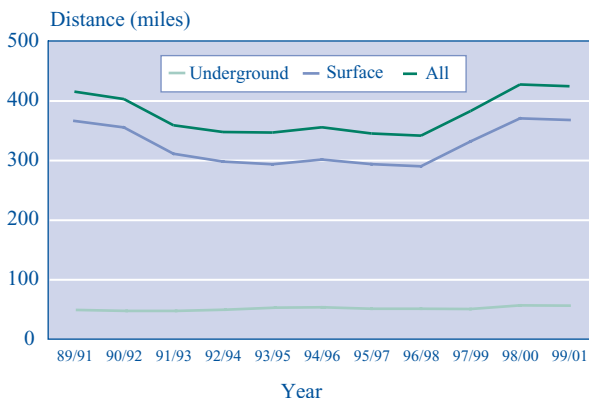


Recent trends in rail use

- During 1999/2001 the average person made 1,019 trips per year, of which 13 were by surface rail and a further 7 by London Underground. Rail accounted for 22% of all public transport trips; about half of people never or very rarely use surface trains. Only one in twenty said they use a surface train at least once a week and a fifth said they used trains only once or twice a year.
- Rail travel decreased in the early nineties. The distance travelled per person per year by rail in 1992/94 was 348 miles, a reduction of 16% compared with 1989/91 (416 miles). The average distance travelled by rail in 1996/98 was largely unchanged on 1992/94, but in recent years has picked up again to the level of the late eighties, at 425 miles in 1999/2001 (Chart 1).

Chart 1: Average distance travelled per person per year by rail: 1989/1991 to 1999/2001



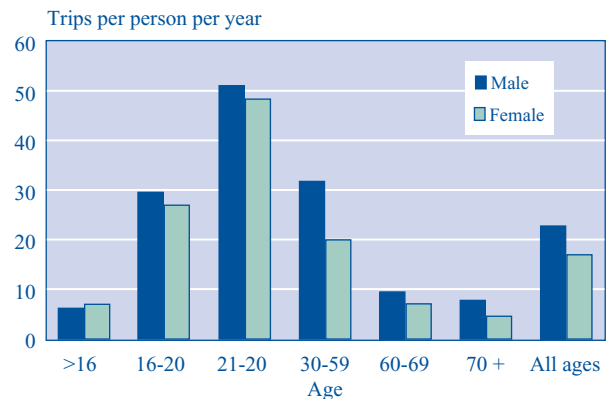
- The average length of a surface rail trip was 31.3 miles in 1999/2001, whilst the average London Underground trip length was 7.6 miles, both very similar to 1989/91. Travel on London Underground typically accounted for between 12 and 15 percent of the total distance travelled by rail over the last 10 years.
- The average rail trip times have stayed largely constant over the years. In 1999/2001 the times were 49 minutes for London Underground and 77 minutes for surface rail.

Who uses trains?

- The train is most widely used by those between the ages of 16 and 60, with use peaking between the ages of 21 and 29 (Chart 2).
- Men travel further by rail than women, covering on average 511 miles a year, compared with 347 for women. Females aged under 16 make about the same number of rail trips as males under 16, but travel about 40% further. In all other age groups women

make fewer rail trips than men. Rail accounts for 1.7% of women's trips compared with 2.2% for men. The difference is most marked between the ages of 30 and 59.

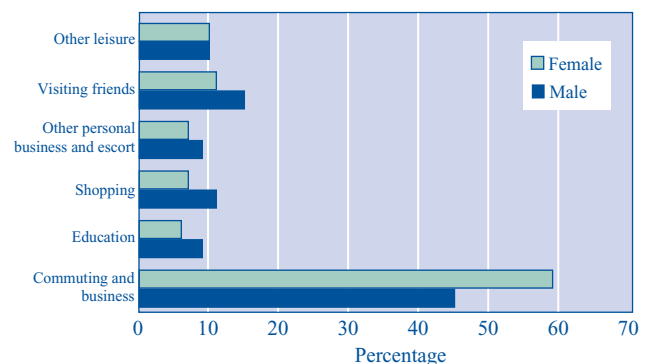
Chart 2: Rail trips by age and sex: 1999/2001



Why do people use trains?

