

# Coronavirus (COVID-19): safer travel guidance for passengers

Walking, cycling, and travelling in vehicles or on public transport during the coronavirus outbreak.

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## Stay alert

We can all help control coronavirus if we all stay alert. This means:

- stay at home as much as possible
- work from home if you can
- limit contact with other people
- keep your distance if you go out (2 metres apart where possible)
- wash your hands regularly

Self-isolate if you or anyone in your household has symptoms.

## Travel safely during the coronavirus outbreak

This guide will help you understand how to travel safely during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak in England. It provides guidance for walking, cycling, using private vehicles (for example cars and vans), and travelling by taxis and public transport (for example trains, buses, coaches and ferries).

You should avoid using public transport where possible. Instead try to walk, cycle, or drive. If you do travel, thinking carefully about the times, routes and ways you travel will mean we will all have more space to stay safe.

## Is your journey necessary?

To help keep yourself and your fellow passengers safe, you should not travel if you:

- are experiencing any [coronavirus symptoms](#)
- are [self-isolating as a result of coronavirus symptoms or sharing a household with somebody with symptoms](#)
- are [clinically extremely vulnerable](#)

Before you travel, consider if your journey is necessary and if you can, stay local. Try to reduce your travel. This will help keep the transport network running and allow people who need to make essential journeys to travel. You can reduce your travel by:

- working from home where possible
- shopping less frequently and shopping locally

## Walking and cycling

Walking and [cycling](#) will reduce pressure on the public transport system and the road network. Consider walking and cycling if you can. Local cycling schemes can be used. Your local council can help you plan your journey by providing maps showing dedicated paths and routes.

Where possible, try to maintain [social distancing](#) when you walk or cycle, for example when approaching or passing other pedestrians or waiting at crossings and traffic lights.

Where using bikes (private, docked or dockless) wash your hands for at least 20 seconds or sanitise your hands before and after cycling.

Consider making a [list of items to take with you](#).

## Public transport

### Plan your journey

Consider all other forms of transport before using public transport.

Before and during your journey, check with your transport operator for the latest travel advice on your route:

- [bus, coach, tram and ferry operators](#)
- [TfL](#)
- [National Rail](#)

Travel may take longer than normal on some routes due to reduced capacity and social distancing measures. Allow sufficient time if your journey involves changes between different forms of transport.

Plan ahead by identifying alternative routes and options in case of unexpected disruption.

If you can, travel at off-peak times. Your transport operator can advise on off-peak times. Your employer may agree alternative or flexible working hours to support this.

Where possible, book your travel online through your transport provider's ticketing app or website. Consider contactless payment to buy tickets.

Taking a less busy route and reducing the number of changes (for example between bus and train) will help you keep your distance from others. Public Health England recommends [keeping a 2 metre distance from other people, where possible](#). Where this is not possible you should keep the

time you spend near others as short as possible and avoid physical contact.

Try to start or end your journey using a station or mode of transport you know to be quieter or more direct. For instance, walk the first or last mile of your journey, or alight at an earlier station, where this is possible.

## What to take with you

There are some circumstances when wearing a face covering may be marginally beneficial as a precautionary measure. The evidence suggests that wearing a face covering does not protect you, but it may protect others if you are infected but have not yet developed symptoms. This is most relevant for short periods indoors in crowded areas.

If you can, wear a face covering if you need to use public transport.

A face covering is not the same as the surgical masks or respirators used by healthcare and other workers as part of personal protective equipment. These should continue to be reserved for those who need them to protect against risks in their workplace, such as health and care workers, and those in industrial settings, like those exposed to dust hazards.

Wearing a face covering is optional and is not required by the law. If you choose to wear one, it is important to [use face coverings properly](#) and wash your hands before putting them on and after taking them off.

Consider making a [list of items to take with you](#) and minimise the luggage you take.

## On your journey

Some routes may be busier than usual due to social distancing measures or changes to previous timetables or schedules. Keep your distance from people outside your household. Public Health England recommends [keeping a distance of 2 metres, where possible](#). The key thing is to not be too close to other people for more than a short amount of time, as much as you can.

The risk of infection increases the closer you are to another person with the virus and the amount of time you spend in close contact: you are very unlikely to be infected from just walking past another person.

