

Get on Board Challenge Pack



Get on Board



Introduction

Welcome to Get on Board, our public transport challenge!

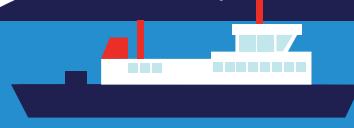
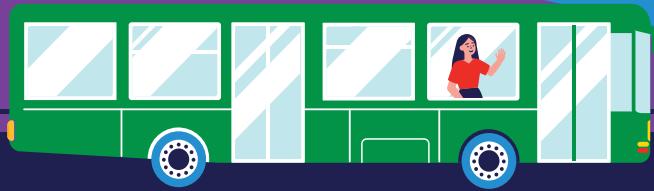
We know taking public transport can seem difficult when it's new to you or you're not used to going on trips as a big group. That's why we want to help by giving you the information and support you need to make it easier and more fun.

By building confidence taking public transport, your group will have access to more adventures that would be too expensive if you had to hire a coach. You'll also have the skills and knowledge to take your next steps, whether that's going into town with your friends, going on a trip with family, or being confident about commuting for jobs or moving to another area for university.

If you're a leader, check out the resources for leaders [on our website which](#) covers all you need to know about planning and risk assessing a trip on public transport.



Get on Board



What do you need to do to get your badge

To earn your Get on Board badge, do 2 activities from the 'learn more about public transport' section, 2 activities from 'plan a journey', both activities from 'be safe' and then go on your journey!



Activity	Rainbows	Brownies	Guides	Rangers
Learn more about public transport				
Floating ferries	X	X	X	X
Future pilot	X	X	X	X
Traintastic	X	X	X	X
Ideal City	X	X	X	X
All aboard!	X	X	X	X
The wheels on the bus	X	X		
Plan a journey				
Ticket tangle	X	X	X	X
Race across Scotland			X	X
Planning pros			X	X
Signs of signs	X	X	X	X
A monkey on the bus!	X	X	X	X
Where are we going?		X	X	X
Do we need a banana?	X	X	X	X
Thank the driver	X	X	X	X
Eco adventures		X	X	X
Be safe				
How we'll keep safe	X	X	X	X
How we'll get help	X	X	X	X

Learn more about public transport

Floating ferries	X	X	X	X
Future pilot	X	X	X	X
Traintastic	X	X	X	X
Ideal City	X	X	X	X
All aboard!	X	X	X	X
The wheels on the bus	X	X		

Plan a journey

Ticket tangle	X	X	X	X
Race across Scotland			X	X
Planning pros			X	X
Signs of signs	X	X	X	X
A monkey on the bus!	X	X	X	X
Where are we going?		X	X	X
Do we need a banana?	X	X	X	X
Thank the driver	X	X	X	X
Eco adventures		X	X	X

Be safe

How we'll keep safe	X	X	X	X
How we'll get help	X	X	X	X

Next Stop Adventure!

This pack is designed to give you the skills to make your next stop adventure. To help us make a big splash, join us on 16 May 2026 for our Next Stop Adventure public transport takeover day! We're working with ScotRail, CPT Scotland, Lothian Buses, CityLink, Ember, Garelochhead Coaches, First Bus, West Coast Motors, Borders Buses, McGill's Bus Group, Stagecoach, Whitelaws Coaches and NorthLink Ferries to make sure their staff know about Girlguiding Scotland and are ready to welcome you onto their services.



Whether that's some help using the ticket machines, a friendly smile and a wave, or a shout out on the departure boards, they're excited to see you on 16 May 2026. There's even a special badge to celebrate taking public transport. You can get this badge for the takeover day or for another adventure!



Learn more about public transport

Floating ferries

Sections: Rainbows, Brownies, Guides, Rangers

Equipment: junk materials for building, sticky tape, scissors, pens to decorate, items of various weights to test your ferry, water in a container or sink that the ferry can float on

Ferries don't just carry people to islands – they can also carry vehicles like cars and lorries, and resources such as food, drink, and things to sell in shops. Raid your recycling and create a boat or raft that can float in water using junk materials. Test it using things like paper clips to represent people, coins to represent vehicles, and toy bricks to represent resources. How many objects can you balance on your ferry? Does it change if you take away 1 type of item? Do you think it matters if a ferry can't take people, vehicles or resources?

