. If you can sit near them, that's helpful, or keep an eye on your map app to see when you're close to your stop. Sometimes the autosystem announces upcoming stops but not always, so you'll need to pay attention.

When you see your stop is next, press the button on the rail, shown here. That will tell the driver you want to get off. If the digital sign already says "bus stopping" you don't have to push the button.



If you're on the upper deck, carefully make your way to the stairs so you can get down them quickly once the bus stops. Don't dilly-dally, the stops are quick. If you have mobility issues, stay on the ground level and snag a priority seat, this way the driver will know to give you extra time.

Remember, no need to tap your card again to get off the bus.

Ok, so most tourists will only take the Tube and bus. But we've included some other options just in case you come across them.

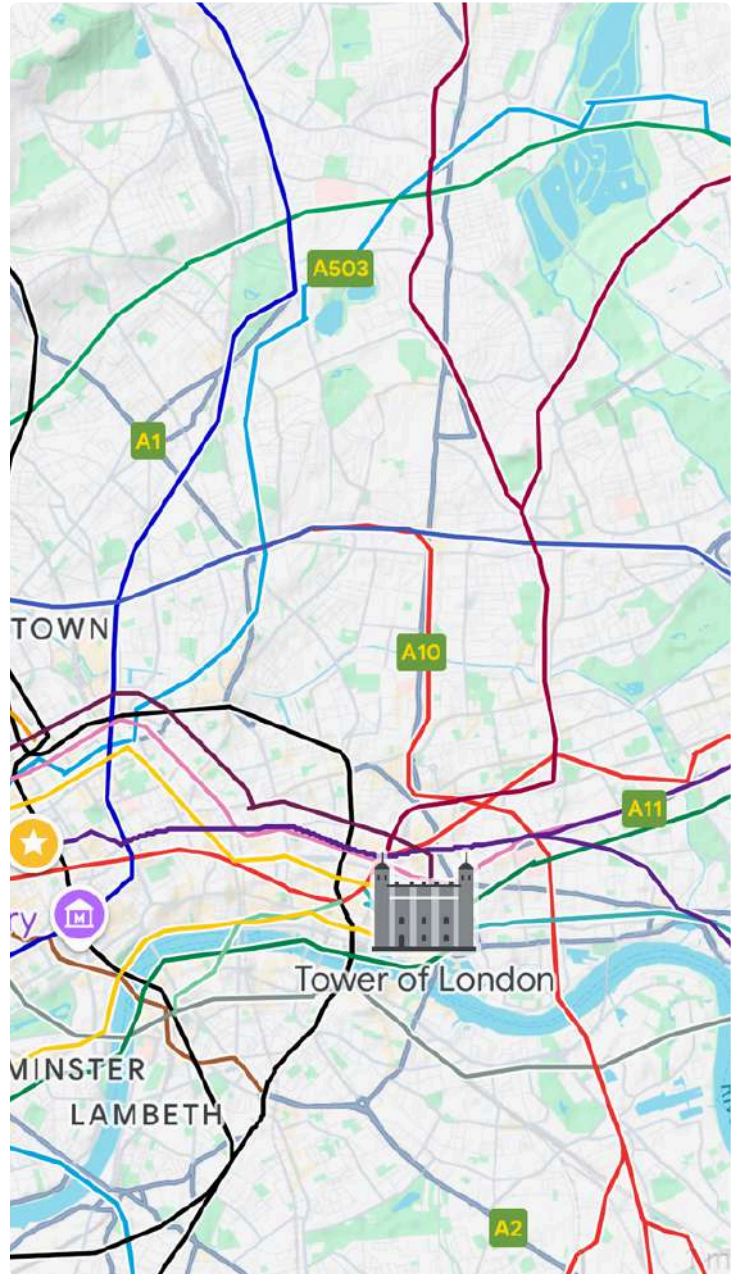
Overground

The Overground is a series of trains, mostly running above ground, that generally run outside the very center of the city, hence why they are less common for tourists to use.

You MIGHT end up taking the overground if you go to Peckham (covered in Day 6 of our London Itinerary and The Casual Tourist Guide to South London), some parts of East London (Day 3 and The Casual Tourist Guide to East London), Hampstead or Camden (Day 5 or The Casual Tourist Guide to North London).

The system works in a very similar way to the Tube, you touch in and out at each station of your journey with the same payment methods or Weekly Travel Card (if you're in the right zone). But if you switch from Tube to Overground or vice versa, this is where you'll see those pink card readers we talked about earlier. You can usually hear people touching their cards on them on or near the platforms, not at the barriers at the entrance of the stations.

One thing that IS different from the Tube is you do have to press the door button to get the trains to open. They're located just next to each door, both inside and outside, and they light up and beep when it's possible to open the door.



When can you take the Overground?

- Monday to Saturday: 5am - midnight
- Sunday: 7am - midnight

DLR

The DLR stands for “Docklands Light Railway”. It’s the only driverless system of its kind in London and it feels a bit like taking the monorail at Disneyland, so it’s sorta fun. Again, most tourists won’t encounter the DLR unless using London City Airport, or maybe when going to Greenwich (Day 6 of our London Itinerary) or the London Excel event center. But if you do, try to get into the front carriage of the train so you can sit in the first (coveted) seats and pretend you’re driving it. 😊

The steps for using the DLR are mostly the same as for the Tube, including payment methods, and needing to touch in and out, however the DLR doesn’t have barriers at their stations so you do need to remember to find the yellow card readers and to use them.

You do also need to push the door buttons to get them to open for you.



When can you take the DLR?

- Monday to Saturday: 5:30am - 12:30am
- Sunday: 7am - 11:30pm

National Rail

National Rail is a collective name for all of the trains that run outside of London. For example, trains from London to Brighton, York, Edinburgh, etc. Confusingly, some run into and through London, like the Thameslink from Gatwick Airport to London Bridge Station.

We've got a whole chapter later on about taking trains to other parts of the UK, but in this section we'll briefly cover National Rail trains in London as you might encounter them.

Within London, these trains are very similar to the Tube, with a few key exceptions:

- You have to press the door button next to the carriage door to open them.
- You can use the same payment methods as you would for the Tube, but if you get on a train in London to head to a different city, you instead need to buy a proper train ticket (more on that later).
- If you take a National Rail train in London and during the same journey need to change to the Tube, you'll have to touch out at the barriers in the National Rail area, then touch in nearby at the entrance to the Tube part of the station. We mentioned this briefly in the Tube section, and keep in mind, it's easy, you can't do it any other way!



When can you take the National Rail?

- It can vary a bit by line, but generally 4:30am - midnight every day. The trains run a bit less frequently late at night and early in the morning.

Uber Boat

This is a fun one. The Uber Boat goes along the River Thames and can be a speedy and fun way to get to different parts of the city. It was created as a commuter option, but it's become popular with tourists because it's a unique way to get from Westminster Bridge to Greenwich, while speeding under Tower Bridge... it's pretty cool.



How to Pay for the Uber Boat

You can pay for Uber Boat with the same payment methods as the Tube and bus, but it has a separate fare structure, so it isn't included in any Daily caps and in fact has its own zones and caps. More on that in the "costs" chapter.

How to get on an Uber Boat

First you'll want to check [the timetable](#) for the day you want to travel. Uber Boat also appears in most transport apps so you can see timings in there too if the app thinks the boat is a good option for where you want to go.

Then head to your closest pier, touch in with your payment method (there are plenty of staff to show you where) and wait for your boat. Some piers have enclosed waiting areas on the dock.

How to get off an Uber Boat

Listen for the very clear announcements saying your destination pier is next, then disembark, touching out on the card reader on the dock. Again there are lots of staff making sure you do this, but thankfully it's really easy anyways.

When can you take the Uber Boat?

- Services run from early in the morning until late at night, seven days a week. For tourists, you should consider “late at night” to be around 10pm.

What’s on the boat?

The inside of the boat is actually quite nice and comfy. There are plenty of seats (you’re guaranteed one) as well as and wheelchair-accessible seats. You can walk around easily, and there’s a decent cafe selling snacks, tea, coffee, soft drinks and alcoholic beverages too. There are also toilets and some of the boats have a large back deck with outdoor seating (also wheelchair accessible).

Trams

We have trams, but you will not use them as they are in areas that 99% of tourists would never go to. So for simplicity, we’ll skip this one.

Taxis

We have three main types of taxis in London – our classic black cabs, taxis that you can hire via an app like Uber, and pre-booked taxis. Let’s talk about all three.

Black cabs

Around for many decades now, they’ve become an icon of London. All black taxi drivers have to complete what’s called “The Knowledge” which is an extremely intense test that shows they know every single street in London as well as where all of the major landmarks and buildings are. It’s actually nuts.

You can wave black taxis down on the street if you see one pass by with it’s top light on, or you can call one with the app [Gett](#). They have seating arrangements that allow for wheelchairs, prams/strollers, and luggage as their front seats lift up. They all take debit and credit cards, although some will push hard to try to get you to pay cash, saying “the machine is broken”, but by law they must accept cards. Black taxis cost more than taxis you call from an app.



Taxis via an app

All taxis that you'd get from using apps like [Uber](#), [FreeNow](#), [Gett](#), and [Bolt](#) are required to have a private-hire taxi license, and therefore the quality of drivers tends to be much better than many other cities around the world, where anyone with just a regular driver's license can sign up to drive. The apps work just like they do in any other city, and you can call larger "XL" cars when you need more room. Costs vary but you'll get a better deal on these apps, and keep in mind that availability varies, and you might find it hard to get a taxi at peak time (and will pay the surge charge for high demand-times).



Pre-booked taxis

You only need to pre-book a taxi when you are doing airport transfers or need to ensure you get somewhere on time, like you've got an early Eurostar that you don't want to miss due to not being able to find an available black cab or taxi.

Pre-booked taxis show up when you tell them to, and if you've booked one to take you from the airport to your hotel, they'll park their car and wait in the arrivals terminal for you with a sign with your name on it.

We always recommend our friends at [Welcome Pickups](#) for pre-booked taxis.

Ok, ready to dive into costs for all of the above? Let's get into these.

CHAPTER 3:

HOW MUCH DOES TRANSPORT COST?



Let's talk about what allllllll of this will cost ya. Keep in mind that the below is all info for people 16 and older. For kids rates, head to the Kids chapter.

How much does it cost to take the Tube?

The (slightly annoying) answer is... it depends.

So let's start with explaining London's zones.

The London Tube system is separated into six "Zones". You can [see them on this map](#), with the zones alternating between grey and white.

Zone 1 is in the very center of the city, then Zone 2 wraps around it, and it keeps going so it looks like a bullseye.

Most tourists will predominantly stay in Zones 1 and 2, and will travel beyond these only if going to Heathrow Airport, which is in zone 6.

When you do one journey on the Tube (so that's one complete ride, from A to B) you will be charged for that journey depending on how many zones you "travel through".

So if you start at a station in Zone 1 and end at a station in Zone 2, you will be charged less than if you ended at a station in Zone 3.

You can see the cost per ride for each zone option, plus peak/off peak pricing, below.

Peak times are: Monday to Friday (except for public holidays) between 6:30am and 9:30am, and between 4pm and 7pm.

	Adults		Young Visitor Discount	
	Peak	Off-Peak	Peak	Off-Peak
Zone 1	£3.10	£3	£1.55	£1.50
Zone 1 - 2	£3.60	£3.10	£1.80	£1.55
Zone 1 - 3	£3.90	£3.30	£1.95	£1.65
Zone 1 - 4	£4.80	£3.60	£2.40	£1.80
Zone 1 - 5	£5.30	£3.80	£2.65	£1.90
Zone 1 - 6	£5.90	£4	£2.95	£2
Zone 2 - 6	£5.90	£4	£2.95	£2

Now, the great thing is, you don't need to memorise these numbers. The system automatically knows what to charge you for a ride once you touch out at the last station of your journey. You just want to make sure you have enough credit on your Oyster if you're using one (again, another advantage of using contactless payment or mobile pay is not having to worry about that).

Daily caps 🥰

If you're thinking that your tube rides could add up quickly, you'll be happy to know we have this thing called Daily Caps. It basically means, depending on how many zones you travel through that day, there's a max you'll be charged, and once you reach that max, the rest of your rides are free – and we love free stuff! This is calculated over 24 hours for journeys that start at 4:30am and end on 4:29am the next day.

The daily cap will be for the furthest journey you did that day. So if you went zones 1-6 for just one ride, your cap will be £16.30. But if you stuck to zones 1-2, your daily cap will then be £8.90.

ATTENTION!



Buses are indeed included in the Daily cap! And we'll reiterate this a bit later, but if you take **ONLY** buses for one day, and no other transport, the Daily cap is only £5.25.

Here's the daily cap chart:

	Daily Cap
Zone 1	£8.90
Zone 1 - 2	£8.90
Zone 1 - 3	£10.50
Zone 1 - 4	£12.80
Zone 1 - 5	£15.30
Zone 1 - 6	£16.30

Daily caps are great because if you have a decent idea of what you'll visit during your trip, and can get a feel for which zones you'll stay in, you can accurately understand how much you'll pay for transport during your trip.

Weekly caps

We also have weekly caps that automatically apply for contactless, mobile pay and Oyster. They're made for local commuters, so the week **always starts on Monday and ends on Sunday**. This often doesn't work for tourists who might start their trip any day of the week. But just in case you arrive on Monday, the weekly cap means that if you travel on five days, your final two days (Saturday and Sunday) will give you free travel.

Here's the weekly cap price guide:

	Pay-As-You-Go Weekly Cap
Zone 1	£44.70
Zone 1 - 2	£44.70
Zone 1 - 3	£52.50
Zone 1 - 4	£64.20
Zone 1 - 5	£76.40
Zone 1 - 6	£81.60

If this DOES work for you, this automatically applies so you don't have to do anything to take advantage of this but you DO need to use the same exact payment method every single time you use transport. Buses are included in this too!

ATTENTION!

If this is all confusing for you, don't stress. This is all automatically calculated for you so you don't need to know every single amount you'll pay. Just to reiterate one more time, we do find using contactless card or mobile pay to pay for transport so much simpler than Oyster, as you don't have to ever worry about running out of credit.



How much does it cost to take the Bus?

Very good news here – the cost of taking a bus is MUCH simpler to understand.



One bus ride costs £1.75.

Once you take one bus ride, **any other bus rides you take over the next 60 minutes are FREE.**

The Daily Cap if you **ONLY** take buses in one day is £5.25.

There are no “zones” for buses, just one flat fare per ride, no matter how far you go.

How much does it cost to take the Overground and DLR?

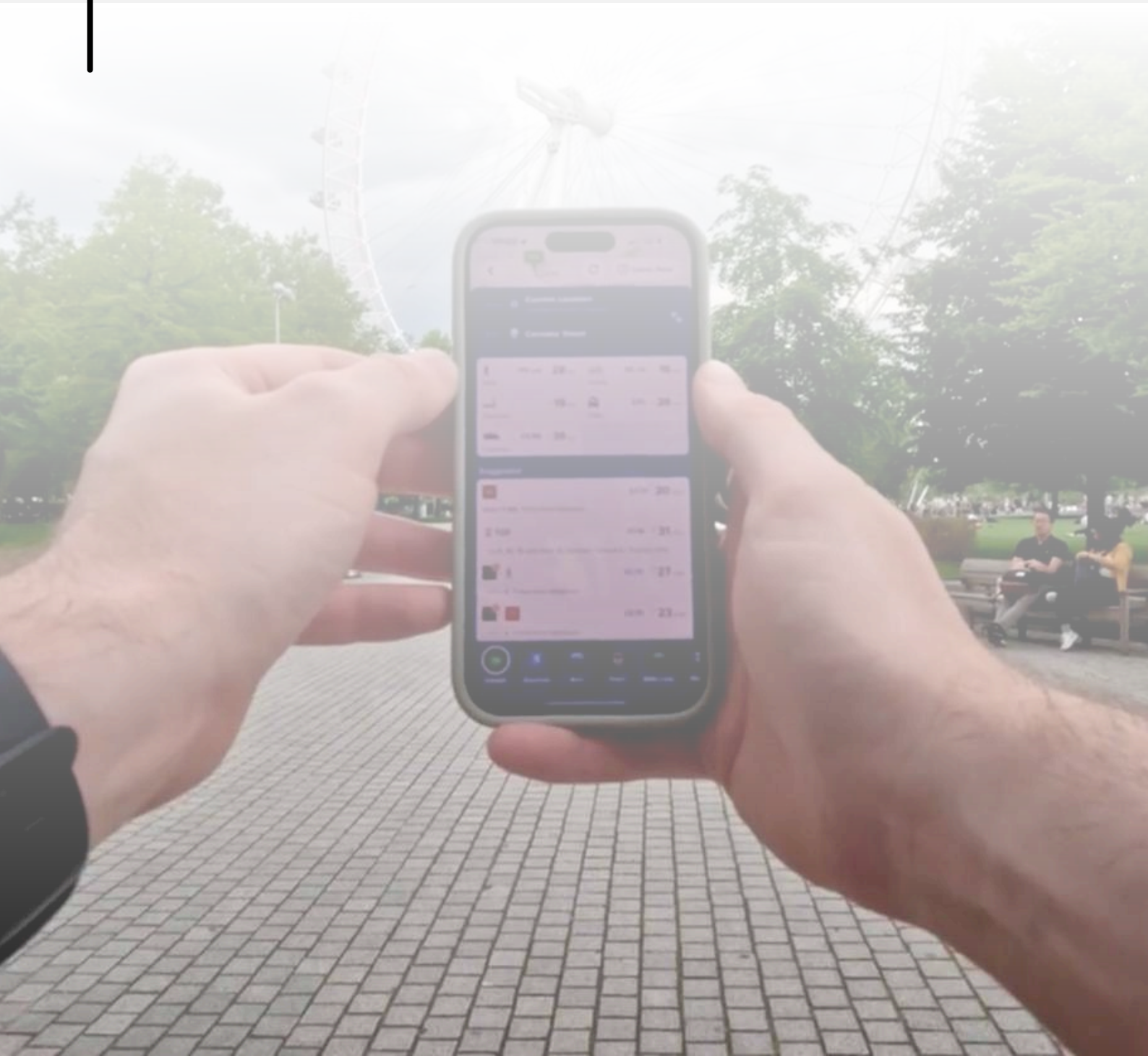
It's exactly the same system as the Tube, so nothing new to do or learn here. *Phew!*



Ok, now let's talk about how to work out how to get from A to B.

CHAPTER 4:

HOW TO WORK OUT WHICH ROUTE TO TAKE TO GET FROM A TO B



Ok, we've covered a lot already, but it's time we tell you how to figure out how you're going to get from A to B while exploring London. If you're particularly familiar with navigation apps or public transport in general, this chapter, along with our tutorial videos, will help clear it all up.

Transport apps you'll need

When you need to work out what route to take in London, the easiest way BY FAR is to use an app. There are a few different ones that work well, but we have two that we recommend the most: Google Maps and Citymapper.

Google Maps

If you've used Google Maps before and already have it on your phone (you might have one of the digital maps from our [London guides](#) in your app already!) then you can just stick with this, you don't need to download anything else.

If you're new to Google Maps, it's a free app that can give you walking, public transport, and driving directions. The advantage of using Google Maps over Citymapper while you're travelling is that you can also get lots of info on what's around you or an area you're hoping to explore, because virtually every business will be pinpointed on Google Maps. Another advantage, again, is that the Digital Maps that come with our London Itineraries and Casual Tourist Guides integrate with Google Maps so they're super easy to use.