There may be situations where you can't keep a suitable distance from people, for example when boarding or alighting, on busier services, at busier times of day and when walking through interchanges. In these cases you should avoid physical contact, try to face away from other people, and keep the time you spend near others as short as possible. If you can, wear a face covering on public transport.

Be aware of the surfaces you touch. Be careful not to touch your face. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your elbow when coughing or sneezing.

Treat transport staff with respect and follow instructions from your transport operator. This may include:

- notices about which seats to use or how to queue
- additional screens, barriers or floor markings
- requests to board through different doors or to move to less busy areas

Help keep yourself, other passengers and transport staff safe:

- wait for passengers to get off first before you board
- ensure you maintain social distancing, where possible, including at busy entrances, exits, under canopies, bus stops, platforms or outside of stations
- be prepared to queue or take a different entrance or exit at stations

- wait for the next service if you cannot safely keep your distance on board a train, bus or coach
- respect other people's space while travelling
- avoid consuming food and drink on public transport, where possible
- be aware of pregnant, older and disabled people who may require a seat or extra space
- be aware that some individuals may have hidden disabilities

## Seek assistance if you need it

If you require assistance when travelling and would normally contact your transport operator ahead of time, continue to do so.

If any problems arise or you feel ill during your journey, speak to a member of transport staff. In the case of an emergency, contact the emergency services as you normally would.

If you need help, maintain a short distance from members of staff, where possible. If this isn't possible, you should try to avoid physical contact and keep the time you spend near staff as short as possible.

## Children on public transport

Where travel is necessary, consider whether children could walk or cycle, accompanied by a responsible adult or carer, where appropriate.

Social distancing applies to children as well as adults. Children should keep their distance from others who are not in their household, where possible. Public Health England recommends [keeping a 2 metre distance from others](#). If this isn't possible children should avoid physical contact, face away from others, and keep the time spent near others as short as possible.

If you are the responsible adult or carer travelling with children, please help them follow this guidance, wear face coverings, minimise the surfaces they touch and maintain their distance from others, where possible.

Children under 2 years old are not recommended to wear face coverings.

Schools may have additional guidance in place for children on transport which we recommend you follow.

## Completing your journey

When finishing your journey, we recommend you:

- consider walking or cycling from the station or stop you arrived at
- follow local guidance
- wash your hands for at least 20 seconds or sanitise your hands as soon as possible - do the same for children within your care if they have travelled

## Taxis and private hire vehicles

At taxi ranks try to keep your distance from people outside your household, where possible. Public Health England recommends [keeping a 2 metre distance from others, where possible](#).

Taxi and private hire vehicle (for example minicab) operators are likely to have put in place new measures to help with social distancing. When traveling in taxis or private hire vehicles follow the advice of the driver. For example, you may be asked to sit in the back left hand seat if travelling alone. You may want to check with your taxi operator before travelling if they have put any

additional measures in place.

If you need to be near other people you should avoid physical contact, try to face away from other people, and keep the time you spend near other people as short as possible. Be aware of the surfaces you or others touch.

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If you can, wear a face covering in an enclosed space where social distancing isn't possible and where you will come into contact with people you do not normally meet.

A face covering is not the same as the surgical masks or respirators used by healthcare and other workers as part of personal protective equipment. These should continue to be reserved for those who need them to protect against risks in their workplace, such as health and care workers, and those in industrial settings, like those exposed to dust hazards.

Wearing a face covering is optional and is not required by the law. If you choose to wear one, it is important to [use face coverings properly](#) and wash your hands before putting them on and after taking them off.

When finishing your journey, we recommend you:

- follow local guidance
- wash your hands for at least 20 seconds or sanitise your hands as soon as possible

## **Private cars and other vehicles**

### **Plan your journey**

Plan your route, including any breaks, before setting out. Try to stay as local as possible to your home. Routes may be different as local areas make changes to enable social distancing on pavements and cycle routes.

If you normally share a vehicle with people from other households for essential journeys, we recommend you find a different way to travel. For example, consider walking, cycling or using your own vehicle if you can.

If you have to travel with people outside your household group, try to share the transport with the same people each time and keep to small groups of people at any one time.