Traintastic

Sections: Rainbows, Brownies, Guides, Rangers

Equipment: paper, pens, craft materials

In Scotland we have some pretty cool trains, but around the world different places have lots of different features on their trains. Some places have double decker trains or magnetic trains that go really fast, some trains have play carriages for children, kitchens serving gourmet meals, or beautiful decorations. Design your ideal train! What would you include to make it an enjoyable, safe and comfortable journey for all passengers? It's up to you whether you draw it, or make a model of your train.

Learn more about public transport

Future pilot

Sections: Rainbows, Brownies, Guides, Rangers

Equipment: paper, some paper plane folding instructions, something to mark out your beach area, a washing up basin or tray of water

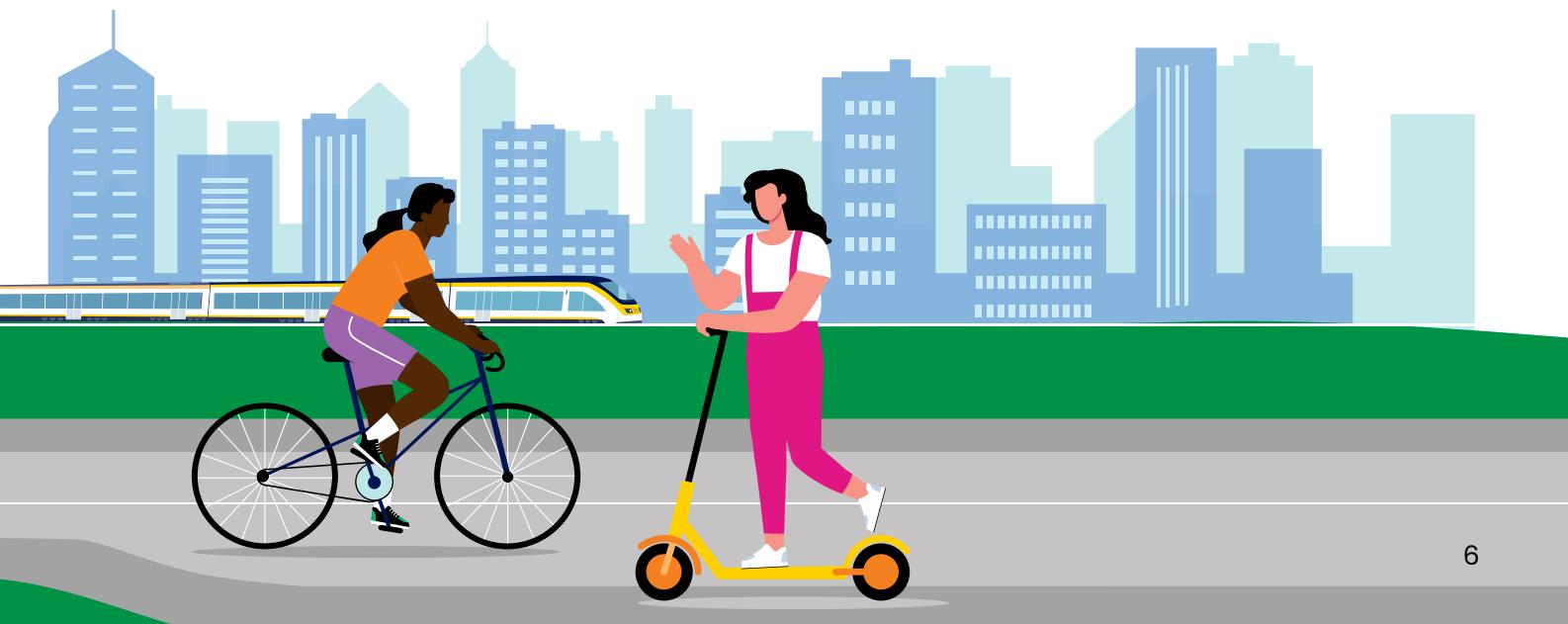
On Barra, the plane lands on the beach! The landing has to be super precise to land on the sand and not in the water. Make your own paper planes that you can land on the beach. Mark out an area on the floor to represent the beach and then put a washing up basin or tray of water next to it. Take turns to see who can land their plane neatly on the 'beach' without ending up in the water. Bonus points for the smoothest landing!

