

GWR

Great
Western
Railway

Friendly guide to travelling with confidence



Introduction

This guide provides information and advice to make your journey more comfortable when travelling. What will be covered:

- Things you can expect to see and hear while travelling.
- Information on each step of your journey.
- Useful tips and links.

Please use the contents page to skip to the section that is most relevant to you.



Contents



What you need to know before you travel

Plan your journey

Where possible plan your journey in advance. Have you reviewed the logistics of your journey? Have you considered an alternate plan if you experience any delays?

You can research your trip and gather information in a number of ways:

- using applications such as GWR or National rail
- using websites such as [GWR.com](https://www.gwr.com)
- using train timetables
- asking for a journey print out from a member of staff

Consider the following:

- what time you'll travel
- your destination
- your departing station
- your arriving station
- station changeovers
- number of stops on route
- timings
- prices
- if you will need assistance

Sounds you may hear

Click [here](#) to check out our soundbite series, which demonstrates some of the sounds you may experience whilst travelling.

The following are sounds you may expect to hear while at the station.

- busy platforms including shouting
- whistle sounds as train departs
- variety of train sounds
- announcements
- suitcase wheels
- train horn



Useful information

- Avoid travelling during rush hour for a quieter journey.
- Covid-19 cleaning measures still take place to support cleanliness and prevention.
- You could utilise items such as the sunflower lanyard to indicate you need some additional support.
- Toilets are located throughout our staffed stations. Use station signage to locate them.
- Monitor your platform for any changes using the screens and announcements.
- If your train is delayed listen out for announcements stating any connected services or speak to a member of staff who can investigate on your behalf.



Packing for your journey

Think about what you would find useful and pack them for your journey.

Essentials:

- Train tickets (whether you have a digital or paper ticket make sure they are active and easy to locate).
- Money (including cash, card, or electronic payment methods).

You may also want to bring:

- Phone & charging device
- Headphones, ear plugs or ear defenders
- Portable games console
- Book
- Notebook & Pen
- Information card & communication device
- Hidden Disabilities Sunflower lanyard
- Sensory items
- Medication
- Food, snacks & drinks



Buying your ticket

Tickets can be purchased using an app or website with your phone. They can be posted to you, or you can collect*

E-Tickets

Tickets purchased online will produce a virtual ticket containing a QR code which can be scanned at the gateline or by a ticket inspector on a train.

Ticket Vending Machine (TVM)

These can be used to purchase tickets from a station. Not all stations have TVM's; use GWR.com/stations to research your station facilities in advance.

Booking Office

Some stations have staffed booking offices where you can purchase your tickets. Research your station facilities in advance using GWR.com/stations. If you are unable to use a ticket vending machine and a booking office is closed you are able to purchase a ticket from a member of staff on board the train.

Railcards

There are a number of railcards available to you, which can be used for discounted rail tickets. See which ones are available: GWR.com/railcards

If you have a Disabled Persons Railcard – this gives 1/3 off adult train fares for you and a companion.

You can find out more information about the Disabled Persons Railcard on the National Rail website.

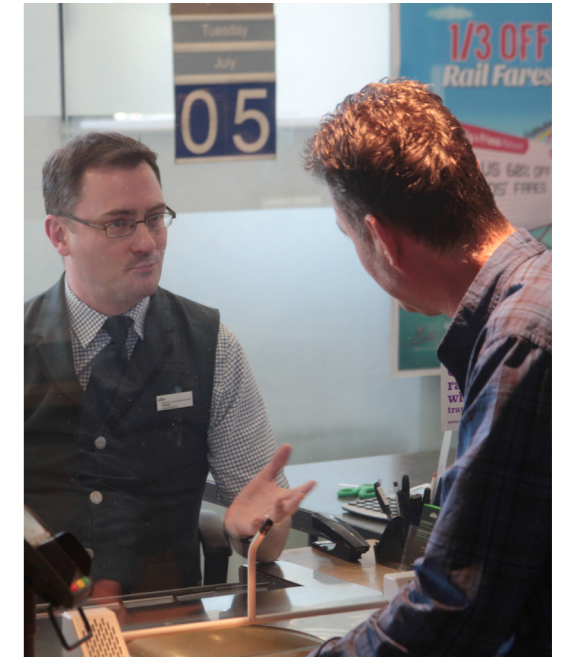
Ticket types

There are different ticket types that you can purchase which can vary in price;

- Advance tickets – only valid on a particular date and train (but may be cheaper).
- Anytime tickets – can be used on any date and train (but may be more expensive).
- Off-Peak or Super-Off Peak tickets – have some time restrictions on them (which can vary across different train companies), but they can enable cheaper travel if you want to travel outside of the busiest times.

