Bus

London Bus Transportation

London and red double-decker buses seem to be synonomous. You will still find some of these in the City area, however, there are 'single-deckers' buses that are now being brought into service. Single or double, there are a few basic tips to get the most out of bus travel in the London area.

On the modern 'single-decker' buses you pay the driver as you board, and you must have the exact amount if you paying by cash. Alternatively, you can buy a Bus Pass or Visitorcard, which is much more convenient and can be cheaper.

NOTE: Bus stop signs list the route numbers of the buses that stop there. If a bus is listed as "Request Only", then you must flag down the bus by raising your arm. If you don't, they won't stop.

Bus Pass

There are weekly and monthly passes, good for unlimited travel on all London buses, but a better deal is the London Travelcard, which is good for unlimited travel on both the Underground and the buses. Travelcards can be purchased for 7 days or more at a time, but they require a passport sized photo.

Visitorcard

Visitorcards are another option. They do not require a photo, and can only be purchased outside the UK. In addition to unlimited bus and Underground travel they include discount vouchers for many popular tourist attractions. Note that the Visitorcard is NOT valid for the Heathrow Express.

Tip

If you live in the US, London Visitorcards are available for AAA members from AAA offices. Save yourself time by getting yours before you go.

London Travel Zones

Greater London is divided into 6 transit zones. Anytime you travel beyond one zone the fare rises. You can save money by only buying as far-ranging a Travelcard as you'll need, but do not try to use a pass to go to a zone you are not authorized for! You'll be liable for about £10 fine, and inspectors DO check.

Take a good look at the zones on a transport map (available free at any tube station or at the London Transport web site). Most of the major tourist attractions are located in Zone 1, so you're fairly safe with a Zone 1 or a Zone 1-2 card. However, be sure to check the location of your hotel against the fare zone map. If your hotel is out in zone 6 and you will be traveling to Inner London, you'll need an all-Zone Travelcard.

Bus Fares

Check the latest bus fares from London Transport.

Travelcards

Travelcards come in variety of options. For up to date prices, check with London Transport .

- Weekly Travelcard, Adult Zone 1, Adult Zone 1-6 (ALL-Zone)
- Visitorcard Zone 1- 2, 3 day, 4 day, 7 day

Touring

London buses can provide a good orientation for first-time tourists. Several routes in particular connect popular travel destinations.

East-West

Route 11 begins at Liverpool Street Station and passes St. Paul's before traveling along Fleet Street and The Strand to Trafalgar Square. Then it swings through Westminster and posh Sloane Square before taking in King's Road.

Route 14 starts in Riverside-Pulteney, before traversing Fulham Road, South Kensington, Knightsbridge, Hyde Park, Piccadilly Circus, Leicester Square, and Soho.

North-South

Route 24 begins at Hampstead Heath, and travels through Camden and Tottenham Court Road to Charing Cross Road, Leicester Square, and Trafalgar Square. From there it goes through Whitehall, past Westminster Abbey to Victoria Station and on to Pimlico.

Night Buses

London Transport has wisely introduced night buses (marked with an 'N' on bus signs), which cover the late night time period when there is no underground service. Night buses begin service about 11:30 and run until about 6AM.

Useful Links:

- First London Timetables
- Transport for London
- Metrobus
- Metroline
- The unofficial Croydon Tramlink website
- LRTA
- London's Transport Museum.
- London Omnibus Traction Society.
- The Omnibus Society.
- Southbus - By Nigel Chatfield showing bus news, features and photographs from South East England
- HarlowRide - All about buses in Harlow
- Docklands Light Railway official site
- Transport History - A selection of features and old photos from the London area
- See How They Run - A collection of miscellaneous transport resources
- Doe's Directory of Bus Timetables and Enquiry Offices
- Busworld
- London Bus Garages.
- The Wandle Industrial Museum
- Always Touch Out: A guide to transport projects in London
- The Red London Bus pictorial by Russell Baldock
- Greater London Photos Fotopic site from James Fullick
- London Transport “E” Plates including a brief history of each route
- buses.org.uk promises to warn you of single deck routes