Ideal city

Sections: Rainbows, Brownies, Guides, Rangers

Equipment: large bits of paper, pens, craft materials

In groups, design your perfect city or town. Would it have lots of playgrounds, safe parks, fun shops or exciting activities? Now imagine that your perfect place has no private transport like cars – only public transport and space for active travel like walking or cycling. What changes would you need to make? How would you make sure it was safe and accessible?



Learn more about public transport

All aboard!

Sections: Rainbows, Brownies, Guides, Rangers

Equipment: you can use your imagination and use whatever you have to hand, or you can get crafty and make signs and decorations for your platform

Set up your meeting place as a train station – you could put out chairs to represent the train, mark out the platforms using tape on the floor, or create signs. If you're feeling creative, you could all work together to design and decorate the station.

Give everyone a role at the station. You could choose from passenger, conductor, train driver, ticket office worker, café employee, or even station cat!

Act out the following situations, switching roles after each:

- Catching a train safely
- Finding a lost kitten at the station
- Meeting another passenger who needs help
- Losing your ticket on the train
- Getting separated from your group and missing the train
- Make up your own scenario

After each scenario, chat about if there's anything you could have done differently.

The wheels on the bus

Sections: Rainbows, Brownies

Equipment: None

Think about all the different people you might meet on the bus who are not already in 'the wheels on the bus' song. Sing the song and add in actions for the new people you have come up with. Talk about what you find annoying when you're on a bus – people talking loudly, music playing, vaping – and then talk about what you can do to be a good bus passenger.