Some things you can do with Google Maps

- ✓ Find routes before you're even in London (be sure to adjust for the day and approximate time so it can suggest routes that consider closures, frequency of service, etc) This is great for working out how to get from your London airport to your hotel.
- ✓ Choose from a mix of routes and see which is longer, has fewer line changes, etc.
- ✓ Get live walking navigation when on the ground.
- ✓ See what you'll pay for each suggested route
- ✓ Each business pinned on Google Maps has reviews, opening hours, a website and a lot more info
- ✓ Under "Trip Options" you can: Prioritise which type of transport you prefer. Ex: Bus vs train, get directions that are step-free and prioritise routes with fewer transfers, less walking, or lowest cost

Citymapper

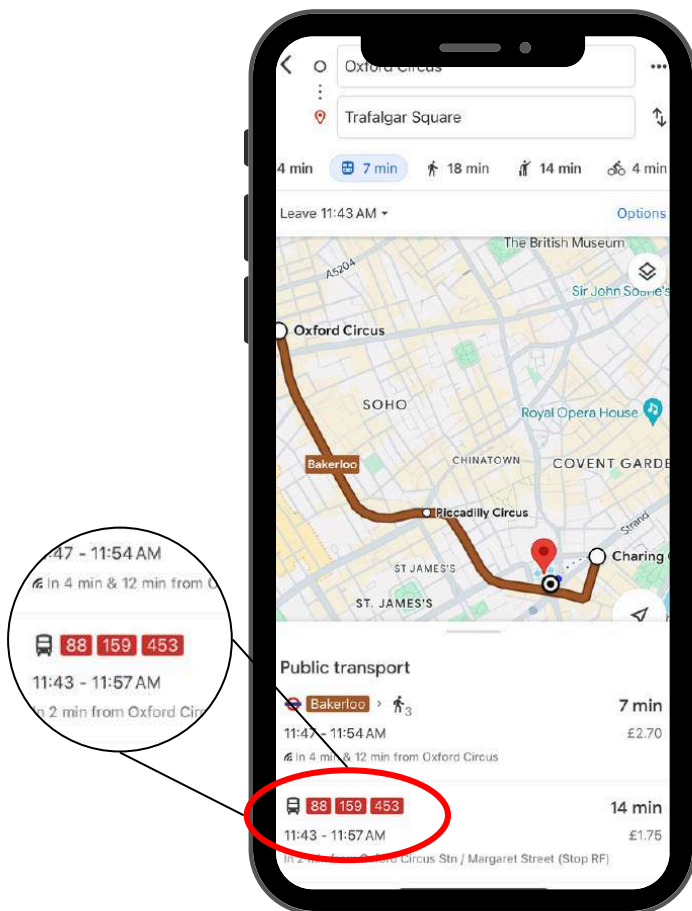
A lot of Londoners also use Citymapper. It works quite similar to Google Maps but doesn't give business and location info like Google Maps. It's sometimes a bit more reliable when it comes to bus timings though, and you can more easily choose options like "bus only", "rain safe", and "step-free". We also think it works better when there's any industrial action happening, as it only shows you "strike safe" routes.

It's up to you which one you want to use, but we generally say Google Maps is slightly better than Citymapper.

