

Rail

Rail has become the preferred method of transport for more and more business travellers. Not just the main UK trunk routes, London to Manchester, Birmingham and Newcastle for example, but now the main European city pairs such as Amsterdam to Paris, Cologne To Paris, Paris to Marseille can be traversed in a speedy fashion.

The best way is to book beforehand and where possible to pick up your ticket from the fast terminal machine in most main stations.

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UK National Enquiries

This site is operated by National Rail and allows you to pick and chose the trains most suited to your needs. Once you have decided on your journey then the system will introduce you to the sites that can issue the ticket for you.



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Rail Bookings

Most people use either the train operator website or thetrainline.com for their bookings. These sites are generally very easy and quick, if you have registered, and can give very good options for fares. The best fares available are the off peak fixed train fares. Off peak may just mean setting out half an hour after you had thought but these fares can be absolute bargains.

Eg

First Class return Norwich to London Liverpool Street

Open return **£113.50**

Two fixed times out 08.30 and back 16.30 **£44.00**

- *No refund on the cheap ticket but it can still be much cheaper even if you cancel several journeys.*

Tickets can now be picked up at many stations using the Express ticket machines so you can book the night before. As with all good fares of course the earlier you book the better the fare.



Train Operators

Eurostar

This is the service between London St Pancras and Paris or Brussels and selected points between. This has been such a great success that many of the flights from London to Paris have been cancelled. Why not when you can take advantage of short a check in time and delivery right to the centre of town?

There are two classes of travel and also frequent user cards, first class lounges and above all a speedy journey. Why would anyone chose to travel out to London Heathrow Airport only to join a long check in queue, a longer security queue and then a long walk to a far off gate. By the time you have done all of that you could be over the channel and heading towards your destination in comfort and with room to work, read and eat without having to suffer the cramped conditions on most commuter planes these days.



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European Rail

There is a great network of trains in Europe, from the ultra speedy TGV's to the sedate tram like Swiss rural trains. Many routes are served and the timetables tend to cover most needs. It is surprising how few business people from the UK use these as they can be much faster door to door and certainly easier to cope with. One of the main reasons is that it used to be difficult to book European rail, it isn't now, and also the lack of geographic knowledge from the reservation staff at most TMC's.

Rail Europe is a great site. There are others if you use Google but this site is all you need.



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Amtrak – US Rail travel

There is no real time benefit on most US journeys as the distances are so great but routes such as New York to Boston and New York to Washington can be better than flying and certainly the destinations between those cities would best be served by using the train. The Acela Express takes less than three hours to go from Penn Street Station New York to Union Station Washington. It also takes just over three and a half hours to get from Penn Street to Boston South. Taking into account the time to get to any of the New York Airports, the check in and waiting time both at the gate and on the plane, it is probably faster to use the train.



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