Plan a journey

Ticket tangle

Sections: Rainbows, Brownies, Guides, Rangers

Equipment: a map of Scotland for each group, a set of tokens for each group

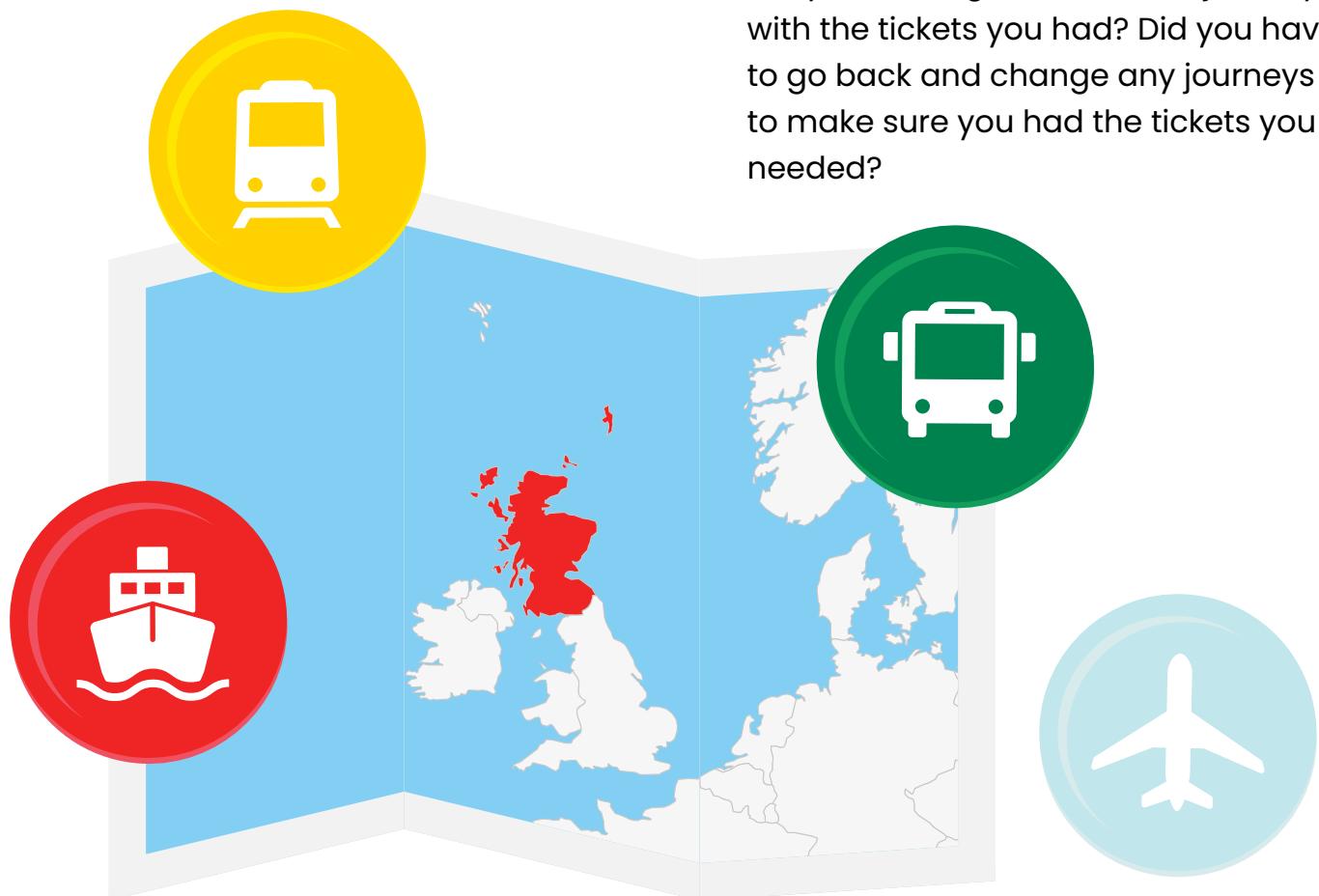
Get into small groups. Each group will need tokens to represent the different tickets they have available to travel with – you will need:

- 4 train tickets
- 3 ferry tickets
- 2 bus tickets
- 1 plane ticket

Use your tickets to go on the following journeys, and make sure you pick a ticket that would get you there safely. For example, you can't take a ferry on land! Remember, once you have used a ticket, you can't use it again.

- Oban – Tiree
- Tiree – Glasgow
- Glasgow – Edinburgh
- Edinburgh – Inverness
- Inverness – Aberdeen
- Aberdeen – Shetland
- Shetland – Edinburgh

Did you manage to do all the journeys with the tickets you had? Did you have to go back and change any journeys to make sure you had the tickets you needed?



Plan a journey

Race across Scotland

Sections: Guides, Rangers

Equipment: access to the internet, a map of Scotland, paper, pens, a dice

You have £1,000 to get between Galashiels and Kirkwall in as few days as possible and you can only take public transport! Compete against other groups to see who can make the journey quickest, and who has the most budget left at the end.

Details:

- You're a group of 12 young people under the age of 16, plus 3 leaders over the age of 22.
- All young members have national entitlement cards and can get free bus travel.
- You have to stop at 3 checkpoints along the way – Glasgow, Pitlochry and Aberdeen.
- You don't need to budget for accommodation and food.
- You can only plan as far as the next checkpoint – so at the start you can plan as far as Glasgow, once you reach Glasgow, then you can plan your journey to Pitlochry.

• Once you've planned your route, roll the dice to find out if there are any challenges on that leg of your journey that will affect your plans:

1. There's flooding on the line, and all trains are cancelled
2. Adverse weather is slowing buses and ferries – all journeys are taking an extra hour
3. There are road closures – all bus journeys take an extra 30 minutes
4. Someone has lost their money – take £100 off your remaining budget
5. It's a Sunday so you need to look at the Sunday timetable
6. Everything goes smoothly!