Check before you travel: It's a good idea to plan your journey before you get to the station. You can see if there are any planned maintenance works on the line which might affect your journey.

*Online tickets purchased through a website or app can be digital, posted or for collection. If you choose collection, be sure the station you're travelling from has a ticket collection machine and you have your booking reference number which will be needed to collect your tickets.



Collecting your tickets

What you need to know when collecting your tickets from the station.

- If collecting your ticket at a station, you will need to have the reference number of the booking available. It can be helpful to have this reference number ready in advance so you can access it easily for when you need it. You will also need your payment card used to make the booking.
- When collecting your tickets, there will often be more than one piece to your ticket – please ensure you wait until they are all printed.
- Once you have your tickets, keep them in a safe place – you'll need them later in your journey.

Getting to the station

There are lots of ways you can get to the train station.

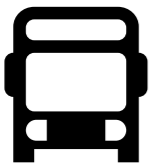
Check how long it will take to travel and make sure you leave enough time before your train journey.



By bus



By car



By coach



By walking



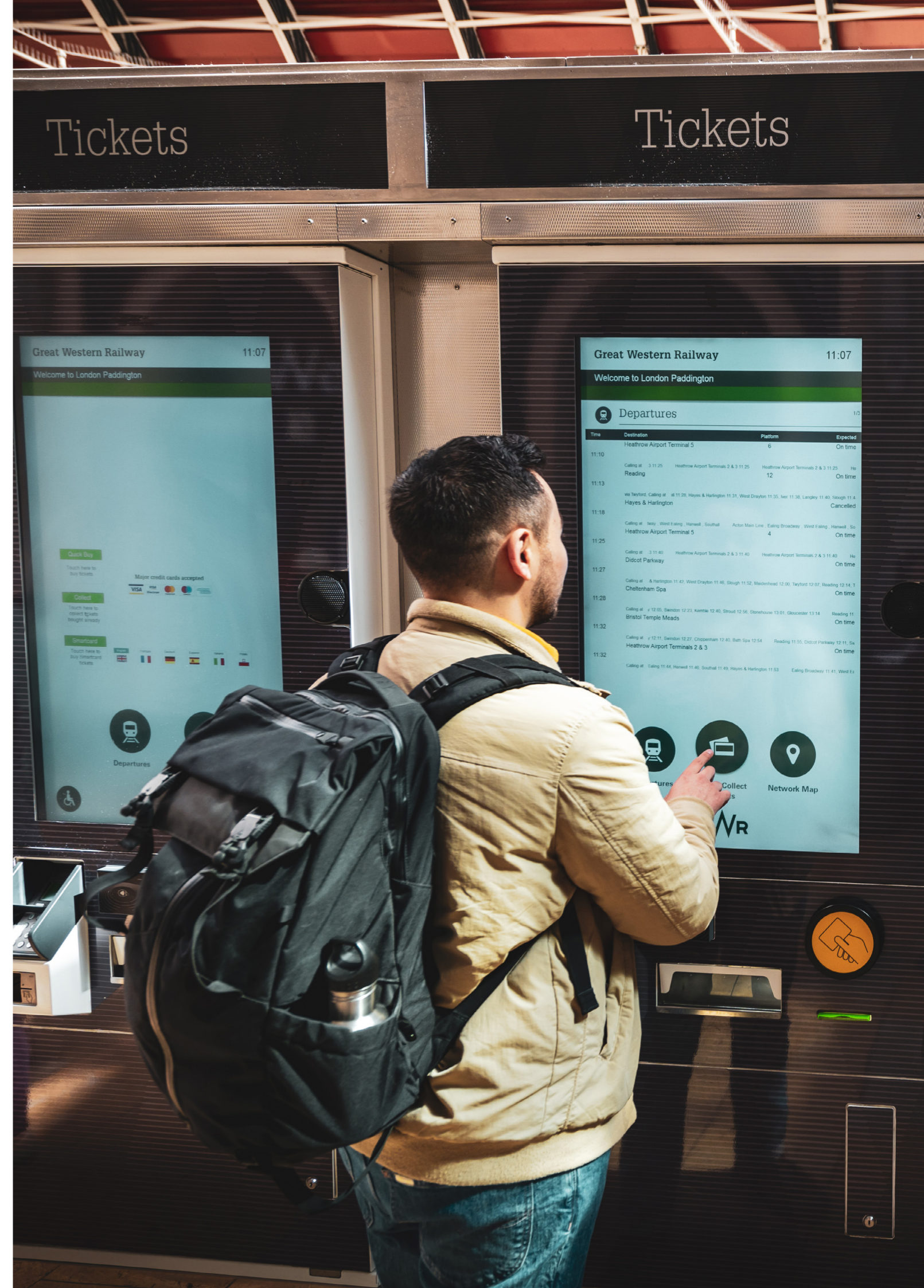
By bicycle



By underground/subway/tube



By taxi



Going through the barriers

In many stations, you may have to pass through ticket barriers in order to get to your platform.

Access to the platform will be controlled at busier stations, with barriers opening closer to departure times. Use departure boards to identify when your train is ready for boarding.

How to use your ticket to get through the ticket barriers:

Magnetic strip tickets

Insert your ticket through the barrier slot and receive your ticket on top of the unit. Your ticket will not reappear at the top of the barrier once you have completed your travel. Magnetic strip tickets are usually orange in colour.

