Young travellers

Four young people talk about underground transport in their city.

A Svetlana, Moscow

I take the metro to college because it's the fastest way to get there. You can use it to reach almost anywhere in the city and it operates from 5.30 a.m. to 1.00 a.m., seven days a week. I usually catch a train at 8.05 a.m. and arrive at college forty minutes later. Our metro is simple to use, though if you can't read Russian it can seem complicated so it's a good idea to look at the official website to plan your journey. I'd also advise using the English map of the system as it has both the Russian and English station names. As well as being an efficient transport system, the Moscow Metro is a unique underground museum with stations boasting wonderful wall paintings and stained glass that are guaranteed to take passengers' breath away.

B Anya, Berlin

I use the U-Bahn, or Berlin metro, at weekends to hang out with friends. Its famous yellow trains run on weekdays from 4.00 a.m. till 1.00 a.m., after which you need to get a night bus. At the weekend, trains run all through the night. The U-Bahn is clean, reliable and easy to use. There are no ticket offices so you have to use the ticket machines which only accept five and ten Euro coins and notes. There are no entrance or exit gates at the stations either, so you should validate your ticket by stamping it at a box on the platform before boarding a train. If you are asked by an inspector to show a valid ticket and do not have one, the fine is very expensive, so don't even think about risking it! Because of the excellent transport system in the city centre, rush hours aren't crowded and even if you can't get a seat there is plenty of standing room.

C Rick, London

The Tube covers a lot of the city and trains run from 5.00 a.m. to midnight, though there's the Night Tube on some lines at weekends. I use this when going out with my friends, but I also take the Tube every day to get to university and my journey usually takes around an hour. When the service is running fine, there are regular trains. But, as the oldest underground system in the world, it suffers from technical faults and delays. In my opinion this happens too often and users should get a refund. It's expensive if you pay for individual journeys so it's best for visitors to buy a Travelcard, which allows unlimited travel in specified zones for a day. Regular travellers can pay in advance if they have a digital card. There are plenty of maps showing the lines and zones in stations and on the trains. The service often gets crowded and you are expected to give up your seat for those who are elderly, disabled or pregnant. Special badges have been introduced for pregnant women and people with conditions that aren't always visible, reading 'Please offer me a seat'.

D Min Jun, Seoul

The subway, which runs daily from 5.30 a.m. to midnight, is very fast and efficient but I still have a journey of at least an hour and a half to college. Our subway is the envy of planners the world over with its high-tech design and services. It is one of the only metro systems where passengers can always use mobile phones and access WiFi. In addition, the trains are fitted with TV screens and have air conditioning in the summer and heated seats in the winter, which I love! If you buy a single ticket, you also have to pay a deposit, which you can get back when you return the ticket card to a machine at your destination. For more journeys, a digital card which you can use until the money runs out might be a better idea. With this, you can transfer between subway stations and buses as many as five times for no additional fare if you complete your journey within thirty minutes.

You are going to read an article about underground transport in different cities. For questions 11–18, choose from the young people A–D. The young people may be chosen more than once.

Which young person/people:

11 believes the look of their trains is well-known? .....

12 mentions the need to be aware of other passengers? .....

13 has a long journey, even on a good day? .....

14 chooses to use the metro as the best form of transport to a particular place? .....

15 can use another form of transport at no extra cost? .....

16 believes there are certain circumstances when users should get their money back? .....

17 mentions you should have the right money before buying a ticket? .....

18 thinks that their metro is one of the most technologically advanced? .....

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