Plan a journey

Planning pros

Sections: Guides, Rangers

Equipment: access to the internet, a map of Scotland

Using the internet, in small groups, see what the longest journey is that you can take from your location in a day. Make sure you check the train, bus, tram, subway, ferry and plane times to check you can make all your transfers. The group that makes the longest journey wins!

Then try and create a journey which uses as many different modes of public transport as possible. This time, the group which uses the most types of transport wins!

Signs of signs

Sections: Rainbows, Brownies, Guides, Rangers

Equipment: a BSL fingerspelling chart



ScotRail have installed video information at Glasgow Queen Street, Edinburgh Waverley, Haymarket, Dundee and other stations showing real time train information in British Sign Language. Learn how to fingerspell the name of your hometown, and the names of other places you want to visit. There are [charts and videos](#) on the National Deaf Children's Society website.

What other ways do you think public transport providers could make travelling with them more accessible?

Plan a journey

A monkey on the bus!

Sections: Rainbows, Brownies, Guides, Rangers

Equipment: paper and pens

Let's have some fun figuring out where you might want to go and what you might see on the way!

Start with a piece of paper each. Someone will call out the first sentence of the story template opposite, and everyone writes this at the top of their paper, filling in the missing word(s). Everyone folds their paper over just enough to cover what they have written. Then the group passes their paper in the same direction around the table or circle, to the person next to them.

Once everyone has someone else's paper, the next sentence will be read out. The group will write the new sentence, fill in the missing words, and then fold their paper over and pass it to the next person.

Make sure you can't see what others have written or it won't be as much fun at the end!

Keep going until everyone has written all the lines of the story and then pass the paper 1 more time. Then each person can open the paper they ended up with and read the silly story the group has made.

For younger girls, a leader can ask for word suggestions from everyone, choose 1 for each section and then read the story they have come up with as a group.

Here's the story template to fill in:

We all went on a big [DESCRIBING WORD] trip!

We got the [PUBLIC TRANSPORT] that goes to [PLACE].

[PERSON IN UNIT] brought a [ITEM] with them.

They said, [WHAT THEY SAID].

On board, we met a [ANIMAL] called [NAME].

They were going to [PLACE] to [ACTIVITY].

We went too and had [FOOD OR SNACK].

When we arrived, the first thing we did was [THING YOU DID].

[LEADER] said [WHAT THEY SAID].

It was really funny when [WHAT HAPPENED].

And the best thing we saw was [THING YOU SAW].

Which of the stories sounds like the most fun? Is it possible to do that journey?

Have a chat about where you would really like to go, how you would get there and back, and what you might see on the way.

Plan a journey

Where are we going?

Sections: Brownies, Guides, Rangers

Equipment: paper, pens, access to the internet, paper timetables

We're going to plan the trip you will take to complete this challenge. It doesn't have to be a long or complicated journey and for your first trip, you might want to start off easy by getting the train 1 stop, having a little walk and then heading back again.

If you're feeling more ambitious, you could visit a town or city you haven't been to before, or check out some of Scotland's incredible beaches, forests, hills or lochs. ScotRail have a [list of fun places](#) to go in Scotland and discounts you can get alongside a train ticket.

