

Using Public Transport

Public transport refers to public buses, trains, trams and coaches. These can all be a good way to get around your local area and beyond.

Using the Bus

Make sure you arrive at the bus stop in plenty of time. When you see the bus that you want to get coming, put out your arm to indicate that you want it to stop and pick you up.



Once the bus stops and the doors open, wait for any passengers to disembark before boarding. Then get on the bus, and tell the driver where you want to go and whether you want a single ticket or an all-day ticket. He or she will tell you how much the ticket is. Place the money on the tray next to the driver. Any change you are owed will be dispensed below the tray. Take your ticket from the machine on your left. Then, you can go and find a seat.

If all of the seats are taken, you will have to stand. If you are seated and an elderly or pregnant person boards the bus and there are no seats available for them, it is polite to offer them your seat, unless you need to remain seated yourself for medical reasons.

As well as buying your ticket on the bus, you can also purchase tickets in advance from various newsagents and post offices. With these tickets,

Image 1 courtesy of [nitinut at FreeDigitalPhotos.net](#)

Image 2 courtesy of [Vichaya Kiatying-Angsulee at FreeDigitalPhotos.net](#)

you need to use a coin to scratch off the day, date and year that you are going to travel. When you board the bus, show the ticket to the driver.

When your stop is approaching, look for the nearest bell button and press it in plenty of time. Gather your belongings and wait for the bus to stop. Once it has stopped, make your way to the exit and remember to say “thank you” to the driver as you disembark. Once you are off the bus, take a few steps away from it as it is dangerous to linger near a bus that is about to drive off.

Some bus operators let you buy tickets online. These can be one-day tickets, or in some cases, weekly, monthly or a one-year ticket. Many bus companies will also have dedicated shops where you can also purchase week, month or year tickets.

Certain bus companies have ‘smart cards’ that you can use which you can add money to online. If you have one of these, you need to press it against the card reader when you board the bus and wait until the light on the reader turns green. For an example of a smart card used by Brighton and Hove Buses, see <http://www.buses.co.uk/tickets/key.aspx> Another example is the Oyster Card which is used in London <http://www.tfl.gov.uk/tickets/14836.aspx>

If you are eligible for a free bus pass, some companies require you to press these against a card reader, as above. If there is no card reader available, simply show your pass to the driver.



Using the Train

Allow plenty of time. Enter the train station and approach the ticket counter. If there is a queue, take your place at the back and wait your turn. When it is your turn, tell the member of staff where you want to go and whether you want a single or a return. They may ask you what time you are returning; this is so that they know which type of ticket to sell to you as some are time-specific. Pay for and take your ticket.

Many train stations now have automatic ticket barriers. Put your ticket into the slot at the automated ticket barrier. The barrier should then open and your ticket should appear at the top of the barrier. Take your ticket and walk through the barrier quickly. If the barrier does not open after you have inserted your ticket, ask the nearest member of staff for help.

If there is no barrier, but there is a member of staff, simply show them your ticket. They may need to clip or write on your ticket to show that they have inspected it, so do not be alarmed if they take it and clip part of it or write on it.

Use the information screens to find out what platform you need to go to. If in doubt, ask a member of staff. Make your way to the platform and wait for your train. Make sure you stand back from the edge of the platform.

Once your train arrives, stand to the side of the nearest set of doors and allow passengers to disembark before boarding. Then get on the train and find somewhere to sit.

When you are drawing near to your stop, make sure you gather your belongings and put your coat on in plenty of time. When the train stops, press the button to open the doors and step on to the platform. Follow signs to the exit. You may need to use automated ticket barriers or show your ticket to a member of staff in order to exit the station, as described above. Make sure you keep your ticket somewhere safe as you will need it for your return journey.

If you need help planning your journey, there are various websites that can help you such as

<http://ojp.nationalrail.co.uk/service/planjourney/search>

You can also phone bus or train companies directly for help with planning a journey.

If you need additional support, many rail companies will arrange for a member of staff to meet you and help you with buying a ticket and making your way on to the train. A member of staff can also meet you at your destination station to help you to the exit. If you would like this support, you generally need to phone and book it at least 48 hours in advance. You may need to explain that you have Asperger Syndrome or High Functioning Autism in order to be eligible for this support.