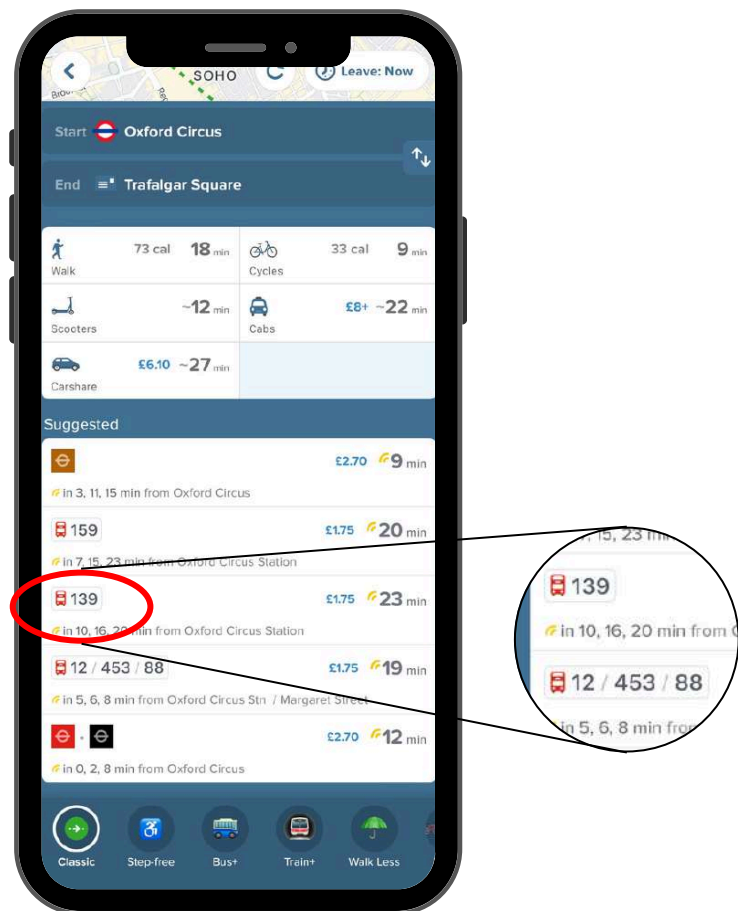


What's what on the apps

Bus

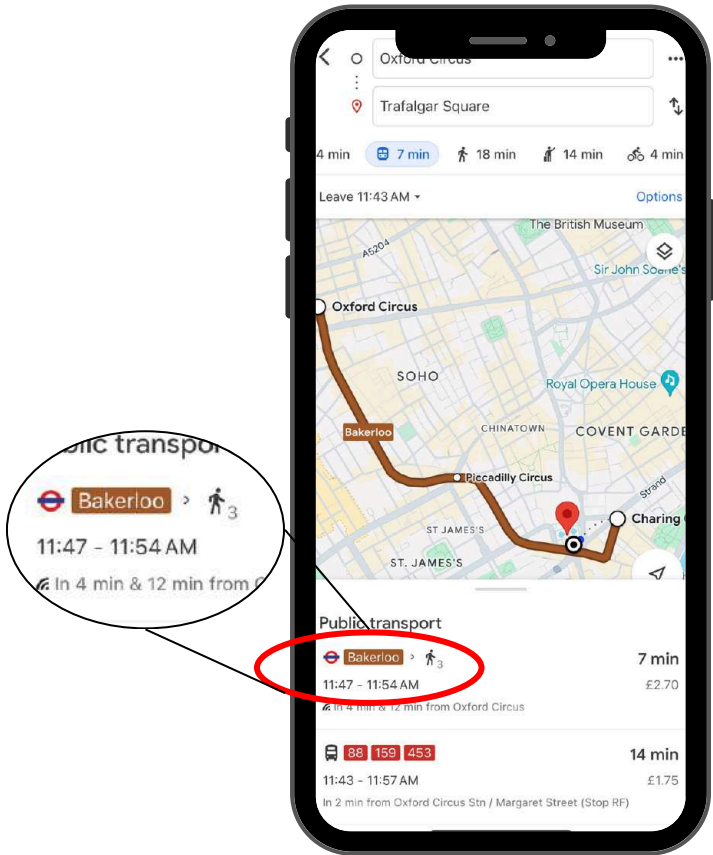


Google Maps

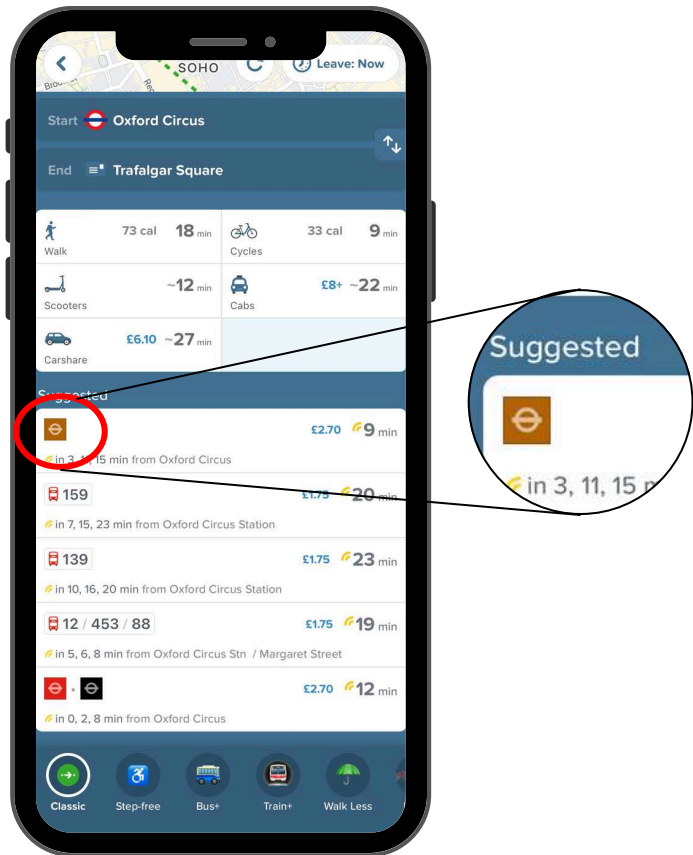


Citymapper

Tube line

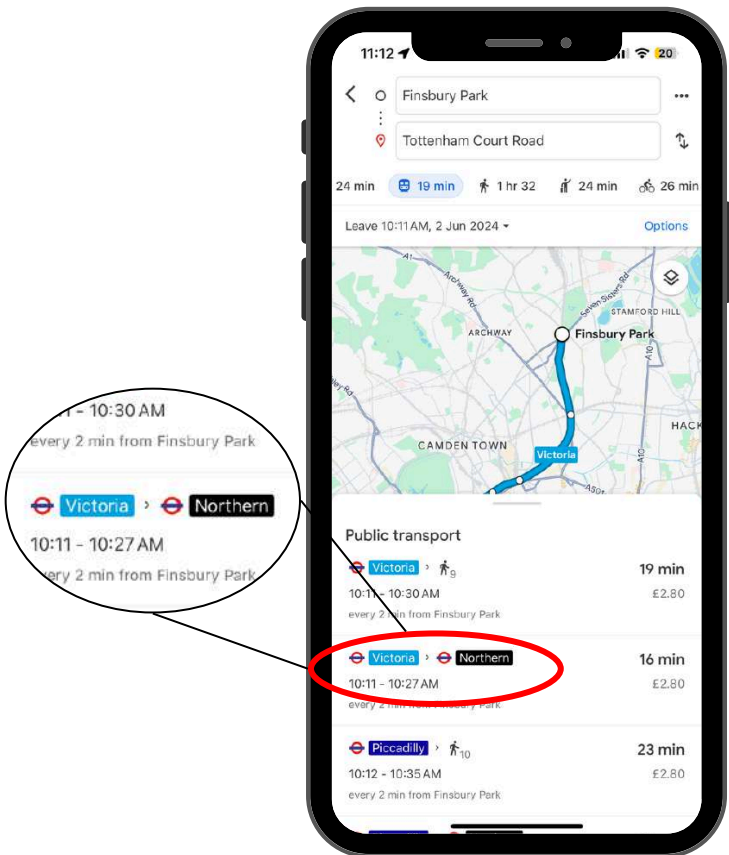


Google Maps

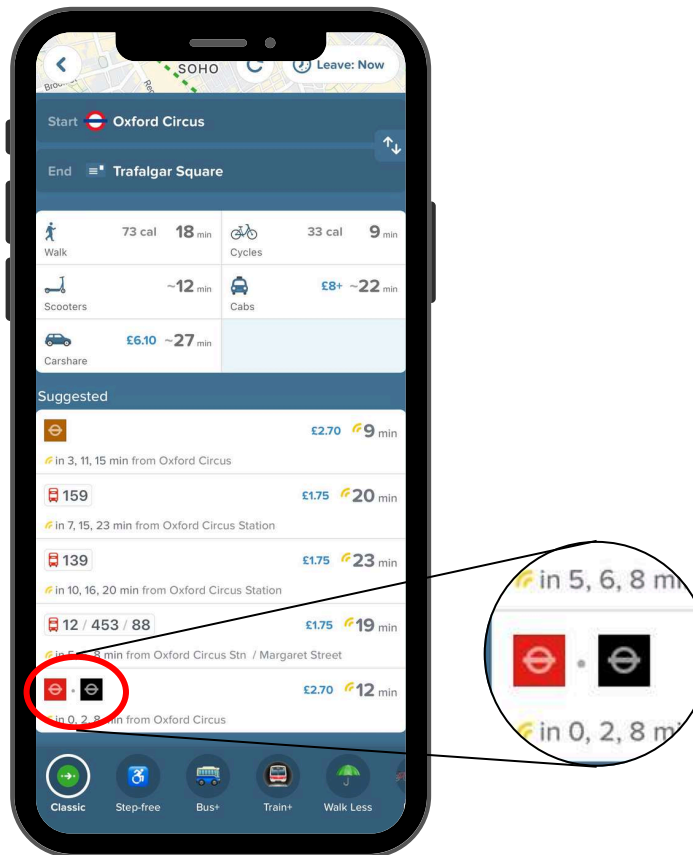


Citymapper

Changing Tube lines



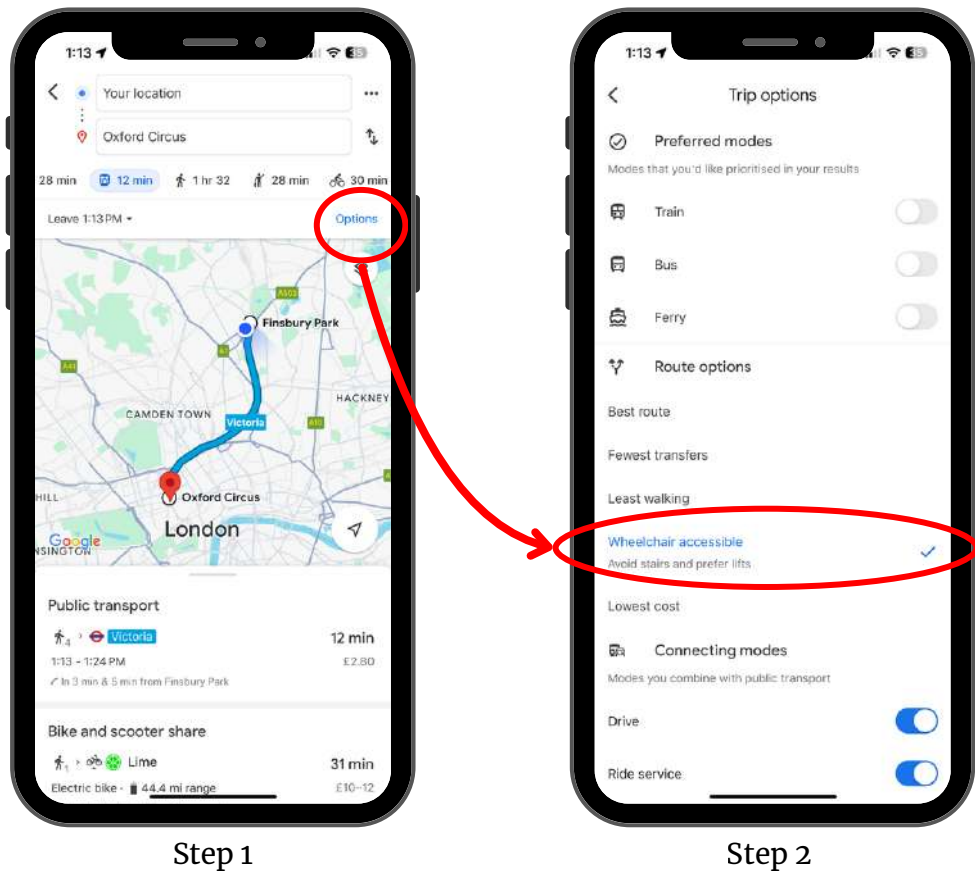
Google Maps



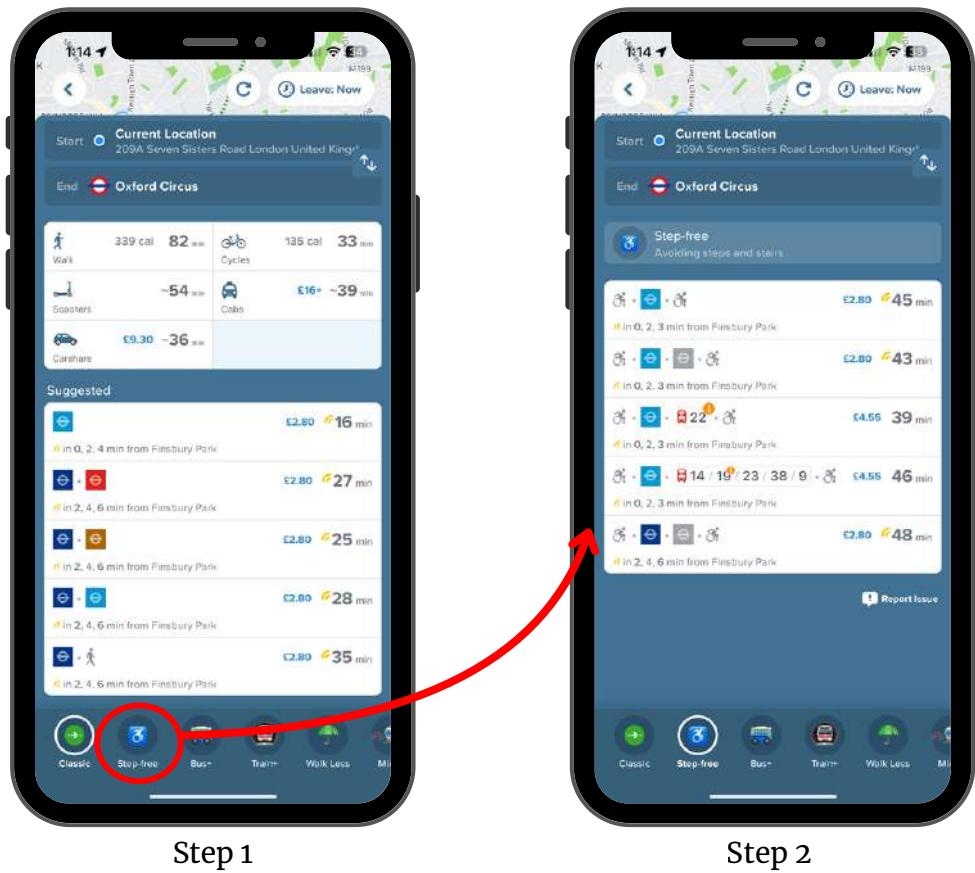
Citymapper

How to get step-free routes

Google Maps

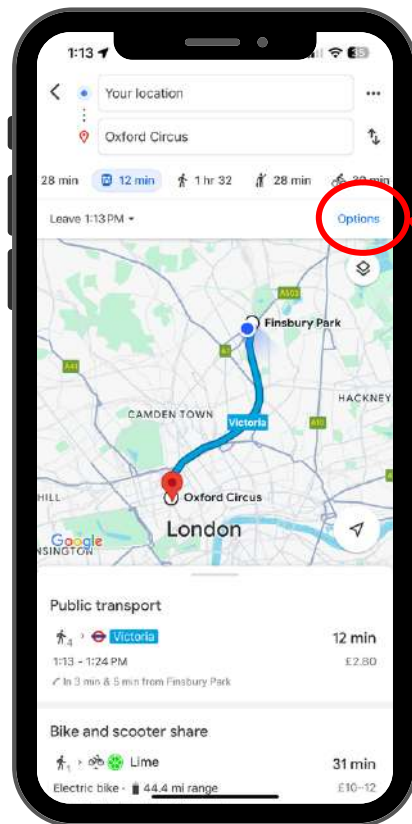


Citymapper

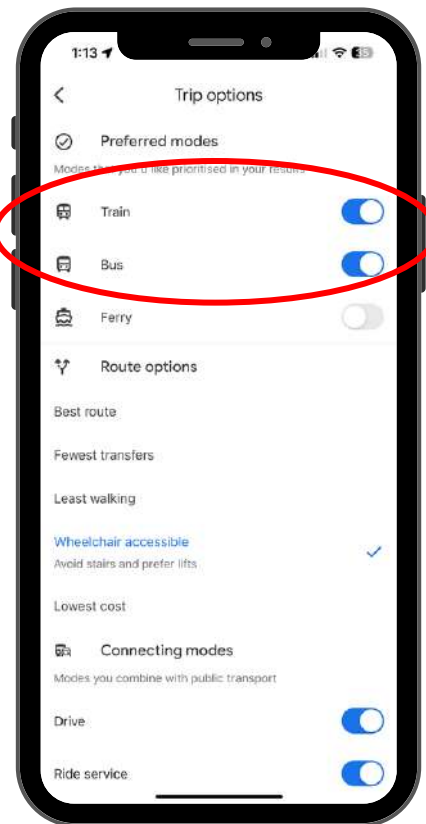


How to get bus/tube only routes

Google Maps

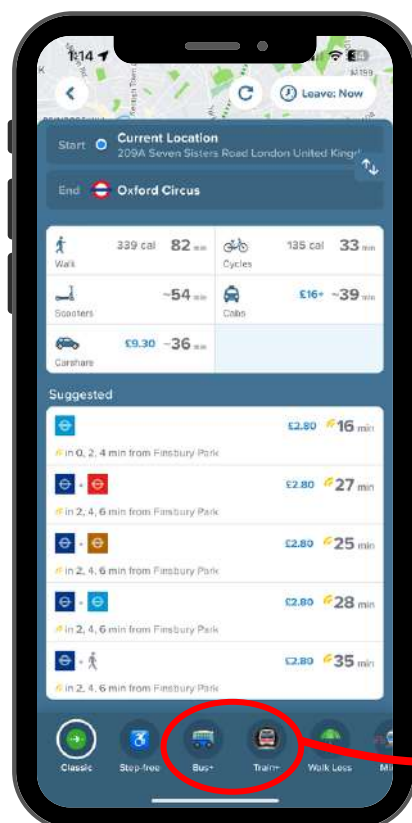


Step 1

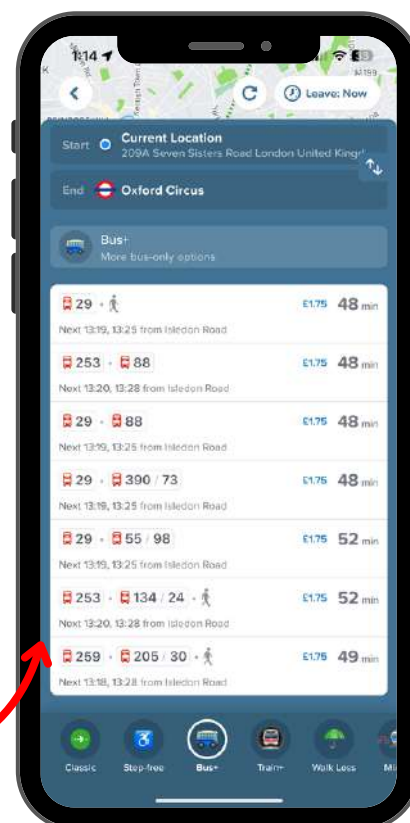


Step 2

Citymapper



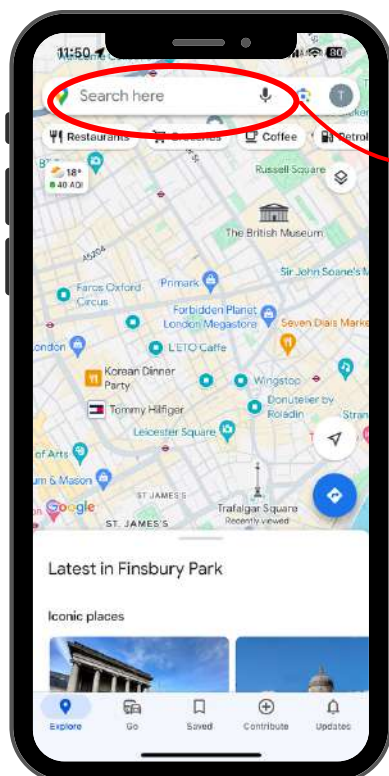
Step 1



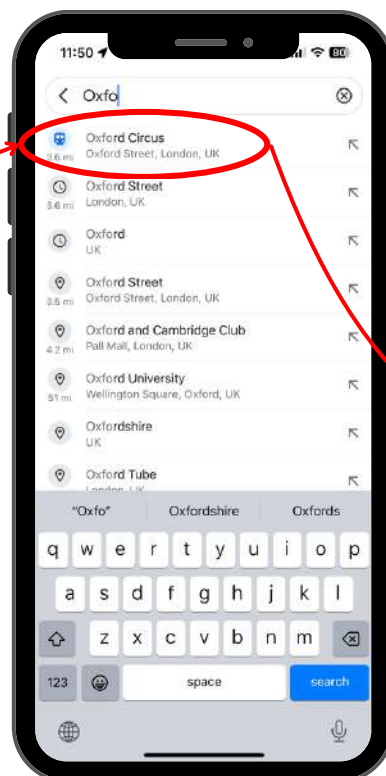
Step 2

How to get route suggestions in Google Maps

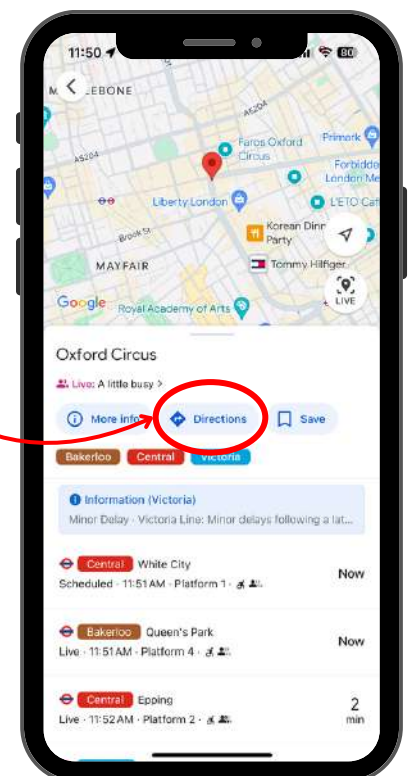
1. Open the app.
2. Click the “search here” bar at the top.
3. Type in the destination name (no need for an address, maps can usually find it, but if you’re not in London yet, you might need to add “London” to the end of the name).
4. When the place listing pops up, click the blue “directions” button.
5. The starting point will be “your location” but click on that and change it to your preferred starting location, like “Heathrow Airport”.
6. Where it says “Leave [TIME]” and a down arrow, click that to adjust for what time you’d like to leave or arrive. You can change the day too. This is optional, if you want directions right now, just leave this part.
7. You can then see towards the bottom your route options. A bar at the top lets you switch between car, walking, cycling and public transport directions.
8. Click on each suggested route to see its details, like which Tube line you’ll take or which bus stop to get on at.
9. If you’re getting walking directions and want to have live navigation as you walk, click the “Start” button.



Step 1 & 2

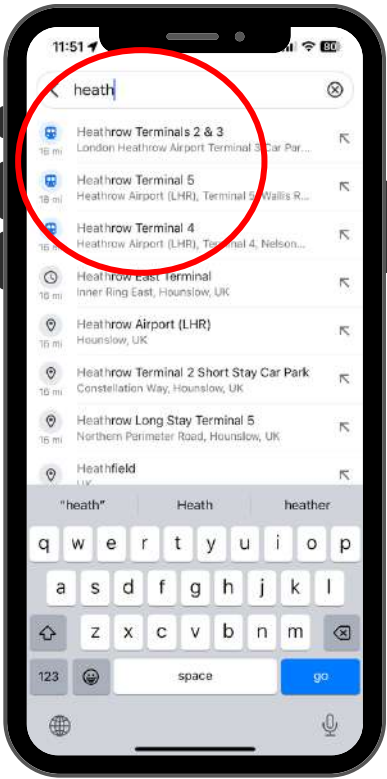


Step 3

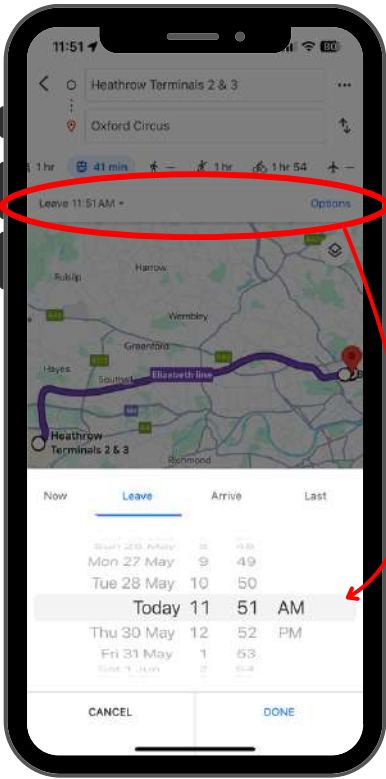


Step 4

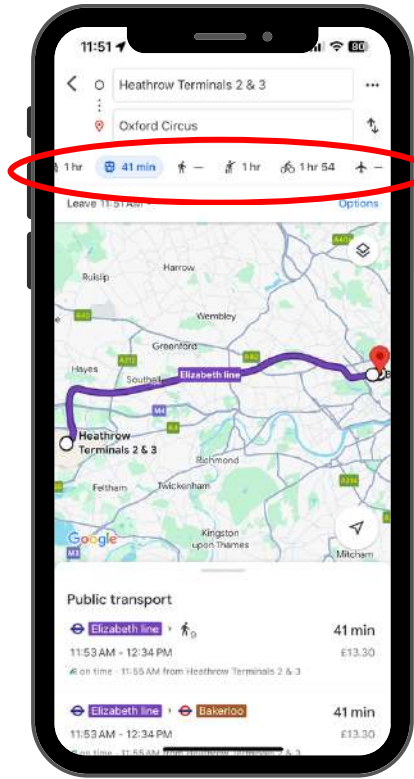
LONDON TRANSPORT GUIDE



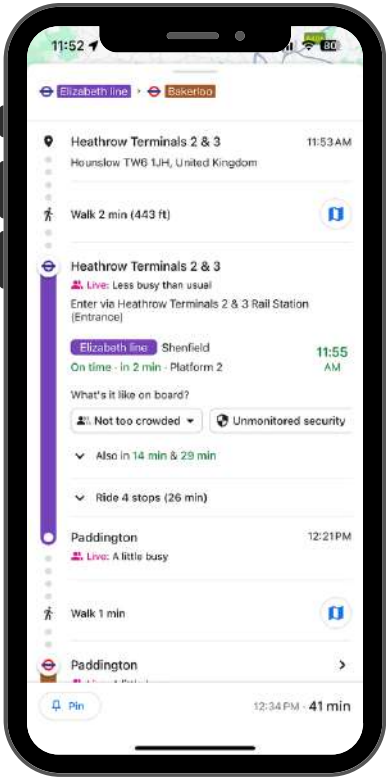
Step 5



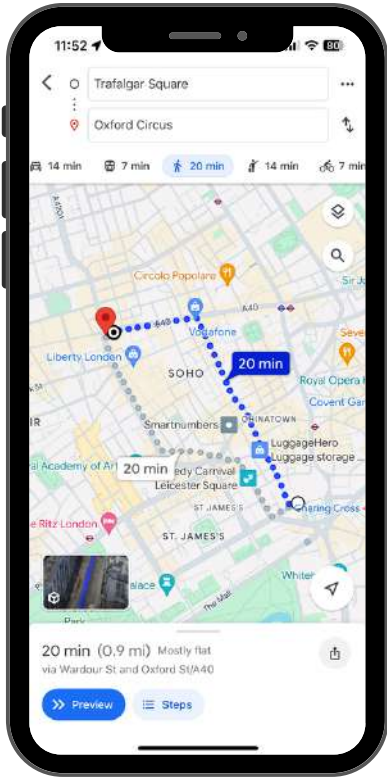
Step 6



Step 7



Step 8

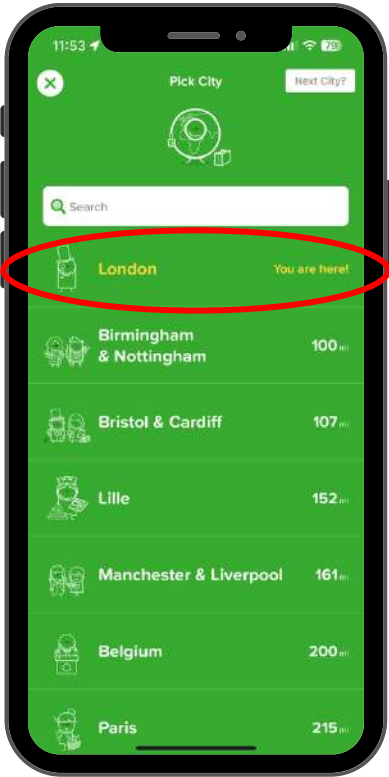


Step 9

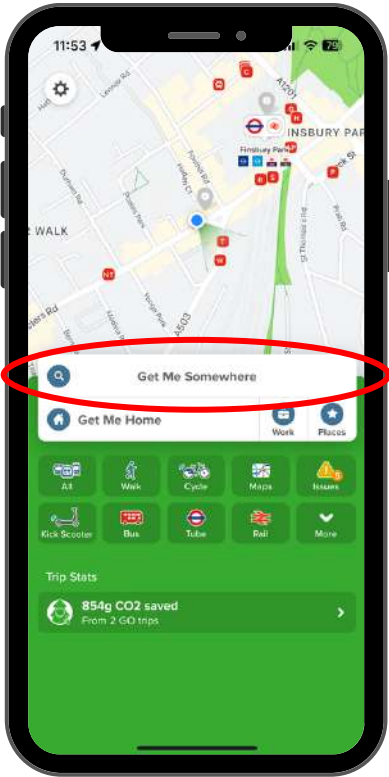
How to get route suggestions in Citymapper

1. Open the app.
2. If you haven't used Citymapper before, you'll have to pick the city you wish to use the map. In this case, pick London.
3. Once your map has loaded, click the "get me somewhere" bar in the middle of the screen
4. Type in the destination name (no need for an address, Citymapper can usually find it)
5. The starting point will be "your location" but click on that and change it to your preferred starting location, like "Heathrow Airport". Click the green arrow to see your route options.
6. In the top right corner, you will see "Leave: Now", click that to adjust for what time you'd like to leave or arrive. You can change the day too. This is optional, if you want directions right now, just leave this as is.
7. Once you have adjusted these, the app will automatically display a new table of different routes you can take. This usually includes walking, cycling, cab and car share routes with estimated times. Underneath you will see the app's "suggested routes" for public transport as well.
8. Click on each suggested route to see its details, like which Tube line you'll take or which bus stop to get on at.
9. Once you pick your preferred route, you can get Citymapper to provide live navigation for your journey by clicking the green "go" button, however this is optional.

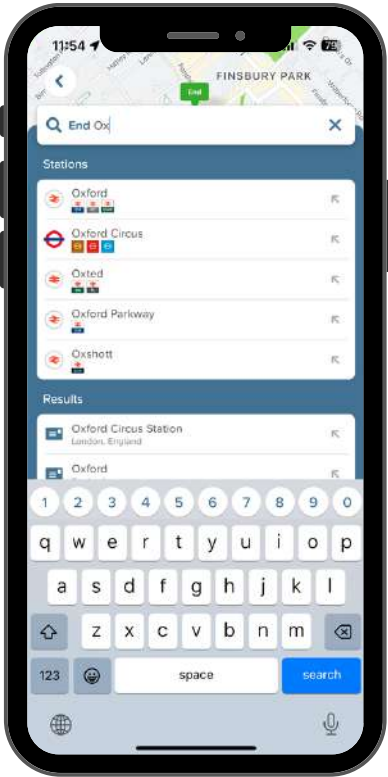
Easy! Now you know how to work out your own routes around the city, even if you're not actually in London yet.



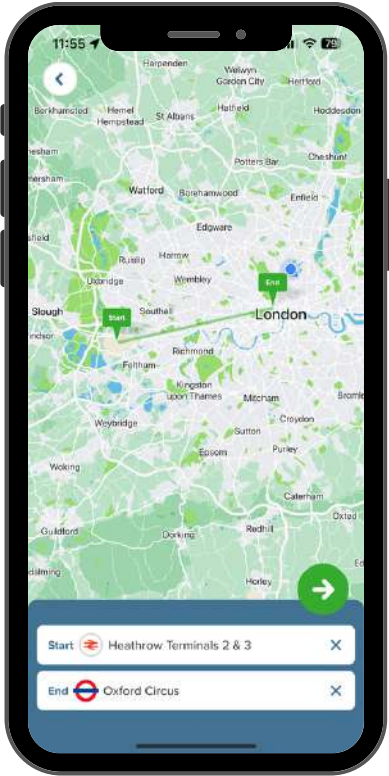
Step 1 & 2



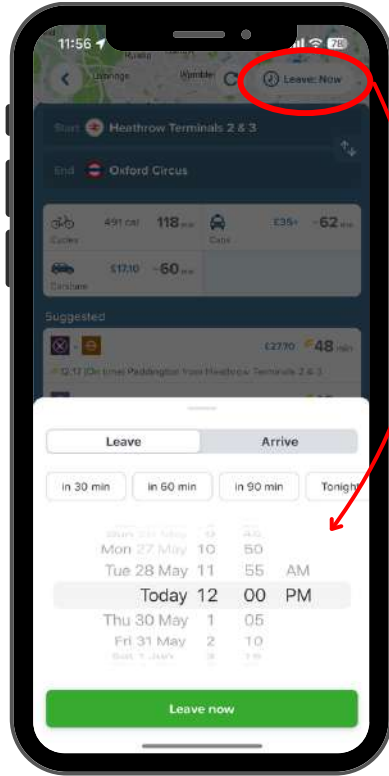
Step 3



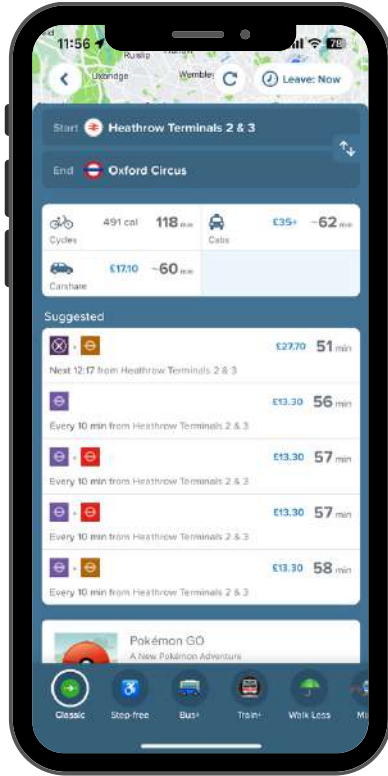
Step 4



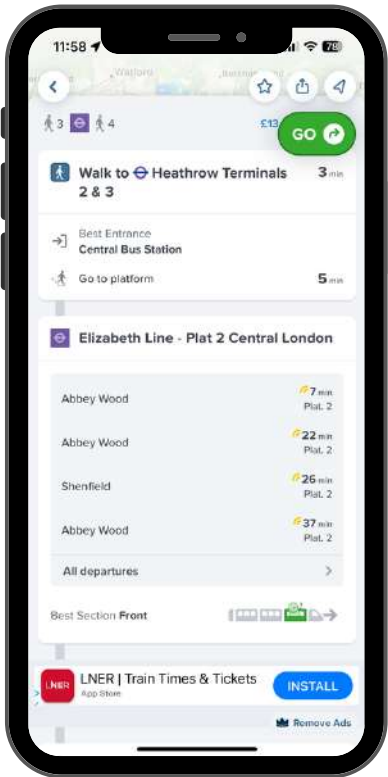
Step 5



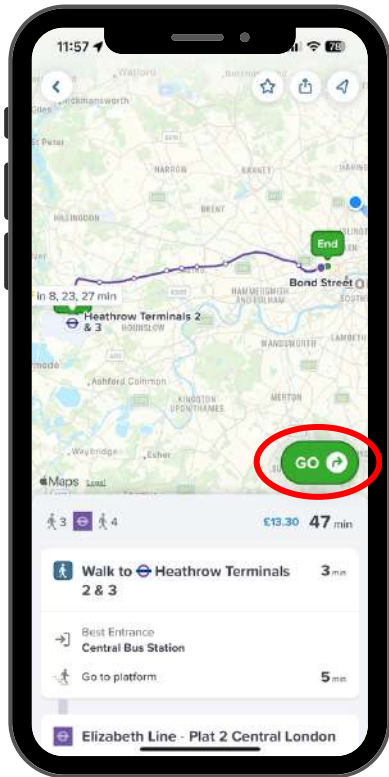
Step 6



Step 7



Step 8



Step 9

CHAPTER 5:

TAKING CHILDREN ON PUBLIC TRANSPORT



Up until this point, we've been talking about tickets for *adults*. If you're bringing the kids to London, we'll walk you through how to navigate that (very bad pun intended).