E-Tickets

Tickets with a QR code are placed on the bottom screen reader. Present your QR code and keep it still until the gates open. If the QR code is on a mobile device ensure your screen brightness is high.

Smart Cards

These are tapped against the yellow contactless reader on the top of the ticket barrier.

Good to know

The wide aisle gates will stay open longer. If you are traveling with large items, please use these gates. You will only be able to enter using barriers with a green arrow.

If your ticket is not working, speak to a member of staff who can support you.

If you haven't used a ticket barrier before stand back and watch others use them first.

[Click here](#) to watch one of our community rail partner's travel top tips videos:



Finding your Platform

There are multiple ways of finding your platform.

Departure and customer information screens will display relevant information. These can be found at station entrances and throughout the station.

Information displayed on these screens include train layout, platform number, stopping patterns and timings.

Use the screens or an app to locate your platform and wait for your train there. If you have to wait to be allowed onto the platform, wait where you can view a departure board. At some stations waiting rooms will be available.



Waiting on the Platform

When you get to the platform – check the board to make sure you're on the right one.

You can speak to a staff member if you're unsure.

Sometimes platforms change, check the customer information screens regularly to ensure your train is still coming in on the right platform.

Platform stop car markers indicate where trains of different sizes will stop on the platform. This information can be used to wait in an area that the train is likely to stop.



Getting on the train

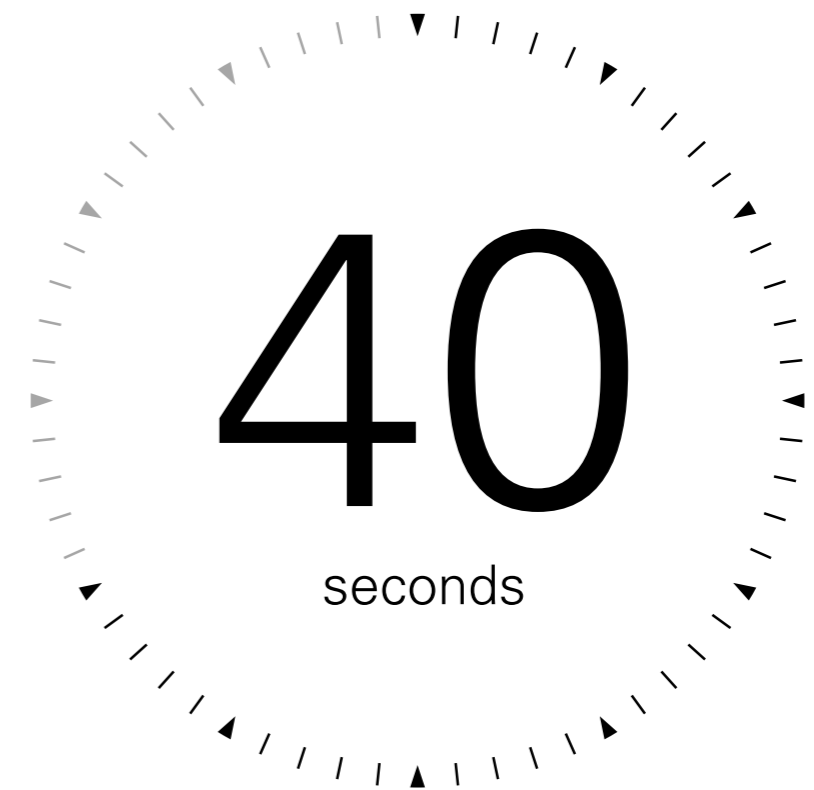
Boarding a train is a simple and easy process