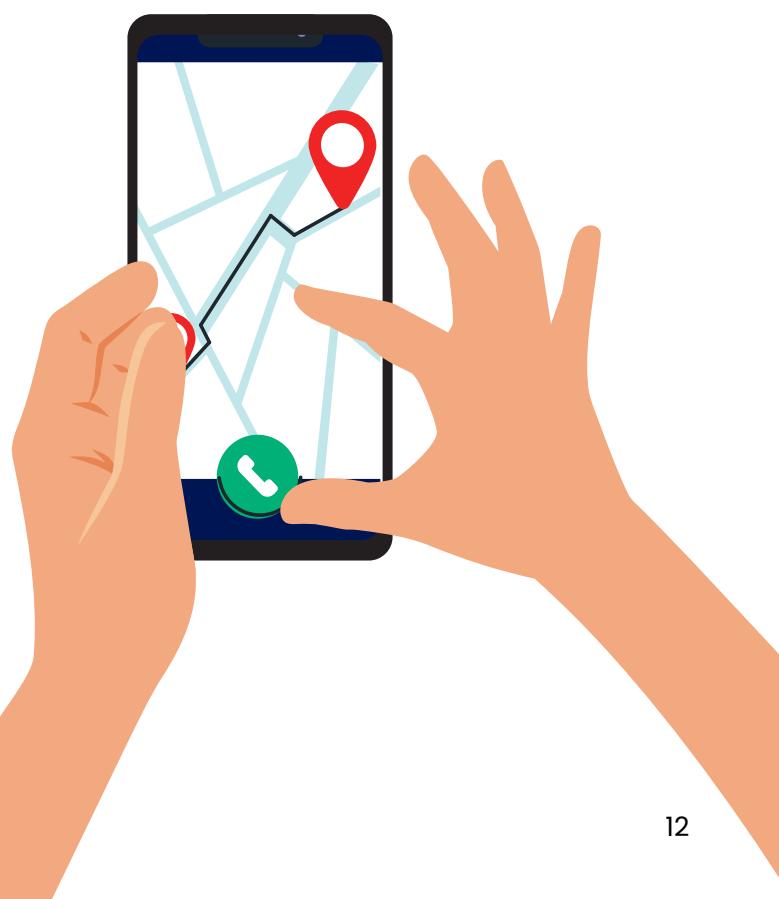
As a group, agree where you are going and when. Use the internet to look up:

- What mode(s) of transport will you be using?
- How will you get to the start of your transport journey?
- What time does the bus, tram, subway, ferry or train leave?
- What time does it come back?
- How much does it cost?
- How do you buy your ticket?

Sometimes it's easier to contact the transport company directly by phone, email or social media, or to visit a bus or train station and check out a physical timetable.

You'll also want to make a plan for when you're there.

- What are you going to do?
- Will you need to take or buy lunch or dinner?
- Do you need to buy tickets for attractions in advance?
- Complete the 'do we need a banana?' activity to work out what you're bringing with you on your journey.



Plan a journey

Do we need a banana?

Sections: Rainbows, Brownies, Guides, Rangers

Equipment: slips of paper, pens

Imagine you're going on a long train journey. What do you need to keep yourself happy? Maybe things like snacks, a drink, games, a warm jumper, a charger, your phone, or a book. Write as many things as you can think of on different slips of paper and then come back together as a whole group to see what you've come up with.

But oh no! Your bag isn't big enough and you can only take 5 things with you. If there's enough for everyone, take a slip of paper each, and then get into groups of 2 or 3. Discuss the things you have in your group and decide together which 1 you think is the most important. Then come up with an argument to persuade the rest of your unit why that is the most important thing to have on your journey. Each group only has 1 minute to share their argument, and once all the groups have given their thoughts, everyone will vote for the 5 items you'll take with you on your journey. Did you end up with the items you thought you would be most likely to take with you?

Thank the driver

Sections: Rainbows, Brownies, Guides, Rangers

Equipment: card, pens, craft materials to decorate, scissors, glue

Think about all the people who work hard to keep public transport safe and enjoyable. This might be bus drivers, train conductors, ferry captains, ticket collectors, the people who fix the track and maintain the roads, the travel companies, and many more. Make a thank you card to take with you on your journey and give it to someone who's helped you have a great day out!

Plan a journey

Eco adventures

Sections: Brownies, Guides, Rangers

Equipment: access to the internet, paper, pens

You can see exactly how much carbon dioxide (CO₂) your journey saves using [ScotRail's carbon calculator](#). Calculate your journey's carbon savings and compare it with the same trip by car. Discuss ways your group could make even more sustainable travel choices. Design a poster or display to share your ideas and share it with us on social media @girlguidingscot. Guide units could also complete the Carbon Calculator UMA alongside this.