What you have to pay for kids, depending on their age



Kids under 11 go free

They don't need a special card and two kids aged under 11 are allowed per adult (but no one is really checking anyways). Take these kids with you through the wide gates, shown here and which you'll find at every single Tube station. Tap your own card, and the gates open slowly and widely, giving you a chance to get through with little ones, luggage, stroller/pram, etc.



Kids 11-15 can get half-price fares

At this age, you can get them the Young Visitor Discount, which gives them 50% off adult fares. To get this, you need to buy them an Oyster (£10.50) and then ask any Tube station staff member to add a Young Visitor Discount onto their card. You won't need any identification for your child, but you'll need them present with you when you ask.

16+ is a full fare adult

Sorry, no discounts, they're a full adult now ;)

What if my kid aged 11+ doesn't have a form of payment?

There are a few options. You could of course buy them their own Oyster card with credit on it. Alternatively, you could give them one of your contactless cards to use, or you could use the same card, but give them the physical version to use and you use the mobile pay version. Because the different “devices” are counted as different “cards” it’s ok to have multiple people use one payment card.

Can I take a stroller on the Tube?

They’re called “prams” and “buggies” here, and yes in theory you can take them on the Tube, but our very old underground system is not particularly friendly to them. You will encounter a lot of steps and escalators. So we usually recommend that you plan to do a lot of walking with the pram, to try to avoid taking the Tube. Buses are a bit better for prams, as there’s a designated area for them to be parked, but if a wheelchair user gets on the bus, you’ll need to move. Black taxis are fairly pram-friendly because they have seats that fold up to make space for wheelchairs.

Finally, if you need to take the Tube, use one of the apps we mentioned above and be sure to choose the “step-free routes” filter. That way you’ll only be shown routes with stations that have lifts (aka, elevators).



CHAPTER 6:

ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORT



So travelling to London, or any new city as a Disabled person can be very nerve wracking, but don't worry, we have put together this section of the guide to help and guide you through so your London experience can be as accessible and smooth sailing as possible. We have worked directly with **Eliza Rain**, a Disabled content creator & disability consultant from London, who's lived here their whole life and has written this section of the guide.

If you would prefer to access this information in video format please see the link [here](#).



Important things to know about accessible travel in London

Before we dive into detailed information on the different ways of navigating London as a Disabled person, here are some valuable tips and factors to consider based on your accessible travel needs:

- **The bus is the most accessible way to travel for Disabled visitors** (for wheelchair users, **vision impaired**, etc). What's more, they are free for wheelchair users and mobility scooter users. See our full guide on taking the bus below.
- **Ask for help!** Transport for London (TFL) staff members are trained in helping Disabled travellers and will be happy to assist you.
- **A secret tip that *not* many people know:** TFL will pay for a taxi for you if your route isn't accessible and there are no alternative routes due to lifts breaking. If this happens, speak to a staff member and they should arrange a taxi for you.
- **You can book Passenger Assistance on transport:** We go into this in further detail below, however, knowing that you can get some assistance on the Tube and trains will give you more confidence in choosing to use these modes of transport.
- **Disabled passengers get a discounted ticket on Uber boats** if you book your ticket online.
- **Small fun tip for travelling by train around the UK:** if you're a wheelchair user travelling by train outside of London, you'll often get put in first class (win) and might even be given free snacks aboard.



Our top tips for Disabled travellers

We also have some helpful tips geared towards visitors with the following different disabilities:

Top tips for wheelchair users

If you do take the Tube, the Elizabeth line is the BEST for wheelchair users (or for anyone) all its stations are step-free (although for some you need to arrange a ramp via a staff member when you arrive at the station), it has A/C and its trains are MUCH bigger than other lines.

Don't assume all stations are step-free and always check the lifts are in working order before travelling (see our tips on how to do this below).

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Strike up a conversation in lifts. Londoners LOVE lift conversation, particularly kids, so don't be afraid to chat about your London trip with people in the lifts. They might even offer you some travel tips.



Top tips for vision-impaired visitors

Seeing eye dogs are welcome on London transport and all public areas nationwide. In the UK it's fairly well known that you shouldn't touch service animals, which are rarer here, so Brits tend to be pretty respectful around them.

We recommend using lifts with service dogs as escalators can be a little dangerous for their paws. In general, TFL strongly recommends all dogs use lifts rather than escalators. If you need assistance, staff members will guide you to the lift and all our lift signage has instructions in Braille.

All bus stop buttons also have Braille on them. Once you've pressed the button, the bus will stop at the next stop and the driver will wait for you to exit.

All passenger crossings (crosswalks) have tactile markings to indicate that you are approaching a crossing.

There are buttons at passenger crossings that beep to indicate safe crossing either in the form of a cone underneath the wait box indicator or a 'beg button' which spins when it's safe to cross.



Top tips for hearing-impaired visitors

Although accessibility isn't that great for d/Deaf and hard of hearing travellers, there are lots of things you can do to get support and have an enjoyable experience in London:

Don't forget, when you're getting the bus, make sure you sit towards the back of the bus, so you can see the live bus updates.

The Elizabeth line is the best line for deaf travellers as it has clearer information boards. It's also just the best line for any traveller.

If you need urgent assistance while travelling on London's public transport you can text the British Transport Police, rather than calling them, at this number: 61016.

Top tips for travellers with sensory issues

The Tube's Elizabeth line is generally the best mode of transport for someone with sensory issues. They have designed this tube line to have the lowest amount of sound when the tube is entering a station as well as within the carriages. Its carriages are wide, air-conditioned and have clear wayfinding when entering the train and once on the train.

In addition, the overall experience on the Elizabeth line is usually less overwhelming and overstimulating than other forms of transport in London, often making it more accessible for autistic travellers.



Disability indicators/aids to get for your trip

The Sunflower Lanyard, also called the 'Hidden Disabilities lanyard,' is a free (and stylish) lanyard that indicates that someone has an invisible disability. It's green with yellow sunflowers on it.

It shows that its wearer may need additional time and space while making others travelling more aware of your needs. The lanyard is most widely understood by staff in airports, however, TFL and other network rail staff have had training on the matter and will be more accommodating towards wearers.

The lanyard has also just launched in Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, Ireland, Latin America, the Netherlands, New Zealand, the UK, the UAE and the USA.

If you aren't able to acquire one before your trip, you can pick one up from assistance desks at Heathrow Airport or at most large UK shops.



Accessible quick links

Here are some useful links and tools we recommend saving and using during your trip to London. These will make getting around MUCH easier for you as well as help you decide which type of transport makes sense depending on where you're travelling to and from. Click the red underlined link.

Accessible tube maps

Step-free access tube map

If you're a wheelchair user or would benefit from using the lift while on public transport, this map, available on TFL's website, lists all Tube stations that are step-free and wheelchair accessible.

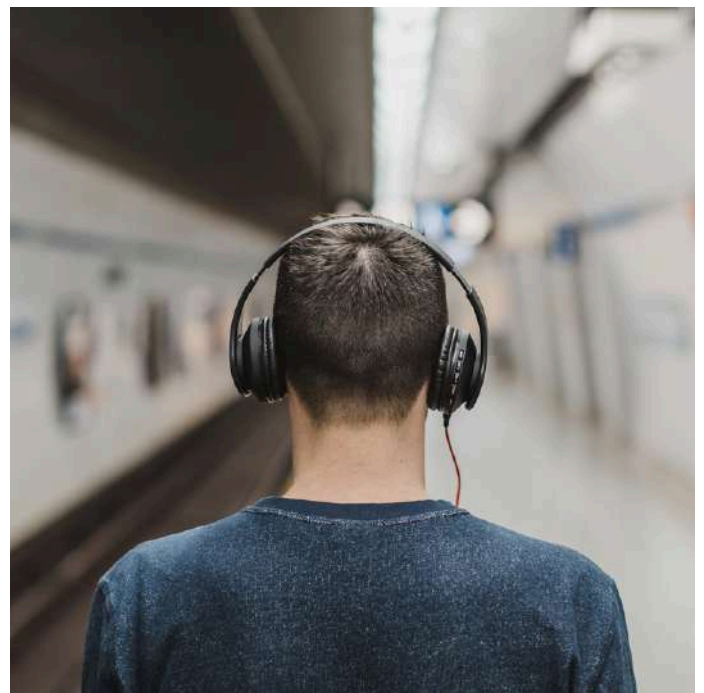
As much as this map is useful, unfortunately, TFL's lift systems are not always reliable. However, we suggest you check the [@TFLAccess](#) on X (previously Twitter) feed or the [TFL Go App](#) before travelling to see if any lifts are out of service. It's a bit of a running (or wheeling) joke about how terrible our lift systems are here in the UK.

Audio tube map

If you are a vision-impaired visitor, you can download this helpful audio map from TFL's website. It will read out the different tube stations along with the accessibility at each station.

Tube map for colour-blind visitors

TFL uses colour to differentiate Tubelines, however, each line also has a name, such as the 'Elizabeth Line' or 'Victoria Line'. TFL offers a larger print Tube map as well as a black-and-white version. However, as colour blindness can vary from person to person, black and white may not be accessible for everyone. The good news is, the [TFL app](#) offers versions adapted to the different variations of colourblindness.



Tube Toilet Map

This map offers information on the different types of toilets available in the TFL systems including if it's accessible. However, just like with lifts, toilets can be out of order, but [@TFLAccess](#) gives regular toilet updates.

Blue badge maps

Although we generally don't recommend hiring a car to travel around London, for some Disabled people, this may be the most or only accessible option. In the UK, many foreign Disabled parking badges are accepted as part of the ECMT agreement (basically a fancy parking law that many different countries have signed, including the EU, US, Canada, and Australia).

The Blue Badge Map allows visitors to find Disabled parking and know the restrictions of that parking space before arrival. The map can be SO helpful and, depending on your destination, might assist you in finding some 'sneaky' and free parking spots right in the middle of town that others don't know about.

Using each London transport option as a Disabled Traveller

The Bus

As we mentioned above, the bus is the best transport option for Disabled travellers. **All buses in London are wheelchair accessible.** However, they only allow travel for **one** wheelchair user at a time, so if you are with more than one wheelchair user, you will need to travel on different buses.

How to get on the bus:

If you're a wheelchair user, hail the bus and the driver will then deploy the ramp for you, which is usually via the doors in the middle of the bus.

If you're Blind and have a visual indicator that this is the case, the bus driver will not expect you to hail the bus. Instead, the driver will stop in front of you, and inform you of the bus number and the location it's travelling to so you know if it's the correct bus for your journey.



Buses are free for wheelchair users and mobility scooter users — yay!

Once you are on the bus, park in the wheelchair section with your back facing the back of the bus, put your brakes on and enjoy the ride. Buggies and passengers with luggage are expected to move/fold down their buggies to make space for wheelchair users.

When approaching your stop, ring the wheelchair bell located in the wheelchair section and the driver will deploy the ramp for you.



Blind and vision-impaired travellers should sit towards the back of the bus as each stop is announced via the speakers to ensure you know when to exit the bus. The next stop is also written above the wheelchair section for any deaf travellers and will show a ‘bus stopping’ light each time a passenger presses the button.

The Tube and Train

Travelling by Tube or train is more challenging for Disabled travellers, however, there are various facilities in place to make your journey easier.

Passenger Assistance

You can book your travel assistance in advance with Passenger Assistance – but you don’t have to (see ‘Turn Up and Go’ service).

There are lots of different services available from passenger assistance, however, each station has its own access facilities so it’s important to check that accessible features are available before travelling.

Booking Passenger Assistance assistance on transport as a Disabled visitor

If you're travelling around London via tube or train and need assistance to get on and off the train, you can book accessibility help via the passenger assistance app, website or by contacting a specific line directly. You can do this up to 2 hours before you travel.

Each line has different contact information, so make sure you research the best way to reach them. We've included the main form of contact for the most useful lines below:

- **TFL London Overground:** 0343 222 1234 [or via the online form](#)
- **Southeastern:** 0800 783 4524 text relay: 18001 783 4524
- **Southern:** 0800 138 1016 text relay: 07970 511077.
- **Gatwick Express:** 0800 138 1016 [or via this online form](#)
- **Virgin trains:** 0800 015 8123 or text relay: 08000 158 124
- **London midland:** 0800 092 4260 or text relay: 0344 811 0134
- **Thameslink:** 0800 058 2844 or text relay: 0800 138 1018

Once you've booked your assistance, the team should be waiting for you upon arrival and will have your access needs prepared.

Don't worry too much though, we know London tourist life can be busy and unpredictable so booking 2 hours in advance might not always be possible. However, you also have the right to 'Turn up and go,' explained in the next section.

'Turn Up And Go' service

All Disabled passengers have the right to show up at an accessible train station and travel without booking assistance prior to their arrival. **Yes, that's right, you do not need to book in advance.**

When you get to your station, flag down a member of staff to help you. Inform them of your access requirements and they will assist you. They will phone ahead to the station you're travelling to to ensure someone is there to assist you when you arrive.

How to get on UK trains

In addition to Passenger Assistance, here are further details on assistance in stations and for boarding trains.

➤ Wheelchair ramps

If you need to use a ramp to get onto the train, this will be put down for you by a staff member. You will then board the train. The staff member will then arrange for you to be taken off by another staff member at your destination who will put the ramp down for you.

➤ **Wheelchairs provided at stations**

If you're not able to walk long distances, some stations have wheelchairs that you can borrow in order to be taken to your platform and onto the train. That said, not all stations offer this assistance, so make sure to check the station's website before you arrive. Wheelchairs are generally available at bigger stations.

➤ **Lifts in a buggy from platform to taxi drop off**

Many of the bigger stations in London have buggies that meet you when you get off the train and take you either to the next platform for an onward train journey or to the exit/taxi rank. These are designed for passengers who may have trouble walking from the train to their next location.

➤ **Assistance or guidance from platform to street**

If you need help with directions or need to be guided from the train to your next location, a member of staff will meet you at the train and will support you as you exit the station.

This service varies from station to station. You do not need to book it in advance. It's a TFL (and other transport available in London) rule that they do not need to be informed of you travelling before your arrival.



How to take the Tube as a wheelchair user

Only 1/3 of London tube stations are fully step-free. You can check if your station is step-free via the [step-free access Tube map](#).

➤ **When to travel on the Tube as a wheelchair user**

We suggest, when possible, to avoid travelling during rush hour (7:30am - 9am & 4pm - 6:30pm), just because it can be very busy and difficult to get to the wheelchair sections!

➤ How to reach the platform via lifts

When arriving/exiting the tube make sure to look out for the lift signs to exit as these are often in a different location to the standard exit.

Lifts can be located very very far apart and you often need to take several lifts to get out of the station. Escalators are often quicker and more direct than lifts, so if you have reduced mobility and can take an escalator, it may actually be the option that requires the least amount of walking.

If you are a wheelchair user or simply need more space when exiting the gates, make sure to go through the accessible gate which is pictured below.



➤ How to board the Tube as a wheelchair user

Once you reach the platform, ensure you board the train at the step-free point.



➤ Where to sit/put your chair on the tube

Board the train and make your way to the wheelchair section within the carriage which is clearly labelled within the train. Make sure to apply your brakes!

If you have reduced mobility, all tubes also offer priority seating throughout the train for those who need to sit down.



Travelling via tube as a blind or visually impaired person

➤ How to board & exit the Tube as a blind or visually impaired person

Once you have arrived at the station you can speak to a member of staff who will ask you what station you want to travel to. They will then take you to the platform and help you to board the train. They will call ahead to the station you are travelling to and another staff member will meet you to help you exit the station.

All London (and UK) public transport accepts service animals. You can exit through the larger ticket gate with your service animal or if you need more space.

➤ How to navigate Tube stations as a blind or visually impaired person

Frustratingly, London tube and train stations can be very busy and difficult to navigate when you are blind or visually impaired, but we do have a few accessibility features in place.

➤ Navigating signage & wayfinding as a Blind or visually impaired person

Many of our wayfinding and lift buttons have Braille on them to assist Blind & VI travellers in navigating and accessing the wayfinding. We also have 'help points' in all TFL stations which are round raised units. You can press either button and will be directed to speak to a member of staff who will either come and help you or will provide instructions on how to get to the area you need to reach.



➤ Train announcements to assist Blind or visually-impaired travellers

Many tube stations will have a tannoy which reads out each train arriving into the station and the location that the train is travelling to. When on the Tube, the driver announces the next station through the intercom system.

Travelling via tube and train as a d/Deaf or hard of hearing person

Unfortunately, there are limited accessibility features in place for d/Deaf or hard of hearing passengers on London transport. Announcements are written on departure boards along with signs on the trains with live information, but the main challenge comes when there's an issue with the trains, such as a signal failure. These announcements are normally read out over the tannoy and aren't always scribed onto the announcement boards. If you think there could be issues with your tube line, you can ask a member of staff for help or get live updates from TFL's website, but there's a real lack of accessibility for d/Deaf passengers.

As we've described in our sections on the different modes of transport in London, we have the Tube, which is the more 'traditional' way to travel in London, but we also have LOADS of trains that run from London's outskirts into London's city centre. Travelling via train for d/Deaf or hard of hearing passengers is very similar to travelling via tube.

➤ How to board the train as a d/Deaf or hard of hearing person

Many London train stations are wheelchair accessible, however, you will need to check each station accessibility features before travelling. These will be listed online, or you can use either the Turn Up and Go service or passenger assistance.

➤ Where to sit on the tube as a d/Deaf or hard of hearing person

Each train offers a wheelchair section and priority seating within the train. If you are in a wheelchair make sure you put your breaks on!

➤ How to exit the tube as a d/Deaf or hard of hearing person

Once you have arrived at your destination station, the staff will either put the ramp down for you, or guide you out of the station. You will then exit the station through the larger gate available.

Similarly to the tube, the London trains offer little support for d/Deaf and hard of hearing passengers, they do have live updates written on the announcement boards, however once again if there are any changes to the schedule etc, this is often spoken out loud rather than updated in writing. You can ask staff members for advice, or use the app [Trainline](#) which offers live updates on trains.



Travelling via other forms of transport in London as a Disabled person

As you may have read in other sections of our London transport guide, in addition to the bus, tube and train, there are a few other modes of transport in London. Here are the forms which are more adapted to Disabled travellers:

Travelling via tram

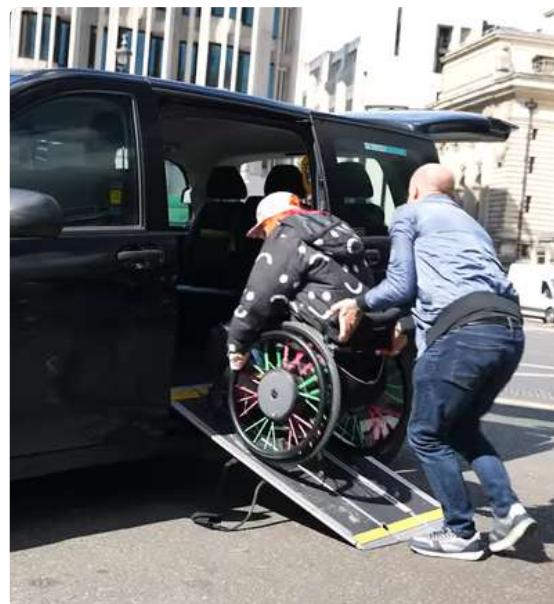
All trams are step-free and offer free travel for wheelchair users (yay!). The tram offers level boarding at all stops and an area within the carriage for wheelchair users and those who need priority seating.

Each platform has live departures on an updating board for d/Deaf passengers and there's a staff member on board who can help Blind and visually impaired passengers.

Travelling via taxi

All Black Taxis are wheelchair accessible and thus can be used by most wheelchair users. Each car will have a ramp within it that the driver will deploy for you to get into the taxi. Once inside, there's a section within the car for wheelchair users to put their chairs into and be strapped in.

Taxis will also accept service animals and many drivers are very understanding of disabilities and will take those who need more guidance into the location that they are travelling to. For example, they will take you from the taxi into the hotel reception to ensure you arrive at your location safely. (This is why we LOVE black taxis!)



Travelling via Uber Boat

Travelling via boat can be a great option for many Disabled people. The boats are the perfect place to see the city without any busy crowds. What's more, they offer a reduced fair for Disabled passengers.