Seat reservations state a carriage and seat number. Use the train layout displayed on customer information screens to ensure you board in the right location. Alternatively, ask a member of staff.

Train door buttons flash when they are ready to be opened. Mind the gap between the train and the platform when boarding and use the handles on board if you require additional support.

Queues can often form where people wait to board. Spread out along each of the doors to prevent delay.

Trains leave up to 40 seconds before the advertised departure time so be sure to be at the platform in advance.



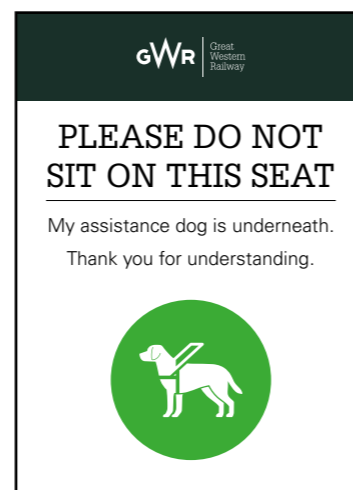
Finding your seat

Once on board, the next stage is to find your seat.

- If you have booked a seat, your seat number will be displayed on your ticket. If you haven't booked a seat, you can use any unreserved seat.
- Some people sit in reserved seats because there is nowhere else to sit and understand they'll need to move if the reservation holder arrives. It's acceptable to ask them to move. If you don't feel comfortable with this, locate a member of staff who should be able to help. Alternatively, you may choose to sit in an unreserved seat nearby.
- If you are on a train without a reservation system, or you didn't reserve a seat, walk onto the train and simply look out for a free seat.



Guide dogs may occupy the space under a seat, next to their owners. Please don't attempt to sit in the vacant seats where the dog resides below. Seat markers are available to guide dog users to indicate that their dog is sat below the vacant chair and can be downloaded from our website within the useful downloads section. Find out more [here](#).