Be safe

How we'll keep safe

Sections: Rainbows, Brownies, Guides, Rangers

Equipment: pens, paper

Before you go on your journey, think about how you'll keep safe and make it an enjoyable journey for you and your fellow passengers.

Think about:

- How you'll get to the transport
- How you'll keep yourself entertained on the transport (there are ideas in the next section)
- Where you'll be sitting
- What you'll do with any snacks
- How you'll get on and off the transport
- What you'll do if you get separated from your group

1 person should write up what you've come up with and then the whole group should sign it. That means you are agreeing to act in a way that will keep you safe on your journey. You can bring this with you on your journey as a reminder in case anyone forgets.



Be safe

How we'll get help

Sections: Rainbows, Brownies, Guides, Rangers

Equipment: pens, paper

Let's have a think about who should do what on public transport – is it up to passengers, is it someone's job who works on public transport, is it for everyone to do, or is it up to no one?

Put up a sign in each corner of the room to represent passengers, jobs, everyone or no one. For younger groups, pictures can help everyone remember which is which.

1 person will read out the list below and wait after each item for everyone to move to the corner for who they think should do the action. You could discuss why some people have gone to different corners, if they're happy to share their opinion.

List of actions:

- Keeping the station tidy
- Driving the bus
- Keeping passengers up to date on delays or diversions
- Looking after your ticket
- Stopping the rain
- Keeping the ferry clean
- Putting luggage onto the plane
- Helping a hurt or ill passenger
- Clearing traffic jams
- Reporting if you see something suspicious
- Keeping the doors clear
- Making sure there's space for wheelchair users
- Being safe at the station
- Helping a lost Rainbow

There are lots of people on public transport who have jobs keeping you safe. For example, the train conductor, bus driver, ferry crew, station or terminal staff, and the British Transport Police.

- **Train conductor or ticket examiner –** they will regularly walk through the train to check on everyone and offer help. If you don't see them and need assistance, you can walk through the train to find them. Or, at the next stop, you can get their attention by standing at the open door and giving a friendly wave.
- **Bus driver –** if you feel unsafe on the bus you can always talk to the bus driver but be mindful of walking around a moving bus or distracting the driver when not at a stop. You can also contact the bus company on social media or call the police.
- **Ferry crew –** will be all around the ferry and in recognisable branded uniform. There will be a safety briefing, video or signs on the ferry to give you more information about how to contact them.
- **Bus or train station staff, or ferry terminal staff –** will be in recognisable branded uniform or high visibility jackets. There are also help point buttons on train platforms to contact station staff.
- **The British Transport Police –** call 0800 40 50 40 or text 61016 to discretely report crime or antisocial/unsafe behaviour on trains or at stations. In an emergency dial 999.

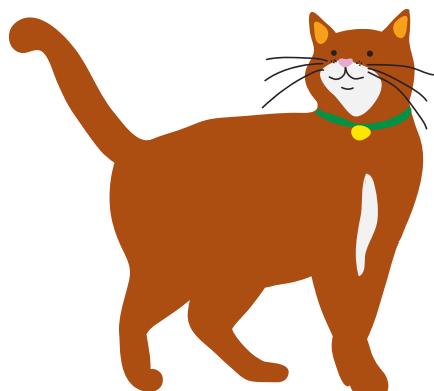
Have fun

There are so many games you can play on public transport. Here are some we like playing:

- **I spy** – ‘I spy with my little eye, something beginning with’ and add the letter of the item you have spotted. Make sure it’s something people can still see! For younger girls, why not try using colours – I spy something green, for example.

• **Alphabet games**

- Make your way through the alphabet by spotting letters on number plates. Work together to complete the alphabet, or try to spot all 26 letters the fastest.
- Play Brown Owl’s cat (based on the minister’s cat) – you can either work your way through the alphabet with each person adding something beginning with the next letter, or if it’s a small group, everyone has to come up with something for each letter. Each person repeats the list, trying to remember everything on it, and then adds to it: Brown Owl’s cat is an angry, blue, cute, dirty cat.



