Coronavirus: severe restrictions to Swiss rail travel

Following the announcement by the Federal Council on the relaxation of coronavirus measures, rail services will return to normal timetable operation in stages from 27 April. Answers to the most pressing questions can be found here.
Key facts at a glance:

SBB is preparing a staged return to the normal timetable after 26 April. Until at least 26 April, please note the following:

- If you cannot avoid travelling by public transport, please consult the online timetable shortly before starting your journey, as there may be cancellations, delays and missed connections during the period of the transitional timetable.
- International services have been suspended. Some cross-border regional connections are still running.
- Please purchase your tickets digitally (via the SBB website or in the SBB Mobile app) and protect yourself and SBB staff in doing so.
- SBB is being as accommodating as possible with regards to refunds: www.sbb.ch/en/refund. Customers with GA, Regional, Point-to-point, and annual Modular travelcards will receive an extra 15-days refund. Customers with monthly travelcards will also receive a refund. Further information can be found here.
- There are new minimum opening hours for shops offering basic provisions in railway stations: 9am to 6pm.
- Follow the FOPH’s behaviour and hygiene recommendations when travelling with public transport.

When will the normal timetable be reintroduced?

SBB and other transport companies will run a reduced service offer until 26 April. Basic public transport services and access to essential locations such as hospitals and food shops will be guaranteed for the duration of this period.

In light of the planned relaxation of the measures taken to prevent the spread of the coronavirus, announced by the Federal Council, an extensive expansion of the service offer on public transport will be carried out by 11 May 2020. SBB and all other Swiss transport companies will implement this expansion of services in stages from 27 April 2020 onwards. As system managers for rail and road, SBB and PostBus are currently developing a protection plan for passengers and staff. Our top priority remains protecting the health of staff and passengers.

Which trains will be running again from Monday 27 April?

- From Monday 27 April, the following trains will be running in addition to the current service offer:
  - IC1 Zürich HB–Genève-Aéroport: resumption of the connection between Fribourg and Genève-Aéroport
  - IR70 Luzern–Zürich HB: return to half-hourly service between Zürich HB and Luzern
  - IR75 Zürich HB–Weinfelden–Konstanz: service will be increased between Zürich HB and Weinfelden
  - IR17 Zürich HB–Olten–Bern: return to half-hourly service between Olten and Bern via the mainline via Burgdorf
  - ZVV S19 Dietikon–Effretikon–Dietikon: increased service offer
  - RE Annemasse–Genève–Lausanne–Vevey/St-Maurice: half-hourly service between Genève and Annemasse

From 27 April 2020, individual regional transport operators will be returning to the regular timetable. Connecting services will be maintained wherever possible. However, disruption and missed connections cannot be ruled out. Up-to-date travel information can be found on the online timetable.

The recommendations of the Federal Office for Public Health (FOPH) to avoid unnecessary journeys, maintain distance from others and take hygiene measures still apply and should be followed: in particular, leisure and tourist journeys must still be avoided; and you should continue to work from home, if possible.
What do these timetable changes mean for SBB and rail passengers?

These measures represent the largest timetable changes (service reduction and reintroduction of full service) ever implemented in such a short space of time. Switzerland’s transport companies would like to apologise to all passengers affected. If passengers miss a connection, their tickets will remain valid with no restrictions. The online timetable will be updated daily as soon as the timetable changes have been entered into the systems.

What kind of connections are suspended until 26 April?

Early-morning and late-night connections are not affected by the restrictions since these connections are important for people who works shifts and therefore for the economies of Switzerland and its regions. Many connections in the middle of the night have however been cancelled. Additional night-time connections on weekends have also been cancelled. Despite these service reductions, basic public transport services and access to essential locations such as hospitals and food shops will be guaranteed during this difficult time.
So there’s a reduced timetable. Which trains and which lines are affected?

The reduction of the timetable is being spread over the following four phases.

