



Train Tickets Explained

Train tickets may look a bit complicated at first sight but, once you understand the three main types, the rest follows easily. Take a look at our mini-guide below to understand more about the different types of train ticket.

Advance

Advance tickets are available on many routes (especially longer distance ones) and must be purchased before the day of travel. They cannot be purchased on the day of travel. They are limited in availability and usually get more expensive the closer you get to the day of travel (they will never get cheaper so, if you know when you want to travel, then book your tickets). You must travel on the train and date specified on your ticket, and cannot decide on the day to travel on a different train (if you do you may be charged a full fare). You can change the date / time of travel in advance for a fee. These tickets cannot be refunded. Advance tickets are always sold as singles - if you want to do a return journey, just buy two Advance tickets. Advance tickets always include seat reservations on journeys where these are available.

Off-Peak

Off-Peak tickets are flexible tickets that are valid at 'off-peak' times of the day. These times will vary depending what journey you are making and our journey planner will show you what times of the day your Off-Peak ticket is valid. As a rule, Off-Peak tickets are valid at any time of the day on Saturdays, Sundays and Public Holidays and after around 09.30 on Mondays to Fridays (though they may not be valid on some evening services, which may start as early as 3pm and last until around 7pm).

The great thing about Off-Peak tickets is that they are flexible - so long as you are travelling in an Off-Peak time you can travel on any train you want. Off-Peak return tickets are also valid for up to a calendar month - so, if you're not sure what day (or time) you're coming back, these are a good bet (so long as you are travelling in the off-peak time).

Anytime

Anytime tickets are fully flexible tickets that are valid on all trains on every day of the week, with no time restrictions (note that there are some Anytime tickets that are valid on the trains of a particular operator only, and these will be clearly marked as such, e.g. "Hull Trains Only" - but they still remain valid at any time of the day).

If your travel plans are likely to change, and you know you need to travel at peak times, then an Anytime ticket may well be your best choice. Even if you have reserved your seats on one train, you can still get on another if you need to.

Anytime return tickets are valid for five days on trains on your outward journey and for up to one calendar month for your return journey (Anytime Day Return tickets are valid only on the day of course).

Packages

Packages are Anytime tickets with some extras included - such as London Underground travel, food and drink or car parking. Sometimes these extras are available for free so it's a good idea to look out for these. Our journey planner will tell you what your Package contains.

Understanding Your Train Ticket

