



Great
Western
Railway

Buy before you board

Important information regarding
your responsibilities as a
passenger on our trains

August 2026



Penalty Fare or prosecution

You risk a £100 Penalty Fare or prosecution if you
travel without a valid ticket for your whole journey

Buy before you board

If you do not buy before you board:

You must have a valid ticket to travel on GWR trains. Where you can, you must buy a ticket before you begin your journey with us.

If you board any of our trains without a valid ticket and there was an opportunity to buy one, you may:

- Have to pay the full, non-discounted single or return fare for your journey (discounts including Railcards, will not be available).
- Be issued with a Penalty Fare if you are travelling within our Penalty Fare area - see map inside the back cover.
- Be reported for consideration of prosecution.

How to buy a ticket:

Ticket office

We have ticket offices at many of our stations. Tickets can be bought for any journey, including one starting from a different station, and those that include London Underground stations.

You can pay for your ticket with cash, debit or credit card, Apple Pay, Google Pay, and Solo or Electron cards. Please allow enough time to buy your ticket.

Ticket machines

These are available at many of our stations and accept cash or credit/debit cards. You can buy a variety of tickets, including 7-day season tickets and discounted tickets for Railcard holders.

Online

You can buy tickets to anywhere in the UK quickly and easily at **GWR.com**

By phone

Call our **Customer Support team** on **03457 000 125** (Standard network charges apply. Calls from mobiles may be higher).

Download our app

Search **GWR** in your app store.

What if there are long queues at the station ticket office?

This is the main reason given for not buying a ticket. It's difficult to tell a genuine case from a dishonest case so, in these circumstances, a Penalty Fare will be issued.

We monitor queues at our stations to keep them as short as we can. Authorised Collectors are supplied with information detailing problems with ticket offices, including closures outside of the advertised times, as well as heavy queuing.

Ticket machines are also available at most of our stations.

What if I arrive late or am in a rush?

Under the National Rail Conditions of Travel, you are responsible for making sure you buy a valid ticket for your whole journey before you travel. Otherwise you may be liable to pay a Penalty Fare.

You may find it more convenient to buy tickets using the GWR app. Or think about buying a season ticket if you travel regularly.

Penalty Fares



Penalty Fares can be issued by any member of staff who is trained and is authorised as a collector of Penalty Fares. You can ask to see their ID badge to confirm this.

Authorised Collectors are in place to reduce the number of customers who board our trains without a ticket. This not only benefits GWR, but also our customers who do pay for their fares.

A Penalty Fare is £100 plus the price of the full single fare applicable for your intended journey. However, if it is paid within 21 days, the Penalty Fare is reduced to £50 plus the price of the single fare applicable

Penalty Fares are issued in accordance with the Railways (Penalty Fares) (Amendment) Regulations 2022.



Report for consideration of prosecution

Where Penalty Fares do not apply, either where there are more serious issues with a journey or you are travelling outside of a Penalty Fare area, our inspectors are trained to report the incident to our Revenue Recovery Team. We review each individual case and decide how it may best be resolved.

What information do I need to provide if I am issued with a Penalty Fare or reported?

If you travel without a valid ticket, you are legally required to provide GWR with your full name, address and date of birth, and any other information which helps confirm your identity.

We take your privacy seriously and this information is collected and stored in line with the Data Protection Act 2018.

I've bought my ticket on board the train before. Why would I now receive a Penalty Fare?

The National Rail Conditions of Travel and Railway Bylaws state that you must buy your ticket before you board. The staff on our trains should only sell tickets or upgrades to customers where they board at a station which does not have ticket selling facilities, or where the ticket office wasn't open, or the ticket vending machines weren't working

Previously, you may have previously experienced our staff applying their discretion. Or, they will have not been one of our Authorised Collectors and therefore not able to issue a Penalty Fare.

Can I buy my ticket at my destination if I am in a rush?

Normally, you can't buy a ticket at the end of your journey. You need to make sure you have enough time to buy a valid ticket before you start your journey. Remember that at some stations, especially larger ones, there could be a queue to buy a ticket.

What if I have bought a discounted ticket, but don't have my Railcard?

If you have a Railcard, you must always carry it with you. If you can't show it during your journey, your discounted ticket will be invalid.

That means you will be charged the full adult fare or receive a Penalty Fare if you are travelling within a Penalty Fare area, or be reported for (the consideration of) prosecution.

If you can produce your Railcard after your journey we will provide one warning, cancel any Penalty Fare or report for prosecution, and refund any extra tickets you had to buy.

What if I want to upgrade from Standard to First Class?

If you have a Standard ticket or season ticket and want to upgrade to First Class, you must buy a ticket upgrade before you travel. If you do not, you will be charged the full First Class fare, receive a Penalty Fare if you are travelling within a Penalty Fare area, or be reported for (the consideration of) prosecution.

You can upgrade from Standard to First Class on most GWR routes at weekends and on Bank Holidays by paying a supplement. These tickets can be bought on board the train, subject to availability.

What if I want to travel further than the destination on my ticket?

You must make sure you have the right ticket before you travel. If your plans change, let a member of staff know straight away so that you can buy a valid ticket.

Please don't wait to be asked for your ticket. If you can't produce a valid ticket you may face a revenue protection sanction action.

You could be prosecuted if it was shown you intended to travel further than the destination on your ticket, without paying the correct fare.

What if I want to buy a season ticket and the ticket office is closed?