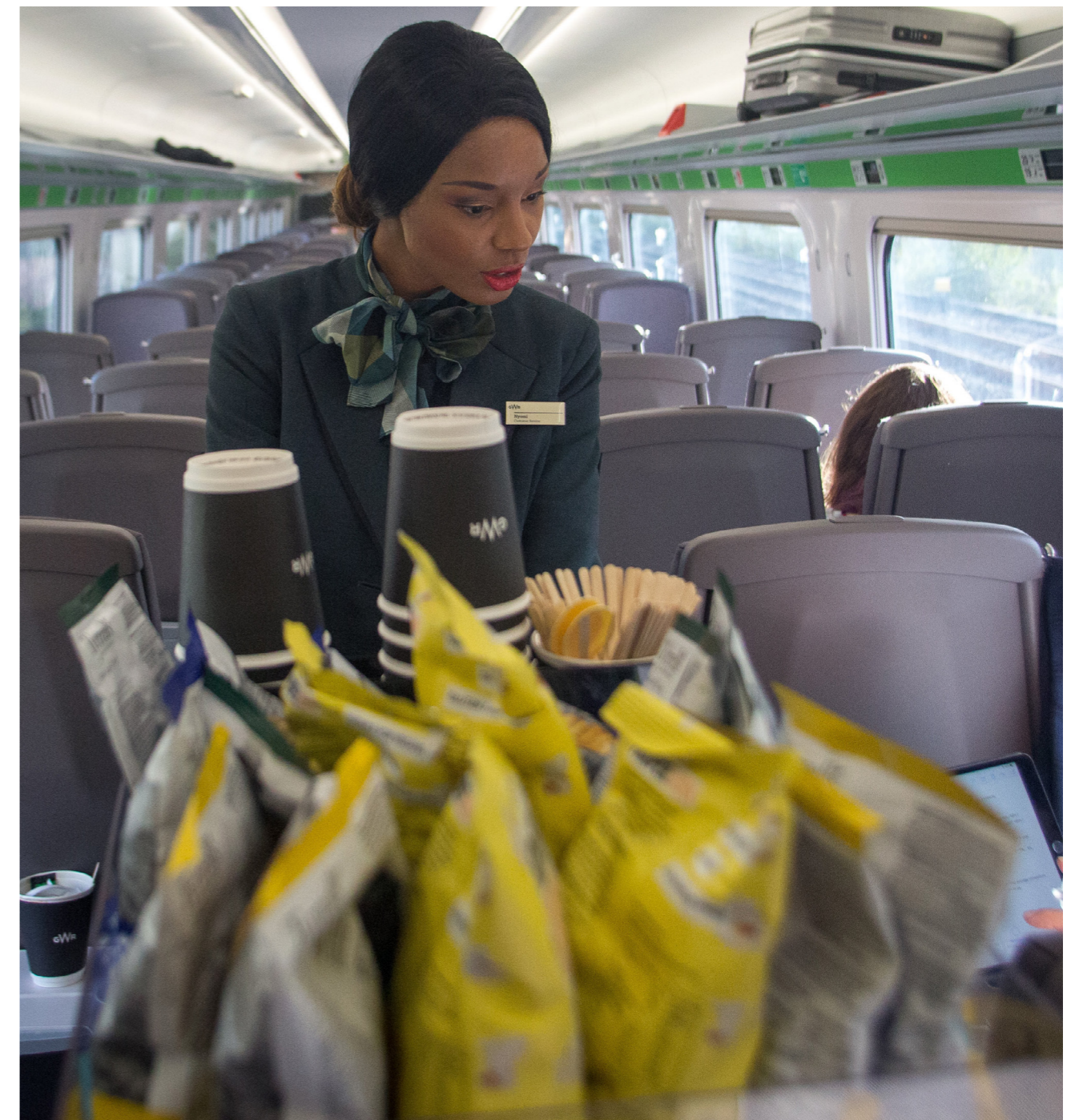
On the train

What to expect when travelling.

Large items of luggage can be stowed in the luggage racks at either end of the train carriage.

Many people opt to sit alone on board unless they are travelling with companions. When travelling alone, often people prefer to listen to music, read books or use their laptops on the train.

Colleagues should announce each station on the approach. You can also use journey planners or applications to track where you are on your journey. Please refer to pages 20-22 for more information.



Arriving at your destination

Check you have all your belongings before leaving the train.

To exit the train you will need to open the doors by pressing the flashing button. Once you've pressed this, it may take a moment for the doors to fully open.

As you leave the train, mind the gap between the train and the platform edge.

To locate the exit, follow the signs either overhead or beneath your feet. For connecting journeys use the departure boards located throughout the station, or alternatively use an app.

Where ticket barriers are closed, use your ticket to exit the gates.



Lost Property

All lost property found by colleagues is collected and held at our lost property offices.

If we find what you're looking for, we'll keep it for up to 3 months. You can collect it, send someone else, or pay to have it returned. You can register your missing items on MissingX, please scan the QR code for more information.



Lost Property Tips

- label your luggage so it can be identified if lost.
- carry your ticket in a ticket wallet or safe place.
- have a checklist of items before you leave the train so you remember everything.



Reducing Anxiety When Travelling

Our top tips to make travelling easier

Technology

Use available applications to track and support your journey.

Mindfulness

Concentrate on surroundings such as landscapes and utilise breathing techniques.