➤ How to use Uber Boat for wheelchair users

You can find the accessibility information for each pier on the [Uber Boat website](#). However, some piers are labelled inaccessible for wheelchair users due to their steepness, which might be something some manual chairs can manage. If in doubt, you can check with the boat captain upon arrival.

As you board, you can pay for the boat with your oyster card or debit/credit card. Wheelchair users can sit inside or outside of the boat. Each boat has a toilet and cafe on board.

Don't worry if you're susceptible to seasickness, the weather isn't too windy here so the ride is generally smooth.

➤ Travelling via Uber boat for Blind, Deaf or hard of hearing visitors

When you arrive at the pier you can approach a member of staff who can help to guide you down onto the boat and make sure that you find a seat on the boat. You can inform the staff members what pier you'd like to get off at and they'll make sure to come assist you or inform you when your pier is coming up.

All Uber boats have a screen that reads out what pier you are approaching and where you need to exit as at each pier the exit changes from the front or back of the boat depending on the type of pier they are docking at. Once you are off the boat a member of staff can get to guide you off the pier.

All Disabled passengers get a cheaper ticket when travelling via Uber boat if you book your ticket online.

Travelling via cable car

Each car is step-free and offers level boarding for passengers travelling. The staff will fold up one or two of the seats within the car for you to have space. If you are blind or hearing impaired you can flag this to the staff when you arrive and they'll escort you onto the car.

Liberty Rides for the Royal Parks

Okay so technically this isn't 'public transport', but we think it's a pretty great service to mention. In London we have lots of very beautiful royal parks, the downside? They are BIG. This can make it difficult for those with mobility issues to enjoy or visit the park. However, Liberty Rides offer a free service for those with limited mobility to be driven around the park. Services run every weekday 10am-4pm and tend to last around 45 minutes. It's a great way for Disabled people to enjoy and experience the park.

Lime bikes

In London, we have rental bikes called 'Lime Bikes'. You'll find these around the city. You pay for your rental via the Lime app and leave the bike in a different place. The great thing about these bikes is that they are electric, making them less energy-intensive than regular bikes which may be useful for some Disabled visitors, particularly for those who find cycling less intensive than walking.



Best accessibility apps to download before your trip

There are loads of great apps out there to help with your trip that will give a range of accessibility information on travel around London along with simply making it easier to navigate the city.

Passenger assistance app

You can use this [Apple](#) and [Android](#) app to book your needed assistance directly on the app without needing to directly contact the train line you are travelling with.



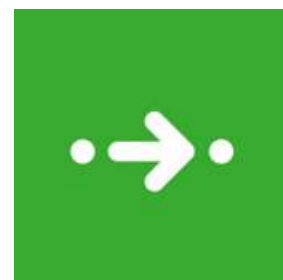
London & UK Live Bus Countdown

This app offered on [Apple](#) and [Android](#) provides live countdown information on when buses will arrive. This can help you to know the wait time and when to arrive at the bus stop.



Citymapper

This app on [Apple](#) and [Android](#) offers updated travel information and will give you step-free routes for those who need it.



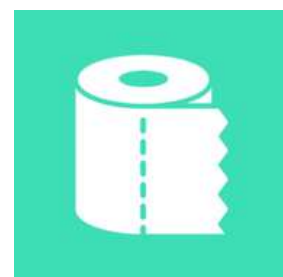
Gett

This [Apple](#) and [Android](#) app allows you to book wheelchair-accessible taxis directly from the app. Remember all black taxis are wheelchair accessible for the majority of wheelchair users so if you would prefer you can hail one down in person.



Flush toilet finder & map

This [Apple](#) and [Android](#) app offers information on toilets in stations as well as near to stations for those who need regular toilet access.



All these apps are free on Apple and Android app providers.

CHAPTER 7:

HOW TO GET FROM THE AIRPORT TO YOUR LONDON HOTEL (AND BACK)



This **mightttttt** be the most common question we get about public transport, and it's honestly one of the hardest to answer because not only are there *multiple* airports in London, but for each one we've got 3-5 options. The BEST one for you will depend on your budget and needs, so we're giving you all of the info in this chapter to help you choose.

Before you scroll to your airport, let's do a quick rundown of the transport types that you'll find at almost all of the airports, and the pros and cons of each. More details about each of them can be found later on.

Pros of getting the coach/bus

- ✓ Often is the cheapest option
- ✓ Train delays or strikes — you won't be affected

Cons of getting the coach/bus

- ✗ Could get stuck in traffic, especially during rush hour
- ✗ Tends to be the longest way to travel into the city
- ✗ Only goes to specific points in the city

Pros of getting the Tube/Train

- ✓ One of the cheapest options
- ✓ Can be quick depending on your hotel location
- ✓ Links to other parts of the city

Cons of getting the Tube/Train

- ✗ Tricky with suitcases, especially at rush hour
- ✗ Some stations are not step-free
- ✗ Could be affected by Tube strikes or delays
- ✗ Busy at peak times (6:30am - 9:30am and 4pm - 7pm)

Pros of getting a taxi

- ✓ Most comfortable and stress-free
- ✓ Some pre-booked taxis will meet you inside the terminal and help with your bags
- ✓ More flexibility if you want to stop off along the way

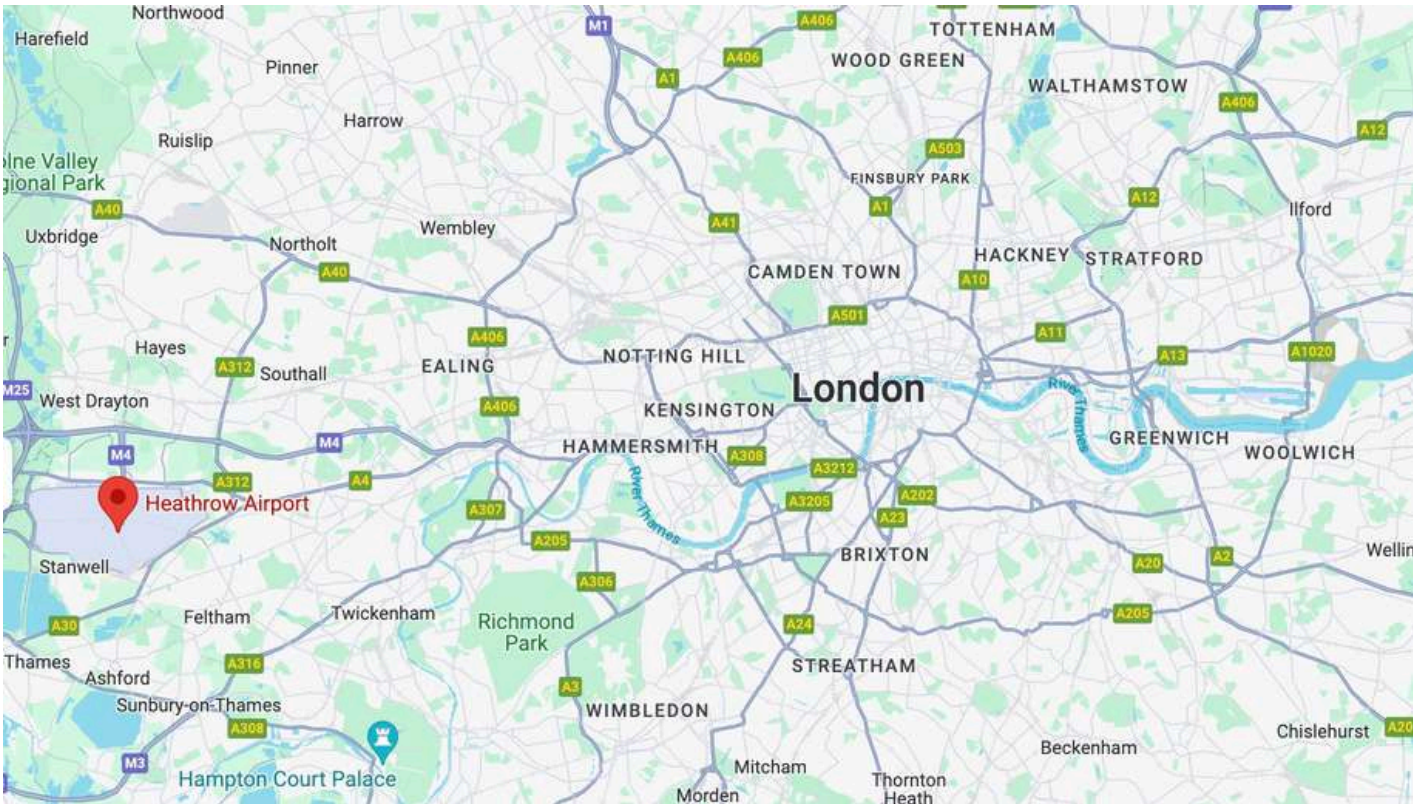
Cons of getting a taxi

- ✗ Most expensive option
- ✗ Can take a long time depending on traffic

Ok, let's get into it... go find your airport 🗺️🗺️

Heathrow Airport

Heathrow Airport is not only the biggest airport in London, it's actually the busiest in Europe, and it's where most people visiting London from outside of Europe will arrive. There are multiple options for getting into the city from each terminal, so there are choices for every budget.



Coach/Bus

Coaches (large buses run by private companies) run regularly from Heathrow to Earl's Court, Hammersmith and Victoria. There are two main companies people tend to go for when travelling from the airport to the city by coach: [National Express](#) and [Megabus](#). These two run frequently to and from Heathrow, with coaches running almost 24 hours a day. To minimise wait times and to secure a spot, especially if you're taking a coach because there's a transport strike, we recommend booking your tickets in advance online.



Where to get on a coach at Heathrow

➤ From Terminal 2 or 3

If you're catching the coach from Terminals 2 or 3, you can hop on one at Heathrow Central Bus Station, located between the terminals above the London Underground station. Just follow the signs as you exit baggage claim.



➤ From Terminal 4

If you're at Terminal 4, you'll find coaches outside the arrivals level of the terminal building, at bus stops 12 to 17, and a short walk from the London Underground and Elizabeth line stations. It's well signed.

➤ From Terminal 5

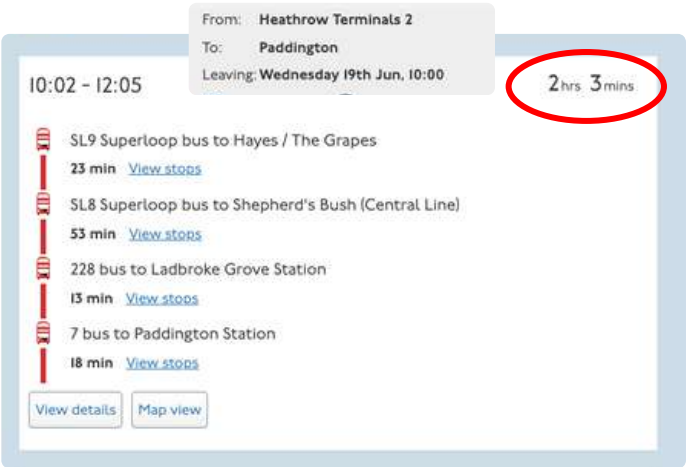
If you're at Terminal 5, you'll find the coach stop between bus stops 9 to 15 on the ground level. Again, it's well signed as you leave baggage claim.

	Time to city	Price one-way	First journey daily	Last journey daily	How to pay
National Express	30-40 mins (to Earl's Court)	From £7.50 (Adults) From £5.60 (Kids 3-15) Free (2 and under)	1:00am	11:59pm	Online in advance Ticket booths
Megabus	40-55 mins (to Central London)	From £15 (Adults) From £7.50 (Kids 5-15) Free (4 and under)	12:25am	10:30pm	Online in advance Ticket booths

Where to get on a London Bus at Heathrow

You can also catch red local London buses at the Central Bus Station, which is within walking distance of Terminals 2, 3 and 5, or a short shuttle train ride from Terminal 4. This option should truly only be used as a last resort as these buses take FOREVER and it'll be a very uncomfortable journey.

Remember, you can't pay for buses using cash, but you can use your Contactless, Google/Apple Pay or Oyster Card.



The Tube

Heathrow is on the Piccadilly Tube line which runs regularly to/from terminals 2, 3, 4 and 5 in under an hour to the very centre of the city. The Piccadilly Line is the dark blue Tube line you'll see on the London Underground maps. It's the second longest line after the Central Line and links to districts all over the city, including Piccadilly Circus, Leicester Square and Covent Garden.



	Time to city	Price one-way	First journey daily	Last journey daily	How to pay
Piccadilly Line	35-60 mins	£5.90 (Adults) £2.95 (Kids 11-15 with Young Visitor Discount) Free (10 and under)	5:12am	11:45pm	Contactless Oyster card Google/Apple Pay Station ticket machines

Where to get the Tube at Heathrow

There are three London Underground stations at Heathrow – one at Terminals 2 and 3 and one each at Terminal 4 and Terminal 5. Just follow the signs as you leave baggage claim.

How often do they run?

Although operating hours are between 5am – 11:30pm, there's also the Night Tube, which runs six trains per hour between Heathrow Airport and central London on Friday and Saturday nights. But this doesn't serve Terminal 4.



Heathrow Express

The Heathrow Express train is the fastest way to the city centre, running four times an hour between the airport and London Paddington, taking only 15 minutes from terminals 2 and 3 and 18 minutes from terminal 5.

You can get a ticket for less than £20 if you book it in advance, but it's also fine to buy them at the airport, you'll just pay more, around £25, making it the most expensive public transport option for travelling into the city.

Where to get the Heathrow Express

The Heathrow Express train serves Terminals 2, 3 and 5 (an extra 3 minutes) to London Paddington Station. Passengers at Terminal 4 will need to take a quick shuttle train from the terminal to Heathrow Central railway station. There's signage everywhere showing you where to find it.



How often are the trains?

Heathrow Express trains leave Heathrow every 15 minutes, and same deal for the return journey.

If you are arriving/departing early in the morning or late at night, be aware that your transport options can be limited. Use CityMapper or Google Maps to check which trains are running during those hours by adjusting your travel date time in the app.

	Time to city	Price one-way	First journey daily	Last journey daily	How to pay
Heathrow Express	15-18 mins to London Paddington	£26 one way £42 roundtrip, or £10 OW if bought 30 days in advance or more (Adults) Free (Kids 0-15)	5:12am	11:58pm	Online in advance Contactless Oyster card Google/Apple Pay Station ticket machines

Elizabeth Line

The newly opened Elizabeth Line is also a great option; it can get you into the city in 30- 45 minutes. It runs every 15-30 minutes and will cost you £15.50 for adults.



Where to get the Elizabeth Line

The Elizabeth Line serves all three of Heathrow's train stations – one station for Terminals 2 and 3 and one each at Terminal 4 and Terminal 5. If heading back to Heathrow, not all Elizabeth Line trains stop at each airport terminal station, so be sure to check that you get on the right train that stops at your terminal. If in doubt, ask a staff member, there are always plenty located on the platforms for this line. If you accidentally end up at the wrong terminal, not to worry, there's a shuttle train going to the other ones or just ask the staff for help (they are EVERYWHERE at Heathrow).

How often do they run?

During the day, there are around 6 trains an hour, while in the early mornings and evenings, there are 3-6 trains an hour. All trains call at Terminals 2 and 3, with only 2 continuing on to Terminals 5 and 4. There is a free shuttle train available between Terminals 2 and 3 to Terminal 4 and Terminal 5 if you need it.

Again, if you are arriving/departing early or late, your best bet is to map your route on CityMapper or Google Maps to check trains are running during those hours and on the day you want to travel.

	Time to city	Price one-way	First journey daily	Last journey daily	How to pay
Elizabeth Line	30-45 mins	£15.50 (Adults) £7.75 (Kids 11-15 with Young Visitor discount) Free (10 and under)	5:15am	12:07am	Contactless Oyster card Google/Apple Pay

Taxi

Taxis are by far the most expensive way to get to the city centre from Heathrow Airport. However, if you're carrying a lot of luggage, are tired after your flight or are facing mobility challenges, it's definitely the easiest option.



Where to get a taxi at Heathrow

London's iconic black taxis stop at the ranks outside each Heathrow terminal, just follow the Taxi signs to find the rank and **ONLY** take a taxi that the taxi rank manager has told you to get in – there are sometimes some dodgy ones waiting for unsuspecting tourists like you.

Taxis from apps like Ubers and pre-booked taxi transfers have designated pick-up spots in the terminal's short-stay car parks. If you ordered from an app, you'll be told in-app which floor and section of the car park to go to. If you pre-book with a company, like [Welcome Pickups](#), your driver will be waiting for you outside of the baggage claim area in the terminal with a name placard, so this is the least stressful and easiest option.

It's also good to know that while black taxis are more expensive, they are allowed to use the bus lanes on certain roads, so that can help reduce your journey time if there's traffic.

Here's a breakdown of taxi options for Heathrow

	Time to city	Price	How to pay
Black cab/ cab on arrival	45 min – 1 hour to Victoria without traffic	£60–100	Contactless Oyster card Google/Apple Pay
Pre-booked private transfer	45 min – 1 hour to Victoria without traffic	£60–100	Pre-booked online
Uber (or similar app)	45 min – 1 hour to Victoria without traffic	£40–80	On the app

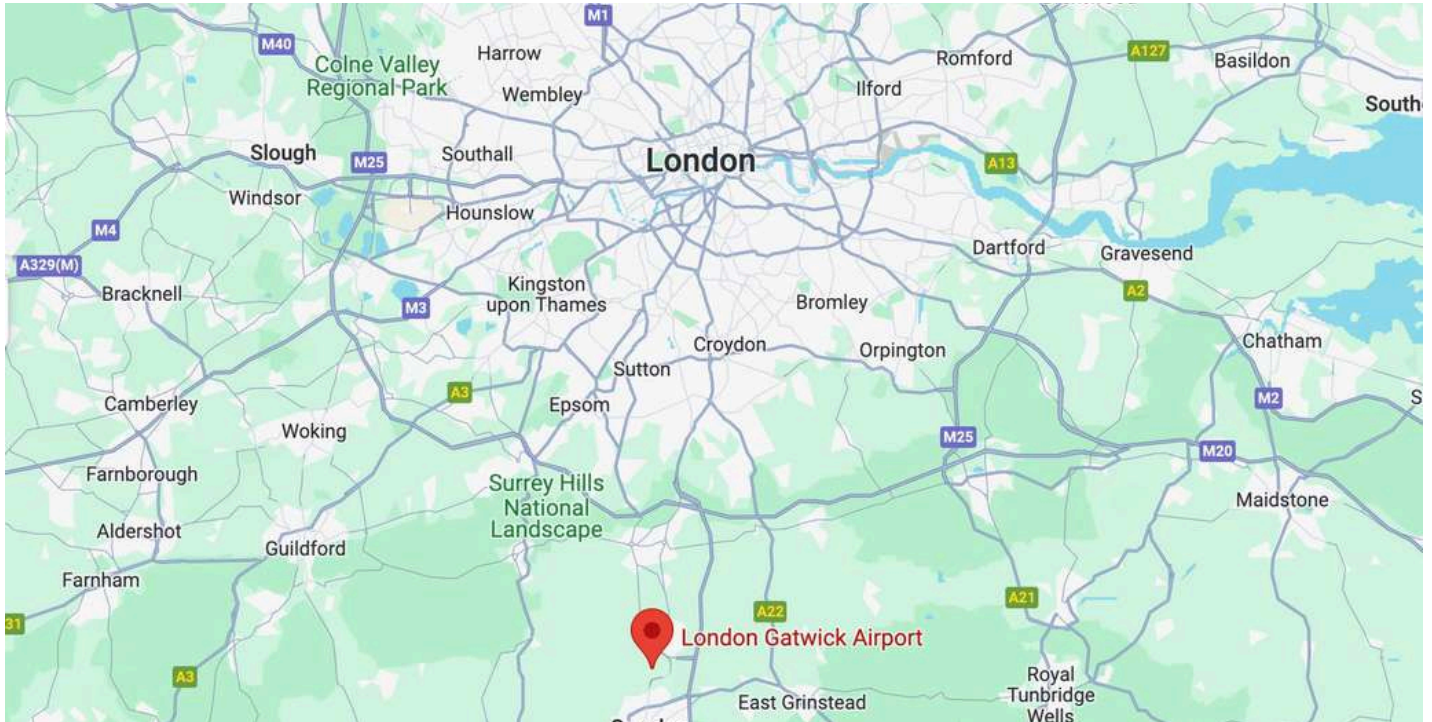
Use the chart in the next page to compare all the different options for the Heathrow Airport.