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Consider making a [list of items to take with you](#).

[Check that your vehicle is safe and roadworthy](#) if you haven't used it for several weeks.

## **On your journey**

If driving, you should anticipate more pedestrians and cyclists than usual, especially at peak times of day. Allow other road users to maintain social distance, where possible. For example, give cyclists space at traffic lights. Public Health England recommends [keeping a 2 metre distance from others, where possible](#).

Limit the time you spend at garages, petrol stations and motorway services. Try to keep your distance from other people and if possible pay by contactless. Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds or sanitise your hands when arriving and leaving.

Be aware of the surfaces you or others touch. If people from different households use a vehicle (for example through a car share scheme), you should clean it between journeys using gloves and standard cleaning products. Make sure you clean door handles, steering wheel and other areas that people may touch.

Where people from different households need to use a vehicle at the same time, good ventilation (keeping the car windows open) and facing away from each other may help to reduce the risk of transmission. Where possible, consider seating arrangements to optimise distance between people in the vehicle.

If you are in close proximity to people outside your household, you should:

- avoid physical contact
- try to face away from them
- keep the time you spend close to them as short as possible

## **Completing your journey**

When finishing your journey, we recommend you:

- follow local guidance
- wash your hands for at least 20 seconds or sanitise your hands as soon as possible

# **Aviation, ferries and maritime transport**

## **Plan your journey**

Before you travel, check with your travel operator and port, or airline and airport for the latest travel advice on your route.

Consider making a [list of items to take with you](#).

## **On your journey**

Some routes may be busier than usual due to social distancing measures or changes to timetables and schedules.

You should try to keep a short distance from others not in your household, where possible. Public Health England recommends [keeping a 2 metre distance from other people](#). There may be situations where this is not possible. If you need to be near other people, you should avoid physical contact, try to face away from others, and keep the time you spend close to other people as short as possible.

Be aware of the surfaces you touch. Be careful not to touch your face. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your elbow when coughing or sneezing.

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Wearing a face covering is optional and is not required by the law. If you choose to wear one, it is important to [use face coverings properly](#) and wash your hands before putting them on and after taking them off.

Follow instructions from your transport operator. This may include:

- notices about which seats to use or how to queue
- additional screens, barriers or floor markings
- requests to board through different doors or to move to less busy areas

Be considerate to your fellow passengers and to transport staff:

- do not congregate near entrances or exits while waiting
- be aware of pregnant, older, disabled people or people with prams who may require extra space or a seat during parts of their journey
- be aware that some individuals may have hidden disabilities

## Completing your journey

When finishing your journey, we recommend you:

- follow local guidance
- wash your hands for at least 20 seconds or sanitise your hands as soon as possible

## International travel

If travelling abroad is essential, make sure you check the latest [Foreign and Commonwealth Office \(FCO\) advice](#) and [coronavirus essential international travel guidance](#) before travelling. Check your specific plans with your airline, ferry, train operator or accommodation provider, and inform your insurance provider.

At all points in your journey it is important that you follow social distancing guidelines and keep a short distance from others where possible. Public Health England recommends [keeping a 2 metre distance from others](#). Where this may not be possible you should keep the time you spend near other people as short as possible and avoid physical contact.

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Wearing a face covering is optional and is not required by the law. If you choose to wear one, it is important to [use face coverings properly](#) and wash your hands before putting them on and after taking them off.

You should review and follow any rules and government guidance set by your destination country, and check public health advice when returning to the UK.

Your transport provider may put measures in place to help you follow the guidance of the destination country.

When finishing your journey, we recommend you:

- follow all local guidance
- wash your hands for at least 20 seconds or sanitise your hands as soon as possible

## Checklists for safer travel

### Plan your journey

- can I walk or cycle to my destination?
- have I checked the latest travel advice from my transport operator?
- have I booked my travel ticket online, bought a pass or checked if contactless payment is possible?
- have I planned my journey to minimise crowded areas and allow for delays?
- am I taking the most direct route to my destination?

### What to take with you

- a plan for my journey
- contactless payment card or pass
- phone (if needed for travel updates, tickets, contactless payments)
- tickets
- hand sanitiser
- essential medicines
- tissues
- a face covering, if required