

Buying Train or Bus Tickets

COMPREHENSION • VOCABULARY • DISCUSSION

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Reading Passage

Read the passage carefully. Each paragraph is labelled with a letter for easy reference.

A Many people travel by train or bus every day. Buying the right ticket can feel difficult at first, but the steps are usually the same in most countries. First, you need to choose your journey. Look at the timetable on the wall or on the transport company's website. Find the start time, the arrival time, and the platform or bus bay number. For example, if you want to go from Bristol to London by train at nine o'clock, find "09:00" on the timetable and check that the train is "direct," which means you do not change trains on the way. Next, decide where to buy the ticket. You have three common choices: Ticket window – You speak to a staff member. Tell them, "A single to London, please," or "A return to Manchester, coming back tonight." They ask for the date and time, then take your money and give you a paper ticket. Ticket machine – Touch the screen, choose your destination, date, and type of ticket (single or return). Pay with a bank card or coins. The machine prints the ticket in seconds. Mobile app – Open the app, type your starting city and destination, select the train or bus you want, and pay online. The ticket appears on your phone as a QR code. After buying, check the ticket: make sure the name of the city, time, and date are correct. On buses you often show the ticket to the driver. On trains you keep the ticket until the conductor walks by and scans it. Finally, arrive at the platform or bus stop ten minutes early. Listen for loudspeaker messages; sometimes the platform changes at the last minute. With a little practice, buying tickets becomes quick and easy.

Vocabulary Glossary

Key words and phrases from the passage. Study them before attempting the exercise below.

WORD / PHRASE	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
journey	a trip from one place to another	<i>We went on a long journey to visit our grandparents.</i>
timetable	a list showing the times when trains, buses, or other services leave and arrive	<i>Check the timetable to see when the next bus arrives.</i>
platform	the area next to the train tracks where you get on or off a train	<i>We waited on the platform for the train to arrive.</i>
destination	the place you are going to	<i>Paris is a popular destination for tourists.</i>
direct	going straight to a place without stopping or changing	<i>I prefer a direct train because it's faster.</i>
conductor	a person on a train who checks tickets	<i>The conductor asked to see my ticket during the trip.</i>
loudspeaker	a device that makes sounds louder so many people can hear them	<i>The announcement was made over the loudspeaker.</i>
QR code	a square image used to store information that can be read by a phone	<i>Scan the QR code to see more details on your phone.</i>

Vocabulary Exercise — Fill in the Blank

Use one word or phrase from the glossary above to complete each sentence. Each item is used only once. Answers are on the final page.

1. Before your trip, check the _____ to know the train times.
2. The train will leave from platform 5, so wait on the _____.
3. You need to tell the app your starting city and your _____ when buying a ticket.
4. The _____ scanned my ticket while I was sitting on the train.
5. Listen carefully to the _____ for any changes in the train schedule.
6. I prefer a _____ flight because it gets me there faster.

Comprehension Questions

These questions are different from the online practice test. Choose the best answer (A, B, C, or D). Answers and explanations are on the final page.

Question 1

What should you do if the platform changes at the last minute?

- A. Wait at the original platform.
- B. Ignore the loudspeaker message.
- C. Move to the new platform.
- D. Return your ticket.

Question 2

How do you buy a ticket from a ticket window?

- A. Use a QR code.
- B. Talk to a staff member.
- C. Touch a screen.
- D. Pay online.

Question 3

What is a key benefit of using a mobile app to buy tickets?

- A. It provides a paper ticket.
- B. It is slow and inconvenient.
- C. You can pay with coins.
- D. The ticket appears on your phone as a QR code.

Question 4

What information can you find in the timetable?

- A. Train prices.
- B. Your seat number.
- C. Arrival times.
- D. Conductor names.

Question 5

Why is it important to check your ticket after buying?

- A. To find the best seat.
- B. To confirm the correct details.
- C. To get a refund.
- D. To change your destination.

Discussion & Writing Prompts

Each prompt references a specific detail from the passage above. Use for classroom discussion or a short written response (150–200 words).

1. Paragraph 2 describes using a timetable to find direct trains. Do you think direct routes are always better, and why?

2. Paragraph 5 discusses using a mobile app to buy tickets. In your opinion, how does this compare to traditional paper tickets in terms of convenience?

3. The passage explains that timetables can be found on walls or websites. Which method do you prefer for checking travel times, and why?

Answer Key

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

Q1 C

Q2 B

Q3 D

Q4 C

Q5 B

VOCABULARY EXERCISE

FIB1 timetable

FIB2 platform

FIB3 destination

FIB4 conductor

FIB5 loudspeaker

FIB6 direct

Comprehension Question Explanations

Why the correct answer is right — and why each wrong option is incorrect.

1. What should you do if the platform changes at the last minute?

✓ C — Move to the new platform. The passage advises listening for loudspeaker messages in case the platform changes.

✗ A — Wait at the original platform. The passage suggests moving to the new platform if it changes.

✗ B — Ignore the loudspeaker message. Ignoring loudspeaker messages could mean missing important updates.

✗ D — Return your ticket. Returning the ticket is not mentioned as a solution.

2. How do you buy a ticket from a ticket window?

✓ B — Talk to a staff member. The passage states that at a ticket window, you speak to a staff member.

✗ A — Use a QR code. QR codes are used with mobile apps, not ticket windows.

✗ C — Touch a screen. Touching a screen is part of using a ticket machine.

✗ D — Pay online. Paying online is part of using a mobile app.

3. What is a key benefit of using a mobile app to buy tickets?

✓ D — The ticket appears on your phone as a QR code. The passage explains that the mobile app ticket appears as a QR code on your phone.

✗ A — It provides a paper ticket. Mobile apps do not provide paper tickets.

✗ B — It is slow and inconvenient. The passage does not describe mobile apps as slow.

✗ C — You can pay with coins. Coins are used with ticket machines, not mobile apps.

4. What information can you find in the timetable?

✓ C — Arrival times. The passage mentions that timetables show arrival times.

✗ A — Train prices. Train prices are not mentioned in the timetable details.

✗ B — Your seat number. Seat numbers are not part of the timetable information.

✗ D — Conductor names. Conductor names are not provided in timetables.

5. Why is it important to check your ticket after buying?

✓ **B — To confirm the correct details.**

The passage advises checking the ticket to ensure the city, time, and date are correct.

✗ **A — To find the best seat.**

The passage does not mention finding seats.

✗ **C — To get a refund.**

Checking details is not about getting a refund.

✗ **D — To change your destination.**

Changing the destination is not mentioned in this context.

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