

Our autism friendly guide to travelling by Metro



Tyne and Wear Metro

A guide for travellers with autism, and parents/carers of people with autism

We recognise that travelling can be stressful. This is especially the case for people with autism.

We want to make sure that our customers feel as comfortable as possible when they use Tyne and Wear Metro. We have teamed up with National Autistic Society to create a guide that can also be used as a tool to help you prepare you, a child or the person you are travelling with for their journey on Tyne and Wear Metro.

BEFORE YOU TRAVEL

If you require assistance when travelling on Metro, for any reason, you can contact us by telephoning **0191 203 3666** (lines open 6.30am to midnight) or email assistance@nexus.org.uk.

Please contact us at least four hours before you travel.

Give yourself plenty of time to get to the station. You can check the timetables on our website here: [Timetables and stations | nexus.org.uk](https://www.nexus.org.uk/timetables) Select the station you are travelling from, and what day of the week you are travelling on.

The time you travel can have a big impact on how busy the station or the train is. If you would prefer a quieter journey, it may be helpful to try and avoid travelling during rush hour time.

AT THE STATION

All Metro stations have signs like this to say the name of the station.



Most also have a Metro cube, which looks like this.



Metro stations can be busy.

You may hear lots of different sounds.

They are often loud and happen at the same time.

They could be the noise of lots of people, announcements over the tannoy, noises of trains arriving and departing or suitcase or pushchair wheels

If you are sensitive to loud noises, consider taking some headphones or ear defenders to help block out loud announcements or music.

There are no toilets in any of our Metro stations.

There will be trains going in more than one direction at every station.

The display on the front of the train will usually show the final destination, not every station, so it might not specifically say your station.

Some stations have signs like this which show how many minutes until the next train comes.



There will be signs to say which platform you need, like this one.



There is a map in every station which shows all the stations so you can see which line yours is on.



There will be an announcement as the train arrives to say where it is going – again this will be the final destination.

TICKETS

You will need a ticket before you get on the Metro.

You can buy one at a ticket machine – they look like this and are at every Metro station.



Or you can use a Pop Pay As You Go card.

This is a smartcard that you order online and top up with money.

You can find out more here: [PAYG on Metro/nexus.org.uk](https://payg.onmetro/nexus.org.uk)

You will need to allow up to 10 days for your card to arrive, before you travel.

GETTING ON THE TRAIN

In some stations, you may have to pass through ticket barriers to get to your platform. They look like this.



We have ticket barriers at 12 stations. They are Heworth, Gateshead, Central, Monument, Haymarket, Jesmond, Four Lane Ends, Regent Centre, Manors, South Shields, North Shields and Airport.

If you have bought a paper ticket at the machine you will need to feed it through the ticket barrier. Remember to pick it back up and keep hold of it. If you have a Pop card, hold it against the orange pad and the gates will open.

If there are other passengers around, you might want to stand back and watch them use the ticket barriers first.

The barriers open quite quickly once a ticket has been accepted, and you will need to move quickly through them once they have opened before they close again.

When the train pulls up, the doors don't open automatically. Press the button on the door to open them. If people are getting off the train, let them off before you get on.



ON THE TRAIN

Once on the train, you can sit on any empty seat. There are no seat reservations like on larger trains.

The train may be busy and all of the seats might be taken, so you might have to stand. Make sure you stand next to a pole or have a handle to hold on to.

It may be noisy on the train, with people talking, or you might hear the music from their headphones. The trains also make noises, which are louder when travelling through a tunnel.

There will be an announcement to say what each next station is, and there is a route map over every door like this.

You might want to sit or stand near this so you can track your journey.



Sometimes we have ticket inspectors on trains and they might ask to see your ticket. This is normal, you aren't getting in trouble. Just show them your paper ticket or Pop card.

GETTING OFF THE TRAIN

The train will stop at every station on its route.

As you approach the stop where you want to get off, make sure you have all your belongings and go to the door. If you are the first person to exit the train, you may have to press the door button to open the door. This looks the same as the button on the outside of the door.

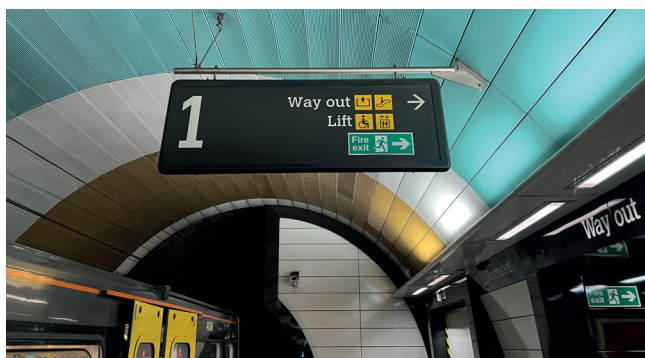


Once the door is fully open, step off the train. Mind the gap between the train and the platform edge. This gap is different at each station, so even if there wasn't one when you got on, there might be one when you get off.

Make your way out of the station.

At some stations there are signs showing the Way Out – like in this picture.

Some stations are very small and the exit is very clear.



You might have to pass through another ticket barrier on your way out.
Put your paper ticket through the barrier, or tap your Pop card to open the barrier.
At the stations with no barriers, you can just walk out if you have a paper ticket.

If you have a Pop card, remember to tap it on the validator – it looks like this.
This closes your journey and makes sure you are charged the right amount of money for it.



ASKING FOR HELP

At a station which is staffed, you can ask a member of staff to help you; this could be done verbally or by using a communication device or card.

You'll see our Customer Service teams wearing uniforms like these. They will be happy to help you.



Help Points are located at every station if you need to speak to a member of the Customer Service team – they look like this.

Press the Enquiry button and you will hear someone talk to you.



DISRUPTIONS

We know it can be difficult when trains are delayed or disrupted. We want all our trains to run on time, all of the time, but sometimes things happen that mean they can't.

If you are expecting a train to arrive and it doesn't, listen out for the announcements over the tannoy system which might tell you when it is due.

You can use the Help Point in the station to talk to a member of our Customer Services team who will be able to tell you when your train is due.

On rare occasions, there might be a longer delay of a few hours or even into the next day. In these situations, you might be able to use a local bus to get to where you need to go. Ask on the Help Point which buses you can use. You won't need to buy a bus ticket, your Metro ticket will cover it on these occasions.

If you use social media, follow us on Twitter.



We share details of all disruptions here and you can message the team to ask for live updates. You could also check it before your travel to check if there are any disruptions.

USEFUL LINKS

These web pages might help you plan your journey and find out more about Metro

The Metro Access guide gives full details of every station on our network

[metro_access_guide_compressed_ts_june_2021_v1.pdf \(nexus.org.uk\)](#)

Metro maps which show the routes and which zones they are in [Metro maps | nexus.org.uk](#)

This guide was created in partnership with The National Autistic Society. The National Autistic Society is here to transform lives, change attitudes and create a society that works for autistic people.