

SAFETY GUIDE

Stay safe on the railway

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3
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in Britain every day



Stay safe on the railway

Britain has one of the busiest rail networks in the world: every day there are about 3 million passenger journeys.

The fastest intercity trains travel at an average speed of 125mph, powered by electricity in overhead lines that's 100 times greater than the supply in your home.

There is also an electrified rail that has electricity three times more powerful than that delivered by your computer or tv.

A train weighs 400 tonnes on average – that's equivalent to about 80 elephants. After putting on the brakes, it travels approximately 2,000 metres or the length of 20 Premier League football pitches before stopping.

Whether or not you're a regular user of the railway, here's what you need to know about staying safe.

The electricity
powering the
railway is 100
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44
people
have died at level
crossings in Britain
in the last 5 years



Level crossings – life savers, not time wasters

Level crossings enable us to safely cross the railway. The number of deaths at level crossings is low in Britain compared with other countries, but tragically 44 people have died in recent years.

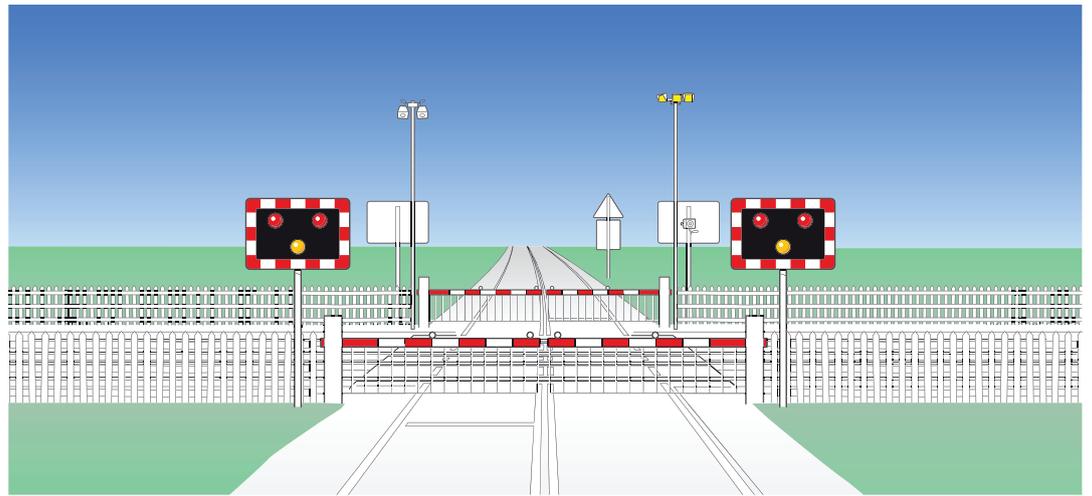
How to use a level crossing

There are different types of level crossing and they don't all look the same. The main types you're most likely to encounter are barrier crossings (full or half), or an open crossing. There are also footpath crossings, found mainly in rural areas.

Barrier Crossings

Full barrier crossings – What to look out for

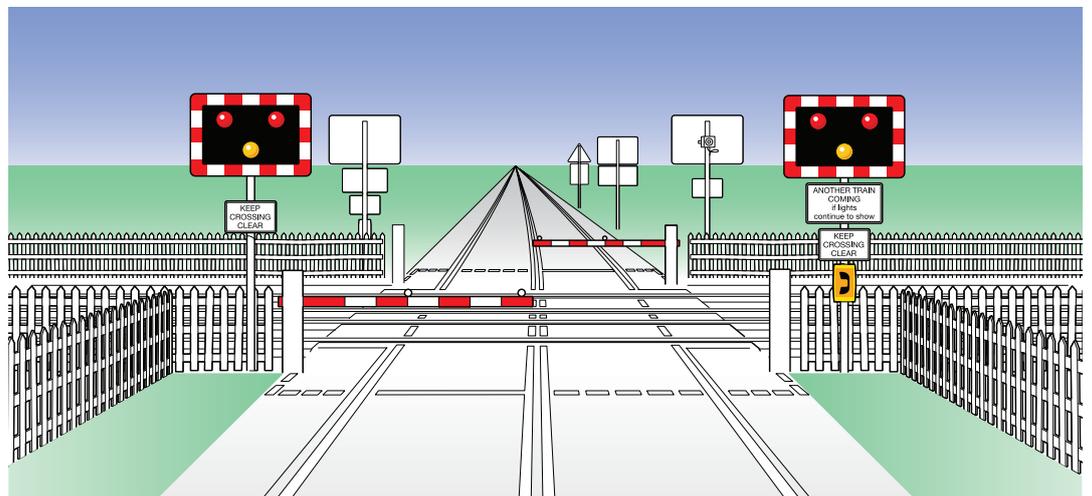
Full barrier crossings have warning lights and an alarm. Barriers cover the whole road and the alarm stops once the barriers are lowered.



