Coronavirus: travel safely thanks to wide-ranging protection measures

On 11 May, SBB resumed normal service on various long-distance and regional connections. More services mean more passengers. Therefore, the public-transport sector developed protection measures. Those who follow them will travel safely. Answers to the most pressing questions about the changes.
Key facts at a glance:
- More passengers are once again using public transport. Therefore, it is important to follow the hygiene rules set by the government.
- Additionally, SBB has developed comprehensive protection measures for public transport. They make safe travel possible.
- SBB is also taking measures to ensure hygiene in stations.
- No extra services will run on the Ascension and Whitsun bank-holiday weekends, and there will be no coaches added to existing services.

What protection measures must be followed on public transport?
When using public transport, follow the protection measures for public transport and the FOPH's hygiene stipulations. SBB developed a protection plan based on the stipulations of the FOPH. We are counting on all passengers to show personal responsibility and solidarity. 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 where it is not possible to maintain distance

Leave seat spaces
Avoid peak times

We keep cleaning regularly
Am I required to wear a mask on public transport?

Whenever a distance of two metres cannot be maintained, SBB strongly recommends that a protective mask be worn, in line with the stipulations of the FOPH. Never store them after use, but dispose of them in a waste bin immediately. You can find information on how to use protective masks correctly on the FOPH website. No masks will be given out by the public transport companies.

- Please obtain your own protective equipment.

You can purchase protective masks in various station shops, for example in kiosks, pharmacies, supermarkets and convenience stores, and elsewhere. Selecta vending machines at stations are also being supplied with protective masks. You can find all the relevant information about stations here.

To limit the risk of infection, an advisable approach is to avoid trains at typical commuting times in the morning and evening and instead use less popular connections. Be considerate towards each other and keep your distance: at stops, counters and ticket machines, when boarding and alighting and, where possible, on board.

You can find a collection of tips for how to travel in the age of coronavirus in this SBB News piece.

Are trains now being cleaned more frequently?

SBB will also be cleaning trains more intensively: objects customers touch and surfaces such as handles, handrails, door buttons, tables, armrests and toilets are cleaned and disinfected several times a day. On lines where demand is particularly high, additional en-route cleaning is carried out. You can wash your hands at stations.

How is hygiene being ensured at stations?

Customers can wash their hands at toilet facilities in stations. At Basel SBB, Bellinzona, Bern, Genève, Lausanne, Locarno, Luzern and Zürich HB stations, the toilet facilities, which normally have to be paid for, are now available free of charge.

In addition, hand-sanitiser dispensers have been installed at the entrances of larger stations and in SBB Travel Centres.

To ensure that the FOPH hygiene stipulations are adhered to, lifts may only be used by one person at a time. Queuing areas will also be set up in shops where needed. For opening hours, please see each shop’s publicity on site.

The waiting rooms in SBB railway stations are closed until further notice.
What trains are running again since 11 May?

Following an initial expansion of the service offer on 27 April, the following trains will be running again from 11 May:

- IR90 Brig–Lausanne–Genève-Aéroport: back to normal operation for the most part
- S40 Fribourg–Romont: all services resumed
- S8 Palézieux–Payerne: all services resumed
- Zurich S-Bahn: all S19 services resumed, various S21 and S23 services resumed

You can find current information on international trains [here](#).

No extra services will run on the Ascension and Whitsun bank-holiday weekends, and there will be no coaches added to existing services.

Please check the [online timetable](#) before every journey to receive up-to-date information.

This expansion of the public transport service offer is being implementing in coordination with the Federal Council’s strategy for easing its restrictive measures.

**When will the normal timetable be reintroduced?**

SBB anticipates that the next stage in the extension of the service offer will occur in early June—depending on further measures from the Federal Council to relax restrictions. Connecting services will be maintained wherever possible. Disruptions to services and missed connections cannot be ruled out in the initial phase of service resumption. You can find current travel information in the online timetable.

Cross-border passenger services will be gradually resumed in agreement with partner railways and in line with the official regulations of neighbouring countries.

Consult the online timetable before each journey.
What is SBB’s approach to ticket refunds?

SBB is offering goodwill refunds. Customers who held a valid GA, Regional, Point-to-point or Modular Travelcard on a SwissPass for one year on the reference date 10 May 2020 will be given 15 days for free. Customers who held a valid Regional, Point-to-point or Modular Travelcard for a month or a 1-month travelpass for the Half Fare Travelcard on the reference date 17 March will also be compensated. They will receive either CHF 15 or 15 per cent of the travelcard price (depending on the travelcard) as a voucher/Rail Bon or Day Passes. Those eligible for compensation do not need to take any action. Information will be provided by the public-transport sector nearer the time. You do not need to go to a counter or call the SBB Contact Centre.

All tickets already purchased will retain their validity. If the connection you booked with the supersaver ticket is not running because the timetable is still somewhat reduced, you can travel using the next available connection. No supersaver tickets and Saver Day Passes are currently being sold. Sales will be suspended for the duration of the reduced timetable. Tickets held by passengers who miss their connection will remain valid without restrictions.

What ticketing measures are in force?

The protection plan for passengers and staff makes it possible to reopen ticket counters that have been closed temporarily and restore original opening hours where these have been limited. You should still buy tickets online, in apps or at ticket machines if possible. Contactless payment methods should be used at ticket counters.

Passengers are still required to hold tickets. However, until further notice, passenger attendants will not take your SwissPass and tickets from you to inspect them, but instead check your ticket from a distance.

Refunds and compensation

SBB is being as accommodating as possible regarding refunds: www.sbb.ch/en/refund. Customers with GA, Regional, Point-to-point, and annual Modular Travelcards will receive 15 days’ compensation. Customers with monthly travelcards will also receive compensation. Further information can be found here.
What if I had already bought a ticket at an earlier date?

All tickets already purchased will retain their validity. If a connection booked with a supersaver ticket is no longer running because of the reduced timetable, the supersaver ticket can be used for the next connection. The sale of supersaver tickets and Saver Day Passes has been temporarily suspended. The suspension of sale will last for the duration of the reduced timetable. If passengers miss a connection, their tickets will remain valid with no restrictions. The online timetable will be updated daily, following the entry of timetable changes into the systems.

What is SBB doing to protect employees?

Our employees are an important part of the public-transport protection plan. They are now wearing protective face masks when in contact with customers if a distance of two metres cannot be maintained. We are providing protective equipment for employees who need it.

Customers are still required to buy a ticket. For the time being, passenger attendants will not handle SwissPasses or tickets when checking them, but will check them from a distance instead. Plexiglas screens are to be used at points of sale in stations. Employees will be made aware of the need to observe the hygiene and behaviour rules.

Many thanks to all our employees who continue to keep Switzerland moving during this difficult period.