Coronavirus: travel safely thanks to our protection plan

Face masks must be worn across Switzerland on public transport services and in associated buildings. This requirement is in force for stations, platform areas, underpasses and shops, among other areas. If you follow the protection measures, you will travel in safety.

Text: SBB/CFF/FFS | Fotos: SBB/CFF/FFS, Keystone

Face masks must be worn on public transport services and in associated buildings. The requirement to wear a mask does not apply to people who cannot wear a mask for particularly good reasons – notably for medical reasons – as well as children under the age of 12.

Thank you for the mutual respect and consideration.
The key points:

- It is important that the Confederation’s hygiene stipulations and the protective measures for public transport are adhered to. They make safe travel possible.
- Throughout Switzerland, it is compulsory to wear a mask when using public transport. A mask must also be worn at stations, on platforms, in waiting rooms, underpasses and shops.
- The requirement to wear a mask does not apply to people who cannot wear a mask for particularly good reasons – notably for medical reasons – as well as children under the age of 12.
- Information on the requirement to wear a mask from the Federal Office of Public Health’s (FOPH).

Update as of 1 March 2021

Adjustment of opening hours of shops and service providers in stations

Shops in stations:

The published opening hours for SBB Services are valid, but not for the stores. Please check directly with the respective stores for the current opening hours.

Gastronomy in stations: gastronomy businesses remain closed. Takeaways may remain open as before. Cross-border travel: Night-train services between Switzerland and Austria will be suspended as of 8 February 2021 until further notice. Please check the online timetable before making any journey and find out about current regulations on international services. Furthermore, everyone crossing the Swiss border by train needs to fill in the following form as of 8 February.

Further, binding information can be found on the website of the Federal Office of Public Health (FOPH).

What protection measures must be followed on public transport?

The protection measures for public transport and the Federal Office of Public Health’s (FOPH) rules for hygiene and behaviour must be observed when using public transport. SBB has developed a protection plan for public transport based on FOPH guidelines. Masks must be worn on all public transport services and associated buildings.

The only exceptions to this apply to children under the age of 12 and people who cannot wear a mask for medical reasons.

Mutual respect and consideration

Eating and drinking is still permitted on public transport – you can remove your mask to do so. Be considerate of each other and keep your distance: at stops, counters, ticket machines, when boarding and alighting and, as far as possible, in vehicles. Staff who come into contact with passengers must make passengers not wearing masks aware that there is a requirement to do so. Protecting customers and staff is a priority for Switzerland’s public transport companies.

Please observe the following protection measures:
Keep your distance at stations

Keep your distance

Buy tickets online
Observe hygiene rules

Keep yourself informed

Wear a mask on trains
Leave seat spaces
Avoid peak times
We keep cleaning regularly
How do I use a mask properly?

You can find information on the correct use of masks on the FOPH website. Please dispose of face masks (disposable products) in a waste bin.

- **Please obtain your own protective equipment.**

Protective masks can be bought in many station shops, such as kiosks, pharmacies, supermarkets or convenience stores, as well as elsewhere. The Selecta vending machines at railway stations are also stocked with protective masks.

You can find all the relevant information on protection measures and opening times for shops in SBB railway stations on the page regarding information on stations.

Are the trains cleaned more frequently than before the coronavirus crisis?

SBB has increased the frequency of cleaning in response to the crisis: objects customers touch and surfaces such as grab poles, buttons, tables, armrests and toilets are cleaned and disinfected several times a day. Additional cleaning is carried out en route on lines with particularly high demand. In total, there are around 1,000 SBB employees deployed to clean the trains.

You can find tips for travelling during the coronavirus pandemic in this article on SBB News.

What about the air conditioning on trains?

The information currently available shows no evidence for an increased risk of infection in SBB vehicles with air conditioning or ventilation systems. The air conditioning units operate using a mixed-air system. This means that both air from outside and recirculating air are mixed together and processed in the air conditioning units.

The amount of fresh air supplied to the passenger areas is secured on a per person basis and varies according to the outside air temperature and the number of people occupying the passenger areas. The air in the passenger areas is fully replaced with outside air at an average rate of six to ten times per hour.

This significantly reduces the proportion of microorganisms in the air. SBB replaces the air filters every 45-90 days to prevent the accumulation of contaminants in the air conditioning units.
How is hygiene being ensured at stations?

In the 34 largest SBB railway stations, hand-sanitiser dispensers have been set up at the entrances and outside the toilet facilities.

To ensure that the FOPH hygiene guidelines are adhered to, lifts can only be used by one person at a time. Where necessary, shops in SBB railways stations have established areas for queueing. Please find out about the opening times for the relevant shops directly at the location.

You can find all the relevant information on protection measures and opening times for shops in SBB railway stations on the page regarding information on stations.

Waiting rooms in SBB railway stations are open. Masks must be worn in the waiting rooms.

What measures apply with regard to tickets?

Ticket counters are open. It’s best to buy your tickets online, on the SBB Mobile app or from ticket machines. If possible, use a contactless method of payment at ticket counters and ticket machines.

Passengers are still required to hold tickets. Until further notice, passenger attendants will not touch SwissPasses and tickets when checking them but will instead check them from a distance. Note: Customers of SBB who have forgotten their travelcard can now pay the CHF 5 fee conveniently and safely online. Up until now, this was only possible at the counter.

How is SBB protecting its staff?

SBB employees are an important part of the protection plan for public transport, and staff wear face masks.

Plexiglass barriers at staffed points of sale protect both staff and customers. Locomotive drivers do not wear surgical masks for safety reasons.

Until further notice tickets and passes will be checked by means of visual inspection so that passenger attendants do not have to touch them.
International rail travel during the coronavirus pandemic

Train travel abroad is possible with certain restrictions.

Please inform yourself about any possible entry restrictions and the current regulations that apply at your destination before you start your journey.

You can find the most important information for each country on the page regarding rail travel to other European countries in coronavirus times.

Suspension of the night-time offer

Since the weekend of 6 to 7 November 2020, night-time networks have been suspended until further notice (in german). Resumption of services depends on the Federal Council’s guidelines regarding closing times and night-life.

Regular night-time services are not affected. Connections that depart after the arrival of the last timetabled trains will be guaranteed.

Please check the online timetable before starting your journey.

Which services are currently available?

Service in SBB Restaurants and SBB Bistros (table service as well as take-away) is suspended until further notice.

You can find information on rail catering here.

Group travel is possible in principle. Groups travelling together are responsible for following all the Federal Office of Public Health stipulations.

You can find information on transporting luggage here.

Many thanks to all staff who are keeping Switzerland moving at this time.