Red lights flashing after the train has passed means another train is coming soon

Half barrier crossings – What to look out for

Half barrier crossings have just one barrier that covers half the road and an alarm that continues until the barrier is raised again.



STOP



WAIT



WALK

What to do

At a barrier crossing, don't go around or jump the barrier when it is closing or down. If you're wearing headphones, take them off. Stay alert.

STOP when you see the red lights flashing and hear the alarm ringing – stay behind the white line.

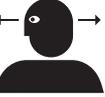
WAIT if the red lights carry on flashing after the train has gone by – another train will be passing soon.

WALK only when the lights go off and the barriers open. Look both ways when you are crossing.

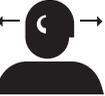
Look both ways when you're crossing



STOP



LOOK

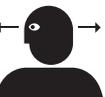


LISTEN

It may seem peaceful but trains can travel through level crossings at high speed



STOP



LOOK

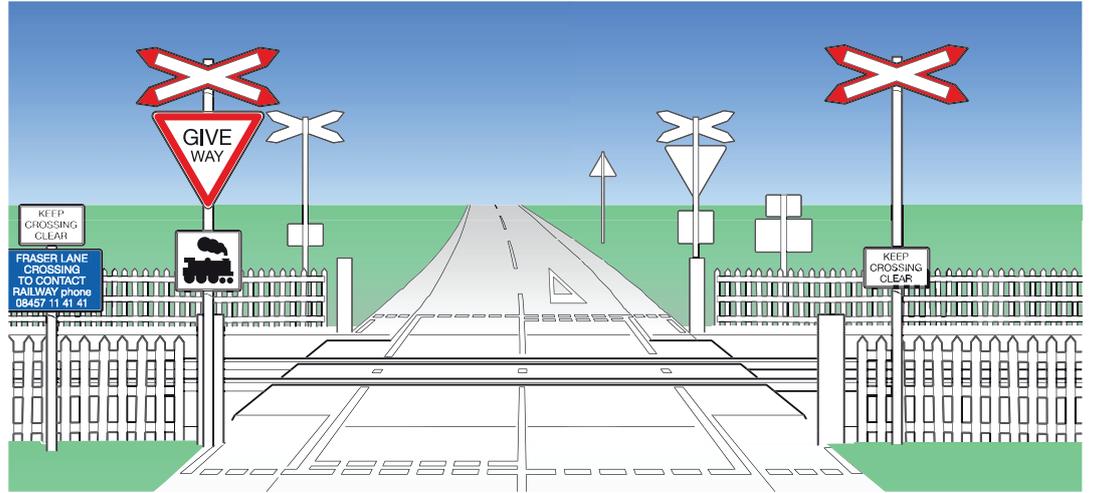


LISTEN

Open crossings

What to look out for

These crossings have no barriers and may not have warning lights. Look out for the signs.



What to do

Take extra care and stay alert. If you're wearing headphones, take them off.

STOP when you reach the crossing.

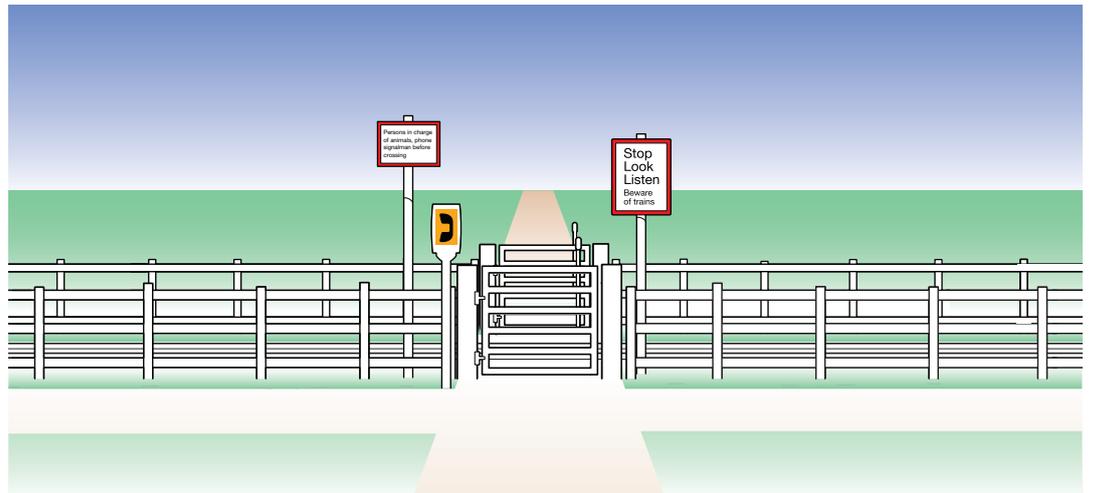
LOOK both ways to make sure nothing is coming.

LISTEN carefully before you cross. Continue to look both ways when you're crossing.

Footpath crossings

What to look out for

You'll mainly find these in the country. It may seem like a peaceful spot but trains can travel through at high speeds. There will be stiles or gates and some may not have warning lights.