HEATHROW TRANSPORT CHEAT SHEET

HEATHROW AIRPORT	Time to city	Price one-way	First journey daily	Last journey daily	How to pay
National Express	30–40 mins (to Earl's Court)	From £7.50 (Adults) From £5.60 (Kids 3–15) Free (2 and under)	1:00am	11:59pm	Online in advance Ticket booths
Megabus	40–55 mins (to Central London)	From £15 (Adults) From £7.50 (Kids 5–15) Free (4 and under)	12:25am	10:30pm	Online in advance Ticket booths
Piccadilly Line	35–60 mins	£5.90 (Adults) £2.95 (Kids 11–15 with Young Visitor Discount) Free (10 and under)	5:12am	11:45pm	Contactless Oyster card Google/Apple Pay Station ticket machines
Heathrow Express	15–18 mins to London Paddington	£26 one way £42 roundtrip, or £10 OW if bought 30 days in advance or more (Adults) Free (Kids 0–15)	5:12am	11:58pm	Online in advance Contactless Oyster card Google/Apple Pay Station ticket machines
Elizabeth Line	30–45 mins	£15.50 (Adults) £7.75 (Kids 11–15 with Young Visitor discount) Free (10 and under)	5:15am	12:07am	Contactless Oyster card Google/Apple Pay
Black cab/ cab on arrival	45 min – 1 hour to Victoria without traffic	£60–100	–	–	Contactless Oyster card Google/Apple Pay
Pre-booked private transfer	45 min – 1 hour to Victoria without traffic	£60–100	–	–	Pre-booked online
Uber (or similar app)	45 min – 1 hour to Victoria without traffic	£40–80	–	–	On the app

Gatwick Airport

Gatwick Airport is the second busiest airport in the UK and one of the most well-connected to the city, with direct links to more train stations than any other European airport.



Coach/Bus

Buses frequently run to/from Gatwick Airport and London Victoria or Earl's Court, where you can then easily hop on the Tube. Although it's the slowest mode of transport into the city, taking up to 2 hours with traffic, it's also the cheapest. [National Express](#) is your only option for travelling into the city, and they run frequently between the city and the airport.

Where to get on a coach at Gatwick

You can jump on board at either the lower South Terminal forecourt or outside International Arrivals at Gatwick's North Terminal, with lots of signs along the way pointing you in the right direction.

Where to buy coach tickets

Purchasing a ticket online in advance is your best bet if you want to save money, but there are also National Express ticket machines in the North and South terminals, and plenty of staff on hand near the coach pick-up areas to answer any questions you have.

	Time to city	Price one-way	First journey daily	Last journey daily	How to pay
National Express	1 hour 40 mins to 2 hours	From £5.20 (Adult) From £3.90 (Kids 3-15) Free (2 and under)	3:35am	11:30pm	Online in advance Ticket booths

Train

Gatwick is super well connected to the rest of the UK via train – you can reach 120 train stations directly and over 700 within just one change! And quite a few are in London, so, it's needless to say that there are plenty of options if you're planning on taking the train into the city.

However, don't forget, if you're arriving/departing early or late, check your route on CityMapper or Google Maps to see if trains are running during those hours. If not, you need to book either a coach or taxi.

For most people, the train is going to be the best option for getting into London as it's affordable, quick, and relatively pain-free.

Which train should I take?

So you can get a train into major London stations like London Victoria, St. Pancras, Kings Cross, Farringdon, London Bridge and more, and there are a couple of different companies that run trains to these terminals. Because the city is so big, you don't want to hop on just ANY train that gets into London, there's likely to be a station that will be best suited for then getting to your hotel.

Luckily, it's super easy to figure this out. Just use Google Maps to see route options from Gatwick Train Station to your hotel. Be sure to also adjust for your arrival date and approximate time so you can see an accurate list of trains that will work for you. You'll be able to see which London station you'll get off at, and also if you then need to take the tube or bus to get to your hotel.



Where to get the train

The station is located in the South terminal, so it's really easy to find and there will be plenty of signs pointing you in the right direction. If you land in the North terminal, just follow the signs to the shuttle to get you to South, it's easy and quick.

How often are the trains

Trains going to and from various London stations and Gatwick are very frequent, especially between 8am and 7:30pm, and they take 30-45 minutes. Earlier than 7am and past midnight, expect less frequency, and they stop running around 1:30am.



How to buy tickets

When you get to the station at Gatwick Airport, you might see a long line of people waiting to buy paper tickets. But good news — you can go ahead and skip that, because Gatwick allows for payment via contactless debit or credit card, mobile pay, or Oyster — just like how you would pay for the tube. Just touch in at the barriers and out at the end of your journey. It's super easy.

Expect tickets to cost £12.50-20.

Lifts at Gatwick

There are lifts (elevators) for every platform at Gatwick station.

	Time to city	Price one-way	First journey daily	Last journey daily	How to pay
Southern Rail	40-45 mins to Victoria	£12.50-20 (Adults) £6.25-10 (Kids 5-15 with Young Visitor discount) Free (5 and under)	5:28am	11:54pm	Contactless Oyster card Google/Apple Pay

Gatwick Express

Although this “high speed train” does exist, and it only takes around 30 minutes, we generally don’t recommend any of our travellers taking it to/from the city centre because it’s really expensive and you have so many other great train options that are far cheaper and take only slightly longer.



Note for families: One exception worth knowing is that children's tickets on the Gatwick Express are just £2, which can make it a bit more of a competitive option if you're travelling with kids.

However, there are a few important conditions to be aware of:

- The £2 fare only applies when travelling with an adult who has a valid Gatwick Express rail ticket
- It is not valid if the adult is paying by Oyster, contactless or Pay-As-You-Go
- Standard class only
- Up to 4 children per adult

	Time to city	Price one-way	First journey daily	Last journey daily	How to pay
Gatwick Express	30-40 mins to Victoria	From £21.50 (online) or £24.10 (at station) (Adults) From £2 - 12 (Kids 5-15) Free (5 and under)	4:35am	1:35am	Contactless Oyster card Google/Apple Pay Ticket machines

Taxi

Because Gatwick is SO far outside of London, getting a taxi to and from the city is for sure the most expensive way to travel. It’ll take you around an hour to get to the city centre, if there is no traffic and depending on your hotel’s location in the city, of course.



Where to get a taxi at Gatwick

There are designated taxi ranks located at the North and South Terminals, with plenty of signs to point you in the right direction.

➤ North Terminal

The taxi rank can be found at the Arrivals area on the ground floor. Take the exit to the long-stay car parks, near the lifts and special assistance help point. You'll see a desk where you go and request a taxi. Do not flag a taxi on your own. Depending on how busy it is, a taxi could arrive to take you within a few minutes, or in 30-45 minutes. A longer wait is usually only when the trains aren't running due to a strike or it being very late/very early.

➤ South Terminal

The taxi rank is outside Arrivals on level 2. Take the exit to the long and short-stay car parks, just past the cash machines and Moneycorp Bureau De Change. You'll see a desk where you go and request a taxi. Do not flag a taxi on your own. Depending on how busy it is, a taxi could arrive to take you within a few minutes, or in 30-45 minutes. A longer wait is usually only when the trains aren't running due to a strike or it being very late/very early.

Ubers generally are very hard to call from Gatwick, and to confirm a ride from Gatwick to London, as most drivers don't want to do that long of a journey, and therefore you'll get lots of cancellations when you try to order one. We generally say to avoid relying on this as it isn't a dependable option.

But we do recommend organising a private transfer in advance, if you prefer to have your driver come in and meet you inside the airport with a sign, to take your bags for you, and for you not to potentially have to wait a while to be picked up. We always recommend [Welcome Pickups](#) for pre-booked taxis.

	Time to city	Price	How to pay
Black cab/ cab on arrival	Approx 1 hour to Victoria	Approx £100+	Contactless Google/Apple Pay On the Gett app (for Black cabs)
Pre-booked private transfer	Approx 1 hour to Victoria	Approx £100+	Pre-booked online

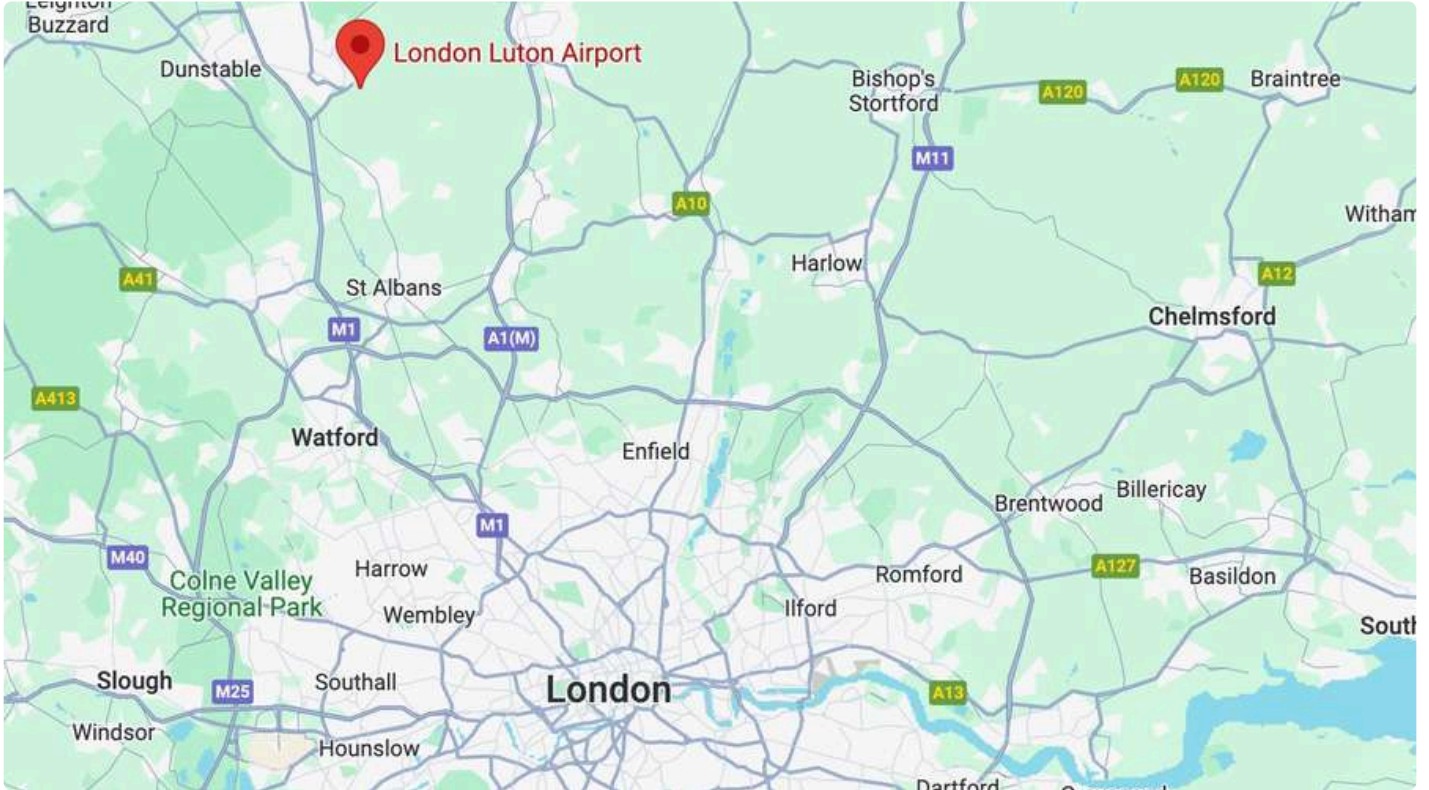
Use the chart in the next page to compare all the different options for the Gatwick Airport.

GATWICK TRANSPORT CHEAT SHEET

GATWICK AIRPORT	Time to city	Price one-way	First journey daily	Last journey daily	How to pay
National Express	1 hour 40 mins to 2 hours	From £5.20 (Adult) From £3.90 (Kids 3-15) Free (2 and under)	3:35am	11:30pm	Online in advance Ticket booths
Southern Rail	40-45 mins to Victoria	£12.50-20 (Adults) £6.25-10 (Kids 5-15 with Young Visitor discount) Free (5 and under)	5:28am	11:54pm	Contactless Oyster card Google/Apple Pay
Gatwick Express	30-40 mins to Victoria	From £21.50 (online) or £24.10 (at station) (Adults) From £2-12 (Kids 5-15) Free (5 and under)	4:35am	1:35am	Contactless Oyster card Google/Apple Pay Ticket machines
Black cab/ cab on arrival	Approx 1 hour to Victoria	Approx £100+	-	-	Contactless Google/Apple Pay On the Gett app (for Black cabs)
Pre-booked private transfer	Approx 1 hour to Victoria	Approx £100+	-	-	Pre-booked online

Luton Airport

Luton is not in London, so it's a bit of a journey depending on where you're staying in the city. Here are your transport options for Luton Airport.



Coach/Bus

National Express coaches run regularly to/from London Luton Airport and popular destinations such as Golders Green, Marble Arch, London Paddington, London Victoria and more. Coach is one of the most budget-friendly options for getting to/from the city, but also one of the longest. Depending on traffic, it takes around an hour to 90 minutes to get from the airport into the city.



Where to buy coach tickets

You can book ahead of time on the [National Express website](#) or [Omio](#), or buy tickets at the bus stop, but that will cost a bit more.

Where to get on a coach at Luton

There are clear signposts for Luton Airport Bus and Coach Station scattered around the terminal. It's located right outside the main terminal building.

	Time to city	Price one-way	First journey daily	Last journey daily	How to pay
National Express	40-90 mins depending on the stop and traffic	£7-14 (Adults) £5.25-10.50 (Kids 3-15) Free (2 and under)	12:01am	11:30pm	Online in advance At ticket booths when you arrive

Train

The fastest way to travel between Luton Airport and London is by train, a journey which takes around 25 minutes. While the airport itself doesn't have a train station, Luton Parkway station is located about a mile away, with frequent DART shuttles connecting the two every four minutes during peak hours. There are two types of trains you can take: the Thameslink, and the Luton Express.



How to buy tickets

Tickets can be booked on [Trainline](#) or [Omio](#) from £11 one-way in advance or purchased at any station, including Luton Parkway. Kids 5-15 get tickets for 50% off. Be sure to put "Luton Airport" as your starting or final destination, not "Luton Parkway" so you get your shuttle tickets included too.

Where to find the train at Luton Airport

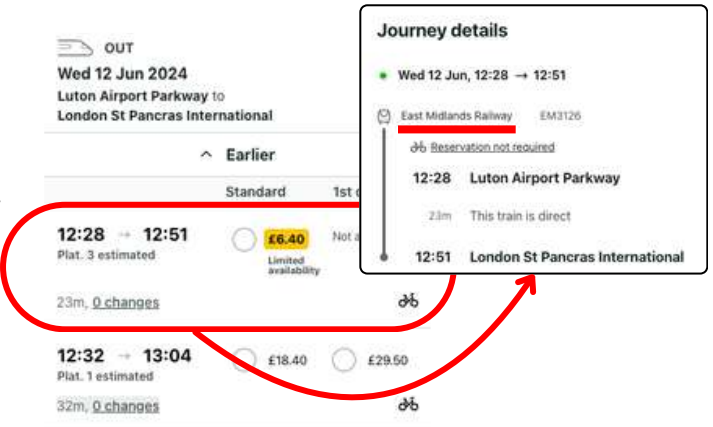
As mentioned, Luton Parkway Station is the designated train station for Luton Airport, easily reachable via the DART shuttle which you'll get from the airport. From the city to the airport, use Google Maps to work out the best route from your hotel, as there are a few stations around the city you can utilise to get to Luton.

How often are the trains?

Thameslink trains operate up to six times per hour, offering quick services to King's Cross St Pancras (which has great links to the rest of the city) in approximately 30 minutes, providing easy access to the city centre. That same train also goes to a few other stations in London like Farringdon and Blackfriars. As always, if you are arriving/departing early or late, double-check your route on CityMapper or Google Maps to see if trains are running during those hours, but they generally run between 5am and 11pm.

Luton Express

The Luton Airport Express is a little pricier, but uses new electric Class 360 trains, so it's better for the environment. Tickets can be booked in advance online for as little as £10 and run every half an hour. Be prepared to pay more on the day, though. It goes between Kings Cross St. Pancras station and Luton Airport Parkway, same as the Thameslink train. The Express runs between 4am and 10pm.



For most people, the Thameslink is the better option between the two trains.

	Time to city	Price one-way	First journey daily	Last journey daily	How to pay
Thameslink	Approx 40 mins	£11 - 24 (Adults) £5 - 12 (Kids 5-15) Free (5 and under)	12:13am	11:35pm	Contactless (only if you're travelling between London St Pancras International and Luton Airport Parkway) In advance online Station ticket machines
Luton Express	Approx 32 mins	£10 - £20 (Adults) £4 - 12 (Kids 5-15) Free (5 and under)	5:32am (Mon-Fri) 5:59 am (Sat) 12:28 pm (Sun)	11:25pm (Mon-Fri) 22:28 (Sat) 21:58 (Sun)	Contactless (only if you're travelling between London St Pancras International and Luton Airport Parkway) In advance online Station ticket machines
Luton DART shuttle	N/A	£4.90 (Adults) £2.45 (Kids 5-15) Free (5 and under)	Runs 24/7	Runs 24/7	Contactless In advance online Station ticket machines

Taxi

If you're willing to spend a bit more or have plenty of luggage to carry, consider booking a private taxi for your transfer. Getting an Uber from Luton Airport can be challenging, and waiting times at the local taxi rank can sometimes be lengthy, so arranging a cab in advance is recommended. Depending on where your hotel is located, you can expect it to take around 60–90 minutes if there isn't too much traffic.

Where to get a taxi at Luton

If you have a pre-booked taxi, it'll be waiting in the temporary pick-up zone in the mid-stay car park. There's also a bus from Bus Bay A that will take you there, or if you prefer, it's just a short 10-minute walk away. Drop-offs here are also free for ten minutes. If you book with [Welcome Pickups](#), who we recommend, the driver will greet you just outside arrivals inside the airport, so no need to try to find him or her.

If you haven't pre-booked and you need to jump in a taxi, you'll find taxis in the designated area just beyond Bus Bay A, where you can queue for your turn.

If you're going to try to get an Uber or use a similar ride sharing app, the designated pick-up areas are located at Luton Airport Long Term Car Park and Luton Retail Park on Gipsy Lane.

