

Losing out?



Your guide to renewing season tickets

Are you making the most of your season ticket? Train companies offer savings and other benefits on monthly or annual season tickets but do you know what you're entitled to? Passenger Focus is the official, independent voice of the rail passenger and we want to make sure that you get the best value from your rail travel.

We're here to help, offer advice and to answer your questions so here's some handy hints to make sure you're getting the best deal.

STEP ONE:

Ask the right questions

Q Can I get a discount?

A Always ask whether you are entitled to a discount. They should be included automatically but it's best to check.

Compensation on season tickets is usually based on the average performance on your route over the previous 12 months. If the number of trains on time or cancelled falls below what is known as the 'trigger' level – automatic compensation should be awarded.

This compensation is given in the form of a discount on the cost of your next season ticket – NOT a cash payment. And remember, if you don't renew your ticket within 28 days of your old ticket running out, you lose your entitlement to the discount.

Discounts will be given on your new season ticket if it is valid for the same period or shorter, and for the same journey.

It's always best to check as some companies have different compensation arrangements. For example, 'one' railway offers a different package. Please check their website www.onerailway.co.uk for further information or contact 'one' customer services on 0845 600 7245

Q What is a void day?

A A void day is when an operator cannot run an effective train service. The train company may choose to declare the whole day 'void'. If so, it must pay compensation. However, it also means the day is omitted from its average performance figures.

Q Can I claim for void days on my previous season ticket(s)?

A Usually if a day is declared 'void', compensation is made by:

- > a refund for any days declared void in the form of cash, cheque or vouchers, or
- > extending the duration of your season ticket

Q Can I use my season ticket in combination with other tickets?

A There is no need to pay twice – season tickets (except those issued by a Passenger Transport Executive or a local authority) may be used in combination with other tickets as part-payment for through journeys. Check with the booking office when buying your ticket.

Q Can I get any extras with my season ticket?

A Many train companies offer extra benefits for their season ticket holders.

Ask your train operator what offers or deals they may have.

Many train companies offer extra benefits on monthly or longer season tickets, such as:

- > discounts on other journeys
- > discounted car parking
- > special retail offers – discounts at retail outlets
- > free travel for partners at weekends
- > free first class tickets.

Annual season tickets valid in the London and South East area are generally issued as Gold Cards or Gold Card Travelcards and offer benefits like discounted travel after 10am on Mondays to Fridays, and at any time at weekends/public holidays. Other benefits include off-peak first class upgrades for just £3 and cheap travel for friends and family. Ask at your local station for details.

An annual Gold Card or Gold Card Travelcard holder may purchase a Network Railcard for the reduced price of £1 for a relative or friend. Full details of the Network Railcard and other discount cards can be obtained from National Rail Enquiries on 08457 48 49 50 or by visiting www.railcard.co.uk



Did you know?

Season tickets offer great advantages, but please note the following conditions:

STEP TWO: Be aware of your rights

Q Can I get a refund on my season ticket?

A You can obtain a refund on your season ticket, but the calculation of what you're owed is not calculated on a pro-rata basis.

What you get back:

- > Annual season tickets are issued for 52 weeks for the price of 40 weeks. If you are seeking a refund in the last three months of your season ticket, you will not get a refund.
- > Refunds are calculated on the price you paid for your ticket minus the days/weeks used (at the price of tickets you would have bought without a season ticket), minus a further administration charge. This may mean that you get back less than you expected.
- > Duplicate tickets replacing lost tickets are not normally refunded (see next question).
- > Your refund will be worked out from the date you return your ticket. If you want to get your refund calculated from an earlier date, you may need to submit proof, such as a medical certificate, as to why you couldn't present your ticket for refund sooner.



Q What if I lose or damage my ticket?

A A replacement ticket is issued if the original becomes damaged and stops working (e.g. doesn't open ticket barriers). Your ticket can be replaced as often as necessary. Replacement tickets can be refunded.

A duplicate ticket may be provided if your season ticket is lost or stolen. A second duplicate ticket may only be issued under special circumstances (e.g. if it has been stolen and reported to the police). However, no more than two duplicate tickets will be issued in any 12 month period under any circumstances. Refunds are rarely made on duplicate season tickets.



Q What if I forget my season ticket?

A You need to buy a ticket for that day before travelling. On the first occasion, the train company will refund the cost of your rail ticket but you must present the ticket with any claim for a refund.

Some train operators, but not all, will refund a second ticket if you forget your ticket again.

Q Do I have to buy a monthly or annual season ticket?

A You can buy a season ticket for any length of time as long as it is more than one month and less than one year. This benefits passengers who do not travel all year round such as students or seasonal workers.

Q What if my journey changes?

A You are entitled to a pro-rata refund on your original season ticket if:

- > the ticket is valid for one month or more
- > the new season ticket begins the day after the original ticket is handed in
- > it is valid for a period as long as the original.

STEP THREE: Getting further information

This leaflet is an outline of some of the issues to be aware of when buying or renewing your season ticket. For further information:

- > ask at your local station
- > pick up a copy of your train company's Passenger's Charter
- > visit your train company's website.

Full entitlements on season tickets are contained in the National Rail Conditions of Carriage, available at www.nationalrail.co.uk or from any station.

Different terms apply to refunds and rebates on season tickets if your ticket incorporates a journey on the national rail network but is issued by London Underground or one of the Passenger Transport Executives which operate in metropolitan areas. To find out more, contact London Underground or your local PTE directly.

For more help and advice about your season ticket or any other rail issues, contact us at:

Passenger Focus,
Freepost WA1521,
Warrington WA4 6GP

Tel: **08453 022 022**

Textphone: 0845 850 1354 Fax: 0845 850 1392

Email: info@passengerfocus.org.uk
www.passengerfocus.org.uk

or National Rail Enquiries

Tel: 08457 48 49 50 www.nationalrail.co.uk