What to do

Take extra care, stay alert and if you're wearing headphones, take them off. Follow the signs. If the crossing has red warning lights you must not cross until they go green.

If there's a sign telling you to call for permission to cross, you must use the phone provided to speak to a member of the railway. They will tell you when to cross.

STOP when you reach the crossing.

LOOK both ways to make sure nothing is coming.

LISTEN carefully before you cross. Continue to look both ways when you're crossing.

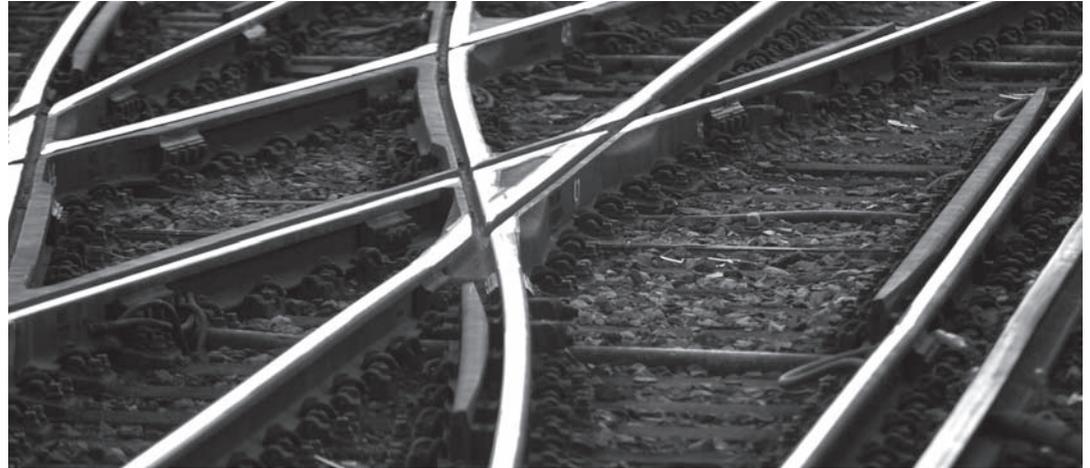
69 people

people have been
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the railway in the
last 10 years

Fact:
Rubber-soled
shoes will not
protect you from
the electricity

Electrification

Trains are powered by electricity carried through overhead lines or a conductor rail, sometimes called the third rail. The third rail has 750 volts passing through it. Overhead lines carry 25,000 volts – that's 100 times greater than the power supply in your home. Tragically, 69 people have been electrocuted on the railway in the last 10 years.



The facts

- The 'third rail' looks like a normal railway rail, but is electrified. The electricity is so strong that if you touch the rail, you will be seriously injured or killed.
- The third rail and overhead lines have electricity flowing through them at all times and are never switched off.
- Electricity in overhead lines can 'jump'. You don't have to touch the overhead lines to get electrocuted. If you fly a kite or dangle things from bridges near the overhead power lines, the electricity can arc like lightning or jump up to 3 metres.
- Young people have been seriously burnt or killed by climbing on trains which has brought them close to the overhead lines.
- Others have been hurt by touching objects in contact with overhead lines or conductor rails.

Fact:
The third rail and
overhead lines have
electricity flowing
through them
at all times



Keep safe

- Never play with a kite or balloon near overhead lines by the railway.
- Never walk (or run) on the railway track – you can't tell which rail is electrified. Always use a level crossing to cross the railway.
- You may see danger warning signs at train stations and along the tracks. They are there to keep you safe. Never ignore a railway sign.

**50
people**

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trespassing on
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in 2011

Graffiti is
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Trespass and vandalism

Trespass on the railway can have tragic consequences. In 2011, 50 people were killed after taking shortcuts and trespassing on the railway track, and there were 445 recorded near misses between trespassers and trains.

Vandalism is when someone deliberately damages railway property. The most common types of vandalism that occur on the railway include graffiti, littering, fly-tipping and damaging railway property (such as fences, bridges, signs and tracks). It costs the industry millions of pounds each year, which could have been spent on improving the rail service.



The facts

- Trains produce wind turbulence so powerful that it can drag somebody standing next to the tracks under the wheels of the train.
- Graffiti is criminal damage and carries a prison sentence of up to 10 years.
- Whenever you're on the track you're at risk of serious injury or death from trains and high voltage electricity.
- Putting objects on the track (like stones or shopping trolleys) could cause an accident which may hurt or kill other people. Even a small object can derail a train.

Causing a train
accident could lead
to prosecution and
life imprisonment

Know the law

- A criminal record stays with you for life.
- If someone puts an object on the track which causes an accident, the maximum sentence is life imprisonment.
- If a child is charged with causing a train accident, their parent or guardian may be prosecuted too.
- Trespassing on the railway track is a criminal offence with a maximum fine of £1,000.



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Stay safe on the railway

www.rail-life.co.uk

**For further information email:
communitysafety@networkrail.co.uk**