As long as you have a photo card, you can buy a weekly season ticket from one of our ticket machines.

However, if you want to buy a season ticket for a month or longer, you should buy a single from the ticket machine and then buy your season ticket at your destination.

The cost of your single ticket will then be deducted from your season ticket.

What should I do if I have forgotten my photo card or season ticket?

You should buy a daily ticket for your journey before you travel. You can then apply for a refund at the ticket office when you show your season ticket. You can only do this twice in a 12 month period, and you may be charged an admin fee.

What if I discover that I've forgotten my season ticket once I have boarded the train?

The Authorised Collector will record your personal details and issue you with a Penalty Fare.

You should then follow the instructions to submit an appeal. Send a clear photocopy of your season ticket and photo card to the Appeals Service.

National Rail Conditions of Travel

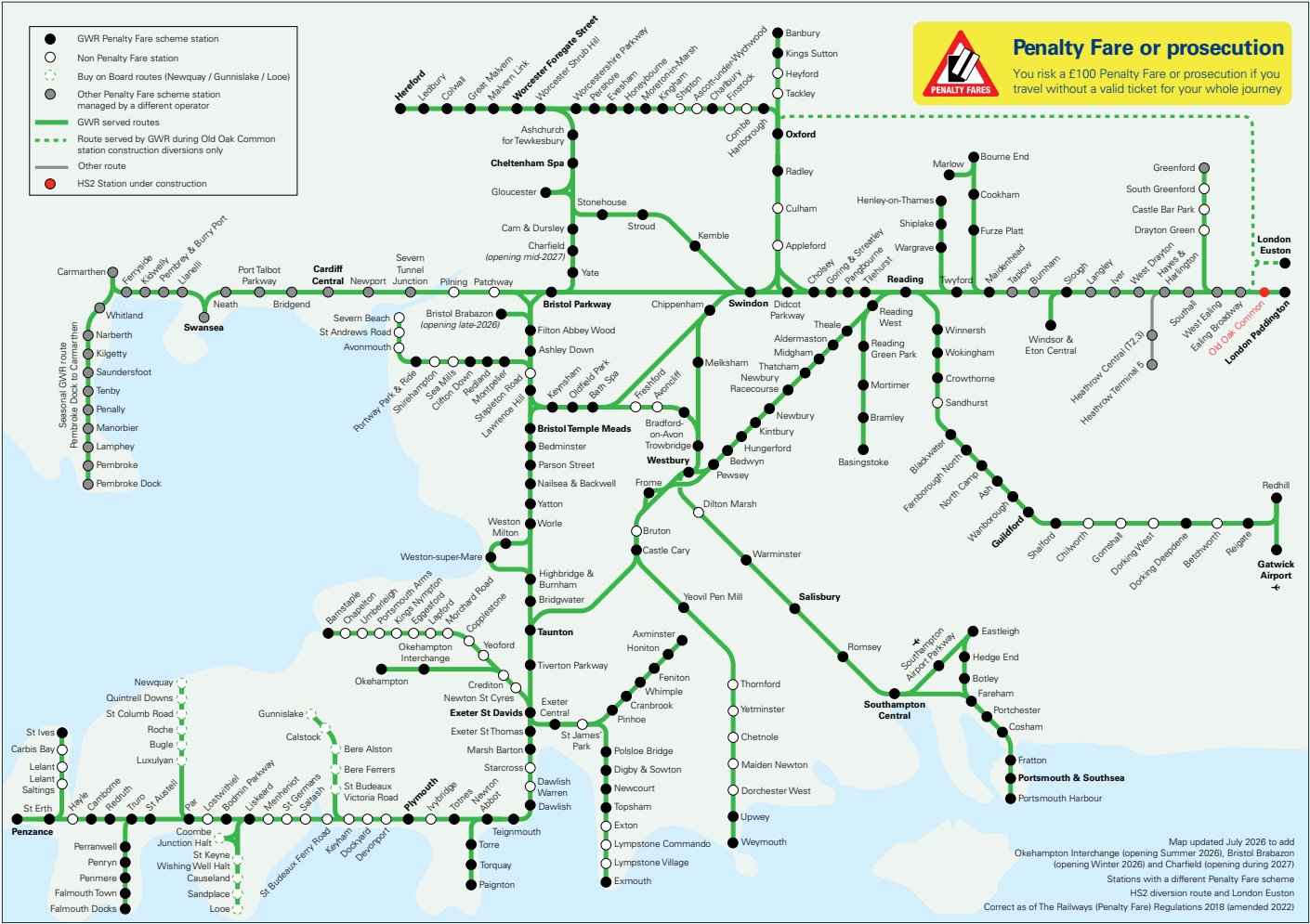
These are national conditions of the sale and use of rail tickets.

If you would like more information, details are available from the National Rail website at **Nationalrail.co.uk**

GWR's Revenue Protection Policy

To find out more about Penalty Fares or being reported for prosecution, visit **GWR.com/RevenueProtection**

GWR Penalty Fare stations



This leaflet is intended as a guide and should not be regarded as a complete or authoritative statement of law or regulations.

Other train operators may have their own Penalty Fares scheme, this leaflet only covers the Great Western Railway scheme.

Information correct at the time of issue - August 2026 and replaces the January 2023 edition of this guide.

Penalty Fares information is correct as per the Railways (Penalty Fares) (Amendment) Regulations 2022.

More information



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GWR.com/contact



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03457 000 125*



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* Standard network charges apply. Calls from mobiles may be higher.

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