○ Grandma’s shopping basket – you can either work your way through the alphabet with each person adding something beginning with the next letter, or ask everyone to think of something which starts with the same letter as their name. Each person repeats the list, trying to remember everything on it, and then adds to it: I went to the shops with grandma and in her basket she put... apples, beans, cucumber and donuts.

- **Create a bingo card** of things you might see on your journey and tick them off as you spot them – who can get bingo first?

- **Give everyone a colour** and they have to spot as many things as they can in that colour either by the end of the journey or be the first person to spot 5 things in their colour.

- **Synonyms or antonyms** – this involves renaming things using similar words (synonyms) or opposite words (antonyms). Decide on a category as a group (like film names) and then take it in turns to change something using synonyms or antonyms so that others can guess it. For example, for Frozen you might say Roasting (opposite, so an antonym), or Jurassic Park might be Prehistoric Playground (similar, so a synonym).

Have fun

- **Shopping list game** – make a shopping list of things like bread, milk, pasta, sausages, toothpaste, and then watch for lorries you can get your shopping from. So, a lorry from a dairy would mean you could tick off the milk, a pharmacy lorry would get you your toothpaste, and while you can get most things from a supermarket lorry, you can only use each lorry for 1 item on your list!
- **Sausages** – choose 1 person and everyone else takes turns asking them questions. The chosen person must answer each question with 'sausages'. The aim of the game is to ask a question that makes the person answering 'sausages' laugh!
- **2 truths and a lie** – everyone thinks of 3 statements, 2 being the truth and 1 being a lie. When it's your turn, you can say them in any order you like and the rest of the group has to figure out which statement is the lie.
- **Card games** if you're on a train with tables – there are classics like snap, or you could branch out into Uno or Dobble.
- **Take pens and paper** and play games like noughts and crosses, or Pictionary.

You could also take puzzle books or colouring sheets with you. Remember to be considerate of other passengers and keep chat at a reasonable volume!



Do the journey

You've learned about public transport, planned your journey and know how to keep yourself safe, so now it's time to go on your trip!

Remember that you will need consent forms from parents or carers to go on a trip, you might need money depending on what you are doing on your trip, and your leader will need to do a risk assessment. Make sure you know what you need to bring with you, when and where you are meeting up, and when you will get back.

If you are on social media, tag us @GirlguidingScot using #GetOnBoardWithGGS and tag your transport provider too! We'd love to see what you get up to.

Enjoyed your trip? Delighted with your newfound confidence? Make your Next Stop Adventure! We have a public transport takeover day on 16 May 2026 that you can take part in and lots of transport providers will be ready to welcome you on their services. Missed the takeover day? No problem – our Next Stop Adventure! badge can be used any time you want to celebrate taking public transport, whether that's taking the bus to the beach, the train to Torquay, or a plane to Paris.

Get on Board



Take it further

If you have had fun with Get on Board, there are lots of ways to take this topic further. Here are some of our ideas, but we'd love to hear about anything you do that's not on our list!

- Visit a transport depot
- Organise an event with local transport providers
- Connect with a unit in another place and do a swap with them – organise a fun day out in your hometown and ask them to do the same for you
- Connect with a unit in another place and meet up somewhere half-way between where your groups live – it doesn't have to be far, it could just be the next town over!
- Take part in our Next Stop Adventure! public transport take over day on 16 May 2026
- Visit a transport museum
- If you live on the mainland, visit an island
- If you live on an island, visit the mainland
- Use public transport abroad or plan how you would get around a city like Amsterdam, Paris or Rome

There are also some links to the programme you could explore. There's a skills builder in Reflect stage 2 called stop the bus! and a UMA called Brownie Bus. Or you could see if you can tick off any challenges from the following interest badges while on your travels!

- Rainbows
 - Great outdoors
- Brownies
 - Aviation
 - Safety
 - Wayfinder
- Guides
 - Clean planet
 - Day tripper
 - Navigator
- Rangers
 - Environment
 - Micro-adventures
 - Travel
 - Wanderer
 - Life skills



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