	Time to city	Price	How to pay
Black cab/ cab on arrival	60–90 mins	£100–120	Contactless Google/Apple Pay On the Gett app (for Black cabs)
Pre-booked private transfer	60–90 mins	£100–120	Pre-booked online
Uber or other ride sharing app	60–90 mins	£65–90	On the app

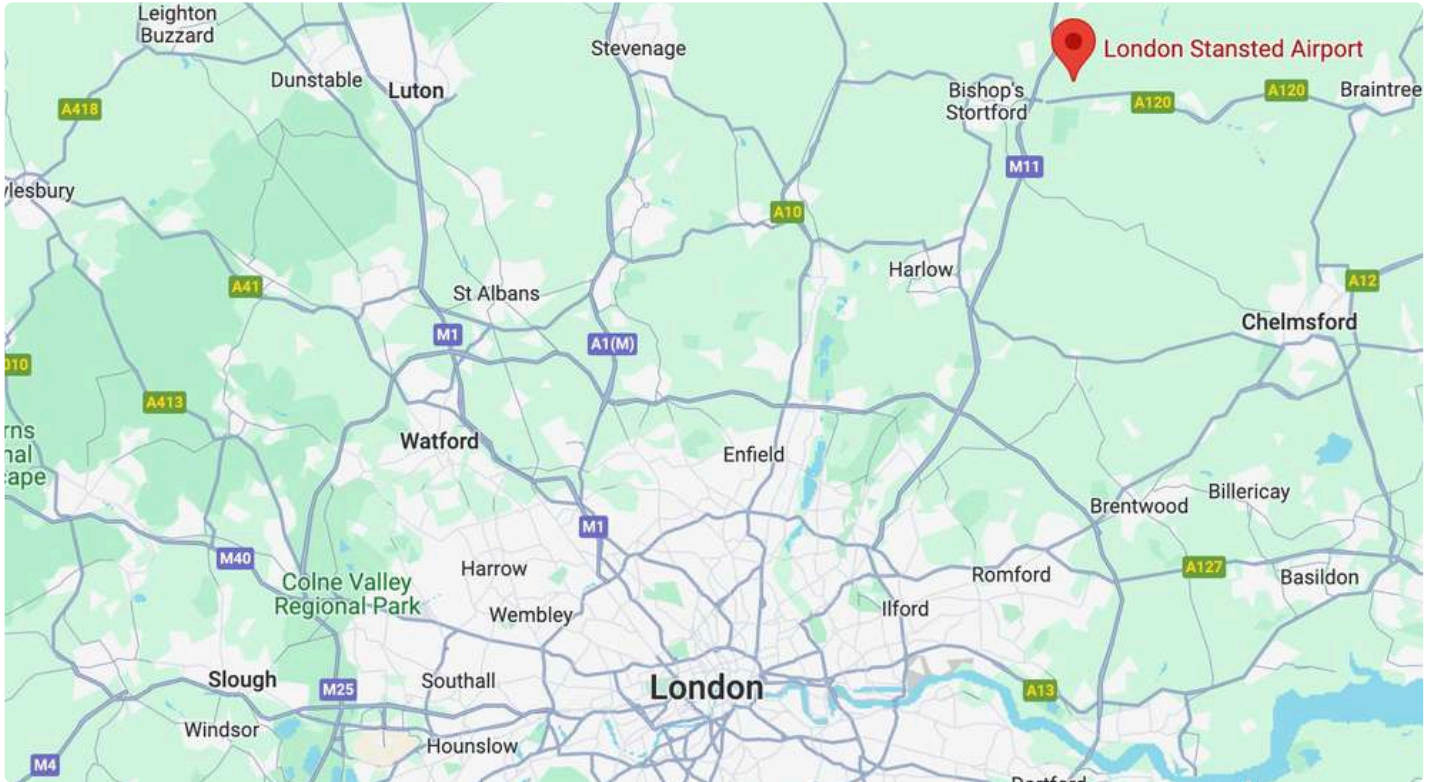
Use the chart in the next page to compare all the different options for the Luton Airport.

LUTON TRANSPORT CHEAT SHEET

LUTON AIRPORT	Time to city	Price one-way	First journey daily	Last journey daily	How to pay
National Express	40-90 mins depending on the stop and traffic	£7-14 (Adults) £5.25-10.50 (Kids 3-15) Free (2 and under)	12:01am	11:30pm	Online in advance At ticket booths when you arrive
Thameslink	Approx 40 mins	£11 - 24 (Adults) £5 - 12 (Kids 5-15) Free (5 and under)	12:13am	11:35pm	Contactless <i>(only if you're travelling between London St Pancras International and Luton Airport Parkway)</i> In advance online Station ticket machines
Luton Express	Approx 32 mins	£10 - £20 (Adults) £4 - 12 (Kids 5-15) Free (5 and under)	5:32am (Mon-Fri) 5:59 am (Sat) 12:28 pm (Sun)	11:25pm (Mon-Fri) 22:28 (Sat) 21:58 (Sun)	Contactless <i>(only if you're travelling between London St Pancras International and Luton Airport Parkway)</i> In advance online Station ticket machines
Luton DART shuttle	N/A	£4.90 (Adults) £2.45 (Kids 5-15) Free (5 and under)	Runs 24/7	Runs 24/7	Contactless In advance online Station ticket machines
Black cab/ cab on arrival	60-90 mins	£100-120	-	-	Contactless Google/Apple Pay On the Gett app (for Black cabs)
Pre-booked private transfer	60-90 mins	£100-120	-	-	Pre-booked online
Uber or other ride sharing app	60-90 mins	£65-90	-	-	On the app

Stansted Airport

London Stansted Airport is the fourth busiest airport in the UK, located 40 miles northeast of London. Many of the UK's low-cost airlines fly from here, meaning you can reach plenty of destinations all over Europe and beyond.



Coach/Bus

National Express coaches serve 38 drop-off locations throughout London, including 15 in the central area and all major London tube stations such as Stratford, London Paddington, Victoria, Liverpool Street, and Stratford. This is definitely the most economical mode of transport into the city, with tickets as low as £8 if booked a few weeks in advance.

Where to buy coach tickets

Buy online on the [National Express site](#) or [Omio site](#) or app. You can also buy tickets at the airport and the designated kiosk near the bus stop.

Where to get on a coach at Stansted

The coach station is conveniently located just a quick 2-minute stroll from the main airport terminal, which is clearly signposted, and staff are readily available to assist you in boarding the correct one.

	Time to city	Price one-way	First journey daily	Last journey daily	How to pay
National Express	70 - 90 mins	From £8-18 (Adults) From £6 (Kids 3-15) Free (2 and under)	12:01am	11:30pm	Online in advance At ticket booths when you arrive

Train

London Underground services don't run from Stansted Airport, but there's the Stansted Express, which departs every half hour. This direct service gets you to Tottenham Hale station and London Liverpool Street station in around 30-50 minutes, making it a faster option than the coach. It's a comfy ride with plenty of room for your luggage.

If you're arriving/departing early or late, remember to check your route on CityMapper or Google Maps to see if the Stansted Express is running during those hours. You can also check their [timetable on their website](#).

Where to buy Stansted Express tickets

It's best to purchase tickets in advance online (book around 12 weeks in advance to get the best savings) or buy on arrival at any ticket machine or at the station's information desks. Tickets will cost £23 maximum for adults for a single, or £46 for a return. Crucially though, the earlier you book, the cheaper the tickets will be, as low as £9.90.

For kids aged 5-15, tickets are half price.

Tickets are flexible, you can hop on any for the day you booked your ticket, so definitely book yours in advance, and it's cheaper to book a return ticket than a single.



Where to get on a train at Stansted

The train station at Stansted Airport is located directly below the terminal building, opposite where you come out of customs. It's easily accessible from the airport's main concourse via escalators and lifts and is clearly signposted.

How often are the trains?

Trains depart Stansted Airport for London every 15 minutes. For early flights, trains start running at 3:40am on Monday, Friday, and Saturday mornings, 4:40am on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, and 4:10am on Sunday. The first train leaving London Stansted Airport for Liverpool Street is 5:30am.

	Time to city	Price one-way	First journey daily	Last journey daily	How to pay
Stansted Express	Approx 50 minutes	£9.90 - £23 (Adults) £4.95 - £11.5 (Kids 5-15) Free (5 and under)	5:30am	12:30am	In advance online Station ticket machines

Taxi

While you can get an Uber at Stansted Airport, they're less common than at airports like Heathrow, and the wait time can be longer. There are taxi ranks outside the terminal and desks to arrange transport inside the terminal, but your best bet is to prearrange your transport in advance so you don't spend loads of time waiting around. We love [Welcome Pickups](#) for pre-booked taxis, as their drivers greet you inside the airport outside arrivals.

The airport is located just off the M11 motorway, roughly 40 miles from central London, so you'll want to give yourself around 45 minutes to an hour to get into the city, depending on traffic.

Where to get a taxi at Stansted

You can easily find taxis at designated taxi ranks located just outside the terminal building. These ranks are clearly signposted and easy to reach.

	Time to city	Price	How to pay
Black cab/ cab on arrival	Approx 45-60 mins	Around £70-110	Contactless Google/Apple Pay On the Gett app (for Black cabs)
Uber	Approx 45-60 mins	Around £70-90	On the app
Pre-booked private transfer	Approx 45-60 mins	Around £100-120	In advance online

Use the chart below to compare all the different options for the Stansted Airport.

STANSTED TRANSPORT CHEAT SHEET

STANSTED AIRPORT	Time to city	Price one-way	First journey daily	Last journey daily	How to pay
National Express	70-90 mins	From £8 -18 (Adults) From £6 (Kids 3-15) Free (2 and under)	12:01am	11:30pm	Online in advance At ticket booths when you arrive
Stansted Express	Approx 50 minutes	£9.90 - £23 (Adults) £4.95 - £11.5 (Kids 5-15) Free (5 and under)	5:30am	12:30am	In advance online Station ticket machines
Black cab/ cab on arrival	Approx 45-60 mins	Around £70-110	-	-	Contactless Google/Apple Pay On the Gett app (for Black cabs)
Uber	Approx 45-60 mins	Around £70-90	-	-	On the app
Pre-booked private transfer	Approx 45-60 mins	Around £100-120	-	-	In advance online

London City Airport

London City Airport is the closest airport to central London, but it's also the smallest and it's the airport that the least of our readers will likely be using. But if this is your airport, travelling to/from City (as it's usually called) to the city centre is easy if you know what route to take. We haven't included comparison charts for this specific airport as it's so integrated into London's transport system that you can just pay on the yellow card readers using Contactless payment, Apple/Google Pay and Oyster Card as you would when navigating your way around the city.



Bus

Classic red doubledecker buses run regularly from London City Airport to locations all around the city for a very reasonable price—£1.75 per ride. You can jump on a bus numbered 473 or 474 to access stops around the city. We recommend checking Citymapper or Google Maps when you arrive to find out which one you need and to see if they are running throughout the night if that's when you arrive/depart. But to be honest, most tourists will see that their transport app recommends them to use the DLR (Docklands Light Railway), which we cover in the “train” section.



Where to get on a bus at City Airport

Bus stops can be found right outside the terminal building. Since the airport is so small and the bus stops are clearly signposted, it's very easy to find them.

How to pay for the bus

Just like you would a normal red double-decker: by Oyster, contactless debit or credit card, or mobile pay.

	Time to city	Price one-way	First journey daily	Last journey daily	How to pay
Regular TfL Bus	30-50 mins	£1.75 (Adults) £0.88 (Kids 11-15 with Young Visitor Oyster Card) Free (10 and under)	4:36am (Mon-Sat) 5:41am (Sun)	1:50am (Mon-Sun)	Contactless Oyster card Travel card

DLR Train

London City Airport is part of the London Underground network and even has its own stop on the DLR. This means it's super easy and quick to reach well-connected tube stations, such as Stratford, in just 15 minutes. It's likely you'll take the DLR to connect to a tube line, and if you're trying to get to the center of the city, expect it to take around 45 minutes.



Where to get the DLR from

As mentioned, London City has its own DLR station, which is clearly marked and within a very short walking distance of the airport terminal.

How often are the trains?

Trains depart every 4 to 10 minutes, depending on destination. The service typically starts around 5:30am and ends around midnight, with slight variations depending on the day of the week and specific times. However, CityMapper and Google Maps can help you plan your route depending on your arrival/departure time, so be sure to adjust the date and time of your travel in the app when doing your route planning ahead of time.

How do you pay for the DLR?

You can pay with contactless card, Oyster, or mobile pay, just like for the Tube. You can also purchase a ticket at ticket machines, but this will be more expensive.

	Time to city	Price one-way	First journey daily	Last journey daily	How to pay
DLR	Approx 22 minutes	£2-4 (Adults) £1-2 (Kids 11-15 with Young Visitor Oyster Card) Free (10 and under)	5:27am (Mon-Sat) 6:56am (Sun)	12:16am (Mon-Sat) 11:16pm (Sun)	Contactless Oyster card Travel card

Taxi

You can jump in an Uber, flag a black cab if there's one available at the taxi rank, or you can arrange a pre-booked taxi, but whatever way you choose, expect this to be the most expensive way to travel to and from the city center. Prices really depend on where you're travelling to/from. You can pre-calculate a fee on the Uber app or if you pre-book a taxi you'll get the rate up front. We always recommend [Welcome Pickups](#) who are highly-rated by our community.

Where to get a taxi at City Airport

Taxi ranks are conveniently located just outside the terminal building. They're signposted, and the airport is small, so they are easy to find.

	Time to city	Price	How to pay
Black cab/ cab on arrival	15-20 mins	£30-50	Contactless Google/Apple Pay On the Gett app (for Black cabs)
Pre-booked private transfer	15-30 mins	£60-80	Pre-booked online
Uber or other ride sharing app	15-20 mins	£30-40	On the app

*Use the chart below to compare all the different options
for the London City Airport.*

LONDON CITY AIPORT TRANSPORT CHEAT SHEET

LONDON CITY AIRPORT	Time to city	Price one-way	First journey daily	Last journey daily	How to pay
Regular TfL Bus	30-50 mins	£1.75 (Adults) £0.88 (Kids 11-15 with Young Visitor Oyster Card) Free (10 and under)	4:36am (Mon-Sat) 5:41am (Sun)	1:50am (Mon-Sun)	Contactless Oyster card Travel card
DLR	Approx 22 minutes	£2-4 (Adults) £1-2 (Kids 11-15 with Young Visitor Oyster Card) Free (10 and under)	5:27am (Mon-Sat) 6:56am (Sun)	12:16am (Mon-Sat) 11:16pm (Sun)	Contactless Oyster card Travel card
Black cab/ cab on arrival	15-20 mins	£30-50	-	-	Contactless Google/Apple Pay On the Gett app (for Black cabs)
Pre-booked private transfer	15-30 mins	£60-80	-	-	Pre-booked online
Uber or other ride sharing app	15-20 mins	£30-40	-	-	On the app

Ok, airport transport is COVERED! Let's keep going...

CHAPTER 8:

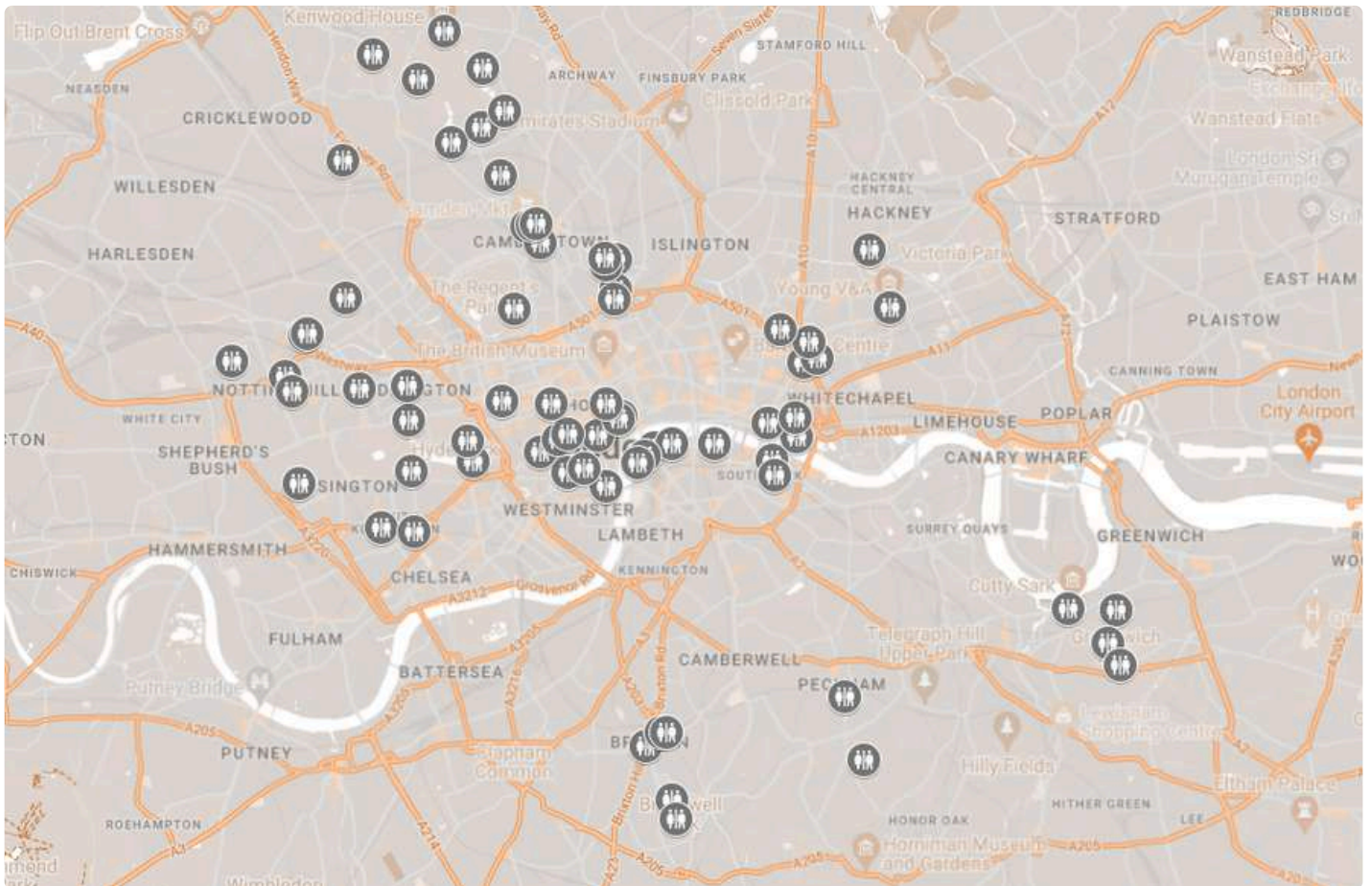
ARE THERE TOILETS IN TUBE STATIONS?



Are there toilets in Tube stations?

In short... no! BUT... the major rail stations, like Victoria, Waterloo, Charing Cross, Kings Cross, and St. Pancras, DO have toilets, and they don't cost anything to use.

If you have one of our [London itineraries](#) or [Casual Tourist Guides](#), we include a Toilet Guide which maps out where to find toilets... some public, and some that us locals know you can sneak into if you have a little confidence 😊



A sneak peek at the Toilet Guide in the 6-Day London Itinerary

CHAPTER 9:

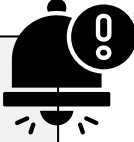
WHAT TO DO IF THERE'S A TRANSPORT STRIKE DURING YOUR TRIP



So in the last couple of years, public transport strikes have increased in the capital (we support the strikers 🙌) which can seem confusing and daunting for tourists. The good news is that it's not always as challenging as it seems, plus, us locals are in this together, struggling to get to work and to important events. But we make it work!

If you hear that there's going to be a transport strike during your time in London...

HERE ARE A FEW THINGS TO KNOW OFF THE BAT



➤ **Transport strikes vary greatly.**

Some are very disruptive, some are not, and some are only disruptive for certain situations. For example, a strike might only affect trains outside of London, and if you don't plan to take a train for a day trip, you're totally fine. So just because you hear the word "strike", it might not affect you in the slightest.

➤ **Strikes often get cancelled.**

So up to the day before, there might be an announcement that the strike will not happen. Then you're good to go.

➤ **No strikes are trip-ruining.**

They just might require some itinerary adjusting and pre-planning alternative transport.

How to check if there are planned strikes during your trip

One month to two weeks before your trip, just Google "London transport strikes" and include the month you're visiting. For example, "London transport strikes June". You'll find plenty of news articles outlining if there are any planned strikes that month and what dates they are.

You'll also usually find info on who is striking and therefore what services will be affected. Most often, it's one of these:

- Select Tube lines
- Select National Rail companies (mostly outside of London)
- All Tube lines
- All National Rail companies
- All London public buses

Generally, the only one that causes major disruption is if all Tube lines or all National Rail companies are striking.

You'll also find up-to-date, detailed info on any upcoming London transport strikes on the [TFL Strikes page](#), and for National Rail strikes, look at their [strike page](#) (but keep in mind that this will list strikes that might be happening nowhere near London).

If you bought train tickets online, there will also be strike information on the provider's website, as well as info on how to get a refund for your ticket.



Which services are affected, and will it affect your trip?

Once you've read up on which services will be on strike, check your itinerary to see if you were planning to use those services on the planned strike days. If not, you're good to go and you can skip the rest of this section! If you were, keep reading.

The below is a guide to what you should do during a strike, depending on which services are down. Once you understand what to do, you can adjust your itinerary accordingly.