**Step 1: from Thursday 19 March**

- Additional peak time trains on long-distance services will be suspended
- Night trains no longer run, stations will be closed at night on weekends as well

**Step 2: from Monday 23 March**

- IC2 Zürich HB–Zug–Lugano: partially suspended
- IC4 Zürich HB–Schaffhausen: suspended
- IR36 Basel SBB–Brugg AG–Zürich HB(–Zürich Flughafen): partially suspended
- IR75 Luzern–Zürich HB–Konstanz: Zürich HB–Konstanz suspended
- IR90 Genève-Aéroport–Lausanne–Brig: partially suspended
- RE Annemasse–Genève–Lausanne–Vevey/St-Maurice: suspended between Annemasse and Genève
- S Léman Express: partially suspended
- S Tilo: partially suspended

**Step 3: from Thursday 26 March**

- IC1 Genève Aéroport–Bern–Zürich HB–St. Gallen: suspended between Zürich and St. Gallen
- IC3 Basel SBB–Zürich–Chur: partially suspended
- IR16 Bern–Olten–Brugg AG–Zürich HB: suspended between Bern and Olten
- IR17 Bern–Burgdorf–Olten(–Zürich HB): suspended
- IR75 Luzern–Zürich HB–Konstanz: additional peak-time trains suspended
- RE Olten–Luzern: suspended

**Step 4: from Thursday, 2 April**

- IR 70 Zürich–Luzern: suspended
- RE Olten–Wettingen: suspended (from 30 March)
Can I still travel abroad?

International services have been suspended. Some cross-border regional connections are still running, for example regional services from Switzerland to Konstanz and regional services between Brig and Domodossola. Please check the online timetable before starting any journey. Due to the different situations in the individual countries, we cannot currently provide any indication as to when it will be possible to run individual lines again.

What if I had already bought a ticket at an earlier date?

All tickets already purchased will retain their validity. If you have bought a supersaver ticket for a connection that 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.
What about refunds?

For refunds, see the site [www.sbb.ch/en/refund](http://www.sbb.ch/en/refund). SBB customer service staff are fully committed to responding to all queries. SBB asks you to appreciate that response times will be longer than usual in light of the current situation.

Will my travelcard be refunded?

Switzerland’s public transport companies and their industry organisation [Alliance SwissPass](http://www.sbb.ch/en/alliance-swisspass) have found a solution (uniform across Switzerland) for customers who cannot use their travelcards because of the current situation affecting public transport. Customers with GA Travelcards, Regional Travelcards, Point-to-point Travelcards and annual Modular Travelcards will receive an extra 15-days refund. Customers with monthly travelcards will also receive a refund. Further information can be found here.

What about shops in stations? Can I still do my shopping?

The following [opening hours](http://www.sbb.ch/en/shop) apply to food shops, pharmacies and kiosks in order to ensure the supply of basic provisions: Monday to Sunday, 9am to 6pm.

There is an exception for kiosks: They can remain closed on Saturday and Sunday since no significant travel activity is expected then. Longer opening hours are voluntary, and at the discretion of the tenant. Notices on shop fronts will give current opening hours. These modifications are temporary, enter into force immediately and until further notice, and will be amended immediately if the authorities responsible issue new instructions, which will always take precedence and be binding.

So travel by public transport should be avoided. However, if I have to take the train in an exceptional circumstance, what do I need to take into account?

Maintain distance to other people on public transport as far as possible. SBB supports the recommendations of the FOPH and expects personal responsibility from customers and flexibility from employers. All public transport operators in Switzerland are trying to maintain social distancing as far as possible. However, we can only achieve this if passengers continue to avoid making unnecessary journeys and use trains with low occupancy as far as possible. This way, people who have to use public transport keep the necessary distance to other passengers. Be even more considerate of other people than usual.

Many employees are working day in, day out in direct contact with customers. What is SBB doing to protect them?

Smaller travel centres will be closed temporarily due to reduced demand. The opening hours of some other travel centres and points of sale will be adapted. The list providing the most up-to-date information is available under “downloads”. The Travel Centres that remain open are equipped with plexiglass screens to protect staff and customers.

- There will be no catering services on board trains (dining car and seat service).
- Long-distance services will continue to be run with train crew on board. Ticket checks will be reduced significantly with immediate effect. Passengers are still required to have tickets.
Avoid unnecessary journeys with public transport.

Follow the FOPH’s behaviour and hygiene recommendations when travelling with public transport.
SBB customer service staff are fully committed to responding to all queries online.