Buddy Up

Travel with a companion to support you. Alternatively use a phone to contact someone digitally whilst travelling.

Distraction

Listen to music, read a book or complete an activity to take your mind off travelling.

Comfort

Bring something small and familiar with you like a teddy or a fidget spinner.

Location

Travel where there are staff on board and near an exit.

Support When Overwhelmed

- If you become overwhelmed whilst travelling our colleagues will support you in the way you need.
- If you are unable to continue on the train, get out at the next stop if necessary. If you can inform a member of staff so that they can support you.
- Call a friend or family member to help you.
- Practice breathing exercises.

Travelling can be daunting but by looking up information in advance and utilising the help available, we can support you in travelling with confidence.



Additional help

Asking for help at a station

At a station which is staffed you could ask a member of staff to help you, this could be done verbally or by using a communication device or card. GWR staff members all carry a GWR identification card.

Asking for help whilst on a train

There may be a train manager on your train who you can ask for help; this could be done verbally or by using a communication device or card. Some people choose to carry an information card that they can use to explain to other people that they are autistic or that to use to request help (without needing to talk). GWR staff members all carry a GWR identification card.

If you need any help whilst at any of our stations please go to the customer service desk or speak to one of the members of staff around the station. Staff in different stations often wear different uniforms as they work for different companies, but they may look similar to these photos. Not all stations will have staff.

Help at a Staffed Station

Members of staff at staffed locations can be identified by a GWR ID and name tag. Please ask a member of staff for any help you need.

Unstaffed Locations

At most of our unstaffed stations, you will find Information Help Points. Use the blue information button for information and the green emergency button if you have an emergency (like calling 999).

On Board

Many of our trains have a staff member traveling on board. If you cannot locate them walking through the train, they can usually be located in the rear carriage of the train.



Booking passenger assistance

If you'd like to book passenger assistance you can do so in a variety of ways.

- using the Passenger Assistance app
- calling **0800 197 1329**
- or using text relay on **18001 0800 197 1329**

Meeting Points

These signs are in place at stations to indicate where you should wait for assistance. Please let a member of staff know when you've arrived at the station that you require assistance.



Useful Websites

Station access map

Find all the information about station accessibility across the United Kingdom [here](#).

Passenger Assist

In just a few clicks you can request to book assistance, so every rail journey you take is as stress-free as possible. More details [here](#).

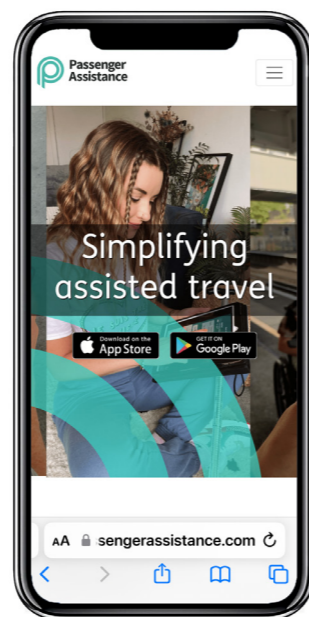
Find a toilet near you

Click [here](#) to find changing facilities.

Click [here](#) to discover the toilet map.

Live information on current delays, platform changes and departures

Click [here](#) for live updates.



Travel Cards & Schemes

GWR Travel Assistance Card

Find out about the travel assistance card [here](#).

JAM Card

Get your JAM card [here](#).

Orange Wallet Scheme

Find out more information [here](#).

Useful apps

Passenger assistance

Passenger Assistance is the new app for disabled people and their carers to request assistance for rail travel in Great Britain.

GWR

Buy train tickets to any destination in Britain; with no booking fees. We will show you all the ways you can complete your journey.

National Rail

Stay on track with the National Rail Enquiries App. Get live train times from all the major train line operators.



This is my journey

Use this journey planner to help plan your journey

Day of Travel

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
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Getting there

Start station		How many stops?	
Destination station		What time does the train leave?	
What time to leave home?		What time does the train arrive?	

Returning

Start station		How many stops?	
Destination station		What time does the train leave?	
What time to leave home?		What time does the train arrive?	

Check list - things I need - fill in what you need to take

Need help? Action plan - If things don't go to plan - what to do?



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