WHO'S STRIKING (AND WHAT TO DO) GUIDE

	Buses	Partial Tube	All Tube	Partial National Rail	All National Rail
Instead take:	Literally everything else, this isn't a huge deal!	Alternative lines. Use Citymapper.	Try to avoid all other transport because they will be very busy. Pre-book a taxi as taxis will be hard to call.	For some cities outside London, National Express and Megabus run coach buses to/from London. Otherwise, just skip travel that day.	For some cities outside London, National Express and Megabus run coach buses to/from London. Otherwise, just skip travel that day.
Going to/from the airport?	You're fine, your transport app will give you alternative routes if needed.	Only Heathrow will be affected, use alternative options listed in Chapter 7, or pre-book a taxi.	Heathrow is most affected. Check if Heathrow Express or Elizabeth Line is still running. Pre-booking a taxi is the easiest and most reliable option, or book a National Express coach, and pre-book a taxi or bus to/from. Victoria Coach station. All others, taxi to where you get the train out of London from.	Check if trains for Gatwick, Stansted or Luton are affected via the airport's website. If affected, book a National Express coach or pre-book a taxi.	Book a National Express coach or pre-book a taxi.

If you're travelling to/from the airport, be sure to reference [Chapter 7](#), where we tell you all of your transport options, so you can take an alternative to the service that's striking.

Make changes to your itinerary

How MUCH change you will need to make depends on how disrupted your travel will be. But it's highly recommended to have some flexibility and change whatever plans you can. If you've booked tours or made restaurant reservations with a cancellation policy, most will be happy for you to shift your booking to another, non-strike day as they understand if you will have difficulty getting there. Just give them a heads up at least 48 hours in advance so they can help you choose a new date.

Attractions will usually let you change the day of your tickets as well. Theatre tickets are a little trickier but if you contact them, they might be able to move you to a different day.

Again, especially if it's a city-wide Tube strike, people understand the difficulty of getting around so they will generally work with you to make sure you can still get to them during your trip.

Other transport options:

Don't forget that during a strike you can still:

➤ Walk!

You can see tons of London on foot.

➤ Cycle

Rent our city bikes, called Santander Cycles. You can find them around the city via the [Santander Cycles app](#). We also have electric bikes you can easily rent via [Lime](#) and [HumanForest](#), no licence needed.

➤ Uber Boat

A fun way to see the city, and you could start at Westminster, make your way east to Greenwich, explore there, then head back to Westminster.

➤ Pre-booked taxi

As mentioned, it's typically hard to call Ubers and Black Taxis on strike days as they're in high demand. Pre-booking is much more reliable. We recommend [Welcome Pickups](#).



➤ Coach

You could still head out of London via Coach with National Express or Megabus. They can take a while, but tickets are affordable.

➤ Organised tour

Some tour companies can take you outside of the city on their own comfy coach so if you still want to do a day trip that could be a great option. Just be sure you can get to the tour meeting point without a problem! You can find these on sites like [Get Your Guide](#) and [Viator](#).

Accessible travel on strike days

If the service you need is running then you'll still be able to use it as you need and get assistance. Be sure to use the Passenger Assistance website or app to book your travel, and if you have already, it won't be affected by strikes.

CHAPTER 10:

HOW TO TAKE PUBLIC TRANSPORT TO THE REST OF THE UK



While we have SO much to do in London that you could spend WEEKS exploring without getting bored, we do appreciate that a lot of tourists also want to explore a UK city or two outside of London. So in this section, we'll be covering how to use public transportation to do that.

Which cities are most popular for day trips?

The three most popular, and generally, the easiest to get to are Cambridge, Oxford and Bath. All of these options have direct train lines running to them from London.

Other cities that are also popular are York and Liverpool, plus tourists often like to see Stonehenge, near Salisbury.

The countryside area of The Cotswolds is also fairly popular, but generally is tricky to make work with public transport, and we would usually recommend booking a tour that takes you to certain towns in The Cotswolds by coach, like [this one](#).

A bit further afield, so more likely to be at least an over-nighter, is Edinburgh, Scotland, plus outside of the UK is Paris, Amsterdam and Brussels, all accessed via the Eurostar.

We're going to cover the two main options for travelling around the UK via public transport: train and coach.



Buying train tickets for travel around the UK

Because the rail system is privatised in the UK, train travel isn't quite as straightforward, or as cheap, as in the rest of Europe. But we'll cover everything you should know to make your travel around the UK as simple as possible.

Where to buy train tickets

There are three ways you can buy tickets:

➤ At a London train station

You can buy tickets at a London train station (not Tube) ahead of time or just before you want to hop on a train to go somewhere. Your best bet is to use the automated ticket machines, which take both card and cash. Some stations will have ticket info booths with staff, but you generally shouldn't need this, especially as there's often a line to speak to someone and you should be able to find other staff walking around that can offer help if needed.



The ticket machines are pretty self explanatory, the only confusing part is choosing a ticket type, which we'll cover shortly.

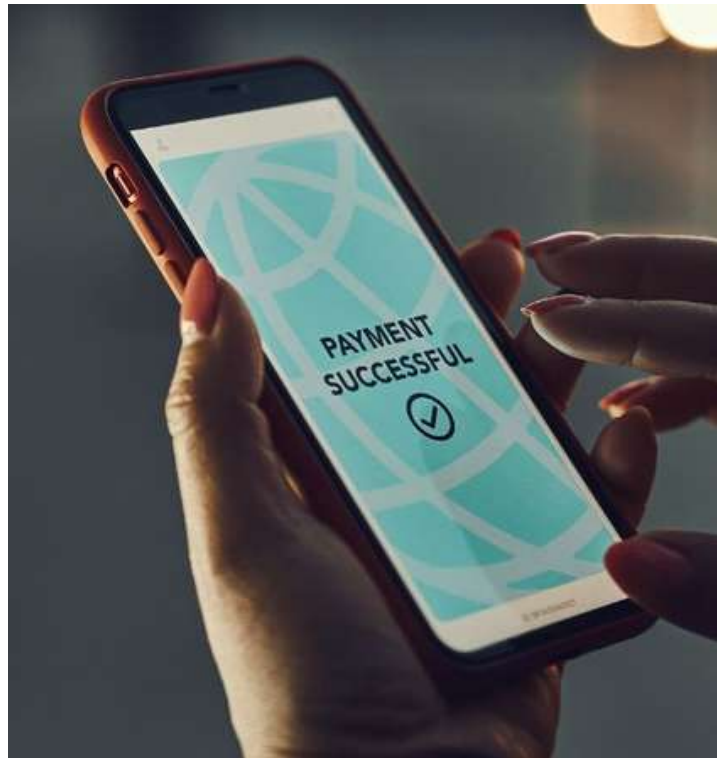
By the way, there's no ONE train station that all trains go from to get to other parts of the UK, there are quite a few. So when you're looking for options to get to another city, put your departure city just as "London" or "London (any)" and it'll give you options from the station(s) that that route departs from. For example, if you want to go to Cambridge, direct trains go from St. Pancras, Kings Cross, AND Liverpool Street station. Be sure to go to the correct station for your ticket!

➤ Online/apps

There are a few different sites and apps you can use to book e-tickets for trains going around the UK. We do like [Omio](#) especially as you can also book for travel around Europe, and therefore keep all of your tickets in one place. But for UK travel we generally find [Trainline](#) to be the most reliable and while they do sometimes charge a small booking fee, for tourists who don't need to add more stress to your travel planning, this is a good app/website to go with.

Trainline also offers a “SplitSave” feature which can save you quite a lot of money on your tickets. This basically figures out if it’s cheaper to split your journey into two tickets (one way) instead of one. It has to do with peak timings and is a little confusing to explain, so all you need to know is 1 – that’s it’s legit and 2 – Trainline automatically works this out for you and can sometimes really save a LOT.

Your tickets will be full virtual with a QR code, which you scan at the barriers at the stations on either side of your journey. It’s very easy, even with multiple people, just have one person holding the phone and scanning everyone in (and finally, them) or go to the wide barriers and show your QR codes to the staff member there.



➤ From train conductors

This option should only be used as a last resort. If for some reason you need to hop on a train quickly and don’t have time to buy a ticket, you can get on the train and buy from the conductor. But you’ll need to go and find the conductor somewhere on the train before they find YOU and fine you for not having a ticket. Totally annoying if you’ve got bags or kids in tow. So... avoid!

Peak vs. off peak travel and other ticket types

There are a few different ticket types you’ll be presented with when buying online or at the train station.

The main one is peak vs. off peak tickets. Travelling on trains during peak times means the ticket price will be higher. Peak times vary a bit between train companies, but generally they are from 4:30am to 9:30am for trains going TO London, and 4:00pm to 7:00pm for trains LEAVING London, on weekdays only. So it’s basically to charge commuters into London more for the busiest travel times.

Because you’re a tourist and might have some flexibility with your timing, or will be travelling in the opposite direction of commuters (so leaving when most are commuting into the city, and then doing the reverse), it would actually be pretty simple to avoid having to buy peak tickets, which are confusingly called “Anytime Day Single” tickets, NOT peak, because, well, marketing...

You might also see some options like:

➤ “Super Off-Peak”

Which is even cheaper than Off-Peak, for a variety of reasons, like you’re booking in advance (called or “Advance Single”) or the timing of that train just isn’t a popular one.

➤ “Anytime Single” or “Anytime Return”

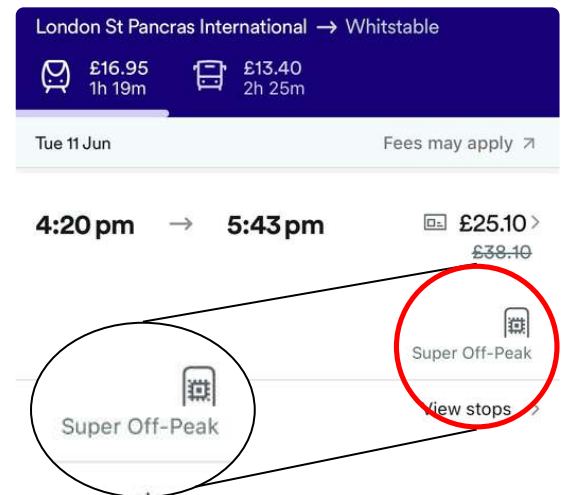
If it doesn’t have “Day” in the name, then you aren’t stuck to the date on the ticket, you can travel outbound on the day of travel + 4 days after, and return can be up to a month later. This flexibility makes these tickets cost quite a bit more than a Day ticket, but lets you keep your travel options open.



When you’re not sure what a ticket name means, there’s usually a little “i” button that gives you more info about the terms of that ticket type.

How do you know if you need to buy a peak train ticket?

If you’re buying variable tickets, it’ll automatically give you the ticket you need for the train time you’re buying for. For example, if you’re travelling to Cambridge at 6:30pm on a Wednesday, that’s peak time, so you’ll only see the option to buy an “Anytime Day Single”. If you’re buying on Trainline, you’ll see if it’s off-peak show up when scrolling through the departure time options.



Variable vs set-price train tickets

A question we get a LOT is: should we buy train tickets ahead of time, or just when we get to the train station?

The answer varies by route– but usually, you’ll want to buy in advance.

Some train routes that take you not very far from London have a flat fee, so there’s, for the most part, one fee for peak travel, and one for off-peak, whether you buy your tickets weeks ahead, or twenty minutes before you hop on the train.

But most routes have variable pricing, so you will see pricing that is all over the place, it might be £25 for one train, and one leaving 20 minutes later is twice the price.

Flat-fee routes, you can buy tickets whenever you like, no stress.

For variable routes, generally, you'll want to buy tickets sooner rather than later, as prices can go up significantly.

How can you tell if a journey that you're looking at has variable or set-price fares?

If you're looking at your train options on a certain day of travel, you'll see a bunch of different pricing options for the same route but at different times. When you do, that's when you'll want to book tickets early, and not wait until the last minute, when they'll likely be super expensive.

If the prices stay generally the same, you don't have to book in advance (although you of course can, if you want to).

Trainline also sometimes shows you if they think the ticket price will go up soon.

Operator	Train No.	From	To	Time	Transfers	Price
Chiltern Railways	C38934	London Marylebone	Oxford	8:11 AM - 9:32 AM (1h21m)	0	£28
GWR	G44513	London Paddington	Oxford	8:22 AM - 9:19 AM (0h57m)	0	£25
GWR	G44698 • C79937	London Paddington	Oxford	8:38 AM - 9:37 AM (0h59m)	1	£64

NOT SURE?

Still confused? All good. If you're pretty set on when you want to take your day trip, just go ahead and book your tickets, so you can check it off your list and be done with it, and potentially save a chunk of money.



	Variable or Fixed?
Gatwick	Fixed
Cambridge	Variable
Oxford	Variable
Bath	Variable
York	Variable
Edinburgh	Variable
Brighton	Fixed

Are your tickets for a certain time, or can you hop on whenever you want?

Again, this varies by route and what time and day you travel, so here's how to check before you buy a ticket.

When you're looking at timing options for a certain date and route, click into one of the options.

You'll then see a few different terms telling you what you're able to do. In this example, it says "Specified train only", so you can ONLY take that specific train, so don't miss it!

In this example, you'll see it says "Any off-peak train", and then below "You can also travel on..." and "valid same day". This means you have some flexibility on which train you hop on that day, but make sure it's not a peak train!

LumoFixed (Standard Class) ⓘ £60.90

Specified train only. No refunds.
Outbound: Only valid on booked Lumo services.

More tickets available from £67
[View more tickets](#)

→ Tue, 11 Jun

12:18 pm → **4:41 pm**
London Kings Cross → Edinburgh (Waverley)
4h 23m, direct **lumo**

Specified Train Only

Off-Peak Day Single ⓘ £16.55

Any off-peak train.
Outbound: Valid only on Greater Anglia services.

More tickets available from £18.50
[View more tickets](#)

→ Wed, 05 Jun

6:37 pm → **7:46 pm**
London Liverpool Street → Cambridge
1h 9m, direct **Greater Anglia**

Any Off-Peak Train

Discounts for kids, mature travellers, etc.

Kids on trains... here's what you should know.

➤ Kids under 5

Kids under 5 ride for free on most trains around the UK. They only get their own seat if you have one next to you that isn't needed by an adult who's paid for it, so they might end up sitting on your lap. If you prefer them to have their own seat, then you'll need to buy a child ticket, which we'll talk about in a second.

When you're booking tickets through Trainline, you can add the ages of the children travelling with you so that it automatically calculates the correct ticket for them. If you need to buy a child ticket so they have their own seat, bump the age up to 5 so it assumes you need a child ticket.

➤ Kids 5-15

On most trains, children in this age range get a 50% discount on train tickets. Just add their ages to the "child" tickets option when you're doing your ticket searches in the Trainline or on the website.

It's recommended that you bring "ID" for children under 16 so you can prove that they are young enough to get the discount. In actuality, unless your 15 year old looks 20, it's unlikely they will be questioned. If they do have ID though, bring it along, just in case.

➤ Kids 16+

For kids who are just visiting the UK and aren't residents, the discounts sadly end at 15. They're a full-blown adult now!

➤ Group Saver

Most train companies in the UK offer "Group Saver" discounts for groups of three or more travelling together. The discount amount can vary, but is usually a pretty decent discount especially as tickets get more expensive. Trainline calculates Group Saver rates for you automatically so it's very easy to take advantage of!

➤ Discounts for 65+

There aren't any discounts available for visitors to the UK who are 65 and over, sorry!

Taking the Eurostar to Paris, Amsterdam or Brussels

Because we're focusing mostly on London in this guide, we won't get too much into taking the Eurostar, but we do have this high-speed train option to get to France, Belgium and The Netherlands.

You can book tickets for the Eurostar on [Omio](#) or the [Eurostar website](#).



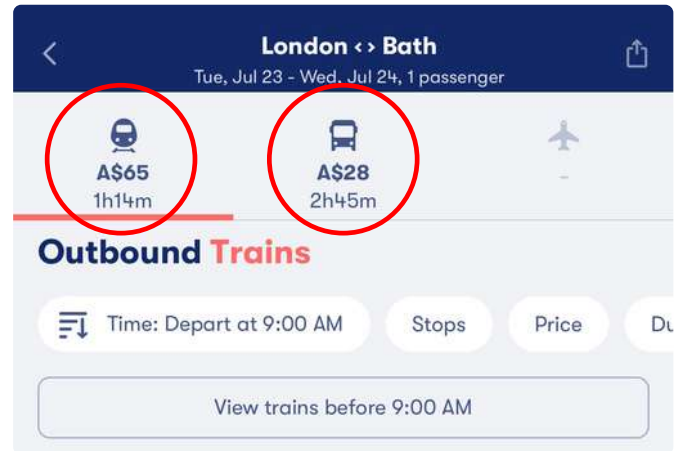
Coaches to the rest of the UK

It's possible to also take coaches to some cities around the UK. Generally these can be a cheaper option but might take a lot longer than a train, but this varies by route. There are two major coach companies: National Express and Megabus.

How to find and buy coach tickets

By far, the best way to see if there are coach options for getting from London to a certain city is to search on [Omio](#). You'll see both Megabus and National Express routes in one list, and you can easily switch to the "train" tab to compare costs and timings between coach and train. You can also book in your local currency.

When searching for coaches on [Omio](#), use "London" as your starting or ending point, but keep in mind that there are a LOT of coach stops around the city, so one might be much closer to your hotel than another, so use Google Maps to check that. You might find that the coach is cheaper but will also require a 40-minute Tube journey to get to the stop, whereas the train option is much more convenient.



Can you hop on any coach or is it for the set time you've bought?

Your ticket is only valid for the time you purchased it for.

CHAPTER 11:

TRANSPORT ETIQUETTE AND OTHER FINAL THINGS TO KNOW



Ok we have covered a LOT by this point, so you've already almost reached pro level when it comes to London transport, well done! In this last section, we'll cover some Tube etiquette to follow. Some of it might be similar to where you're from, or it might be totally different.

Stand on the right on all escalators

When you're in a Tube or train station in the UK, and you find yourself hopping on an escalator, it's REALLY important to make sure you're on the correct side. If you want to walk down or up the escalator, do that to the left side. If you want to stand, stand to the right side.

But don't worry, if you don't remember to stand to the right, a Londoner will pretty quickly come up behind you and remind you that you're not where you're meant to be 😊



Give wheelchairs users priority

When on the Tube, you might see fold-down seats, and you can sit on them. Keep in mind that these are designed so that the seats can be folded up to make room for people in wheelchairs, so be sure to move if you see someone get on that needs the space.

There's also a dedicated space on the ground floor of buses that is for strollers and wheelchairs, however, if you have a stroller in that area and someone with a wheelchair gets on the bus, they take priority and you'll need to move.



Have your payment method ready early

We like to be efficient in this city, so as you approach the barriers at a Tube station, have your payment method ready to go early, don't start searching for it when it's your turn to enter the barriers. It slows the rest of us down. Same deal when getting on a bus, have it ready as you step on and it's your turn to touch in.

Give your seat up for someone who needs it

If you see someone get on that looks like they might struggle to stand on the moving tube or bus and you're physically able, please give up your seat for them. You especially must do this if you're sitting in a priority seat (you'll see the sticker to the right if that's the case). Remember that not everyone has a visible disability, but they might be wearing a yellow sunflower lanyard, or a button saying "please offer me a seat" that shows they need one, so keep an eye out for those.



Image courtesy of TfL

Move down into the middle of the carriage

If the Tube carriage that you're on starts to get busy and you're standing, be sure to move into the middle, away from the doors, so that more people can squeeze on. This is especially important when it's rush hour, as everyone's trying to get to work on time!

Let people off before you get on

It's common courtesy to let everyone off the train or bus before you try to push on. You'll make some people angry if you try to do that, plus it just holds up the flow of traffic.

Take your backpack off

If you're standing on a crowded bus or Tube, it can be a pain to be the person squished in behind you if you've kept your backpack on. Instead, take it off and put it at your feet, and for added security, put your foot through one of the loops so no one can run off with it.

That covers it!

YOU'RE DONE!

You now know everything there is to know about taking and mastering London transport.

If you feel a little overwhelmed with all of this info, leave it for a few days and then read it through one more time. Keep this file on your phone so you can always reference it while in London if you need a refresher.

And PLEASE... we want to see you in action on public transport! Snap a pic or video of you and your travel group waiting for the tube or riding on the top deck of a double decker bus, and tag [@LoveandLondon](#) so we can share with our other followers how you're practically a Londoner now.

Have a GREAT trip!