- The main reason for rail trips was for commuting and business travel. This was the case for both sexes, although the pattern was more apparent for men: it accounted for 59% of their rail trips, compared with 45% for women in 1999/2001 (Chart 3).
- The other main reasons for a rail trip were to visit friends and for other leisure purposes (accounting for 21% of men's trips and 25% of women's). Women also made 11% of their rail trips to go shopping compared with 7% for men.

Chart 3: Rail trips by sex and purpose: 1999/2001



Car availability and rail use

- Individuals aged 17 and over in households without cars made 30 rail trips a year, and 17% of the distance they travelled was by rail. In contrast, individuals aged 17 and over from households with cars made 21 rail trips and only 6% of their travel by distance was by rail. However, the actual distance travelled per person per year by rail was very similar between the two groups (491 miles without cars compared with 511 miles for those with cars).

- In households with cars, the main drivers made an average of 18 rail trips per year, slightly fewer than the non-drivers (aged 17 and over) in these households, who made 20 rail trips per year. Other household drivers in households with cars made almost twice this number of rail trips (38 trips).

Rail use and income

- People make more rail trips the higher the income quintile they are in. Those in the highest income quintile made an average of 49 trips a year, more than twice the number of those in the second highest income quintile, and more than 5 times as many as those in the lowest two quintiles.
- The distance travelled per person per year by rail by those in the lowest income group was 183 miles, 5.4% of the total distance they travelled, compared with 1,040 miles for the highest income group, which was 9.4% of the total distance they travelled.

Rail use by area type

- On average in Great Britain, 21% of households lived within 13 minutes walk of a rail station in 1999/2001 compared with 20% in 1989/1991. However, only 7% did so in rural areas compared with 60% in London Boroughs.
- Rail use was most frequent in London where people made on average 87 trips a year, 50 of which were on London Underground. People living in rural areas made an average of 7 trips a year by rail. In large urban areas (over 250,000 inhabitants), surface rail accounted for 7% of the total distance travelled, compared with 4% in rural areas.

Long distance rail trips

- Rail travel was used for 9% of trips over 50 miles over 1996/2001, but for a larger proportion of the longest trips. 11% of trips between 150 and 250 miles long were made by rail and 17% of trips of 350 miles and over.
- Most long distance rail trips were commuting or business trips (45%), although about 19% were to visit friends and 23% were for other leisure reasons.

Rail use as part of a longer trip

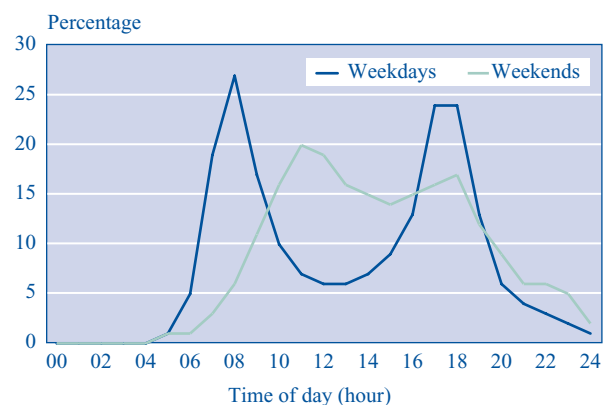
- Rail travel is frequently part of a trip involving other stages with different modes of transport: on average there were 2.8 stages for each trip with rail as the main mode. 73% of surface rail trips involved a walk stage over 50 yards and 20% involved an underground stage.

- In addition to the 20 rail trips per person per year made as main mode, 4 rail stages on average were made as part of a trip with another main mode. 3 of these additional rail stages were on the Underground.

Rail use by day and time of day

- Weekday rail travel clearly shows two peaks, one at 8-9am and one between 5pm and 7pm, corresponding to the morning and evening rush hours (Chart 4). The single hour from 8 until 9am accounted for 27% of the weekday's rail travel, whilst 5-6pm and 6-7pm each accounted for a further 24%.

Chart 4: Rail trips in progress by time of day: 1999/01



- Rail is used least on Sundays, which accounted for just 5% of rail trips. Weekdays accounted for between 16% and 18% of rail trips, with 10% being on Saturdays.

Other rail trips

- Since 1998 it has been possible to distinguish Light Rail modes separately from surface rail and London Underground, which in time will enable greater analysis as the systems become more prevalent in some parts of the country. Those in London and other metropolitan built up areas made an average of 4 trips a year using light rail, mostly for commuting, business travel and shopping. The average Light Rail trip length was 4 miles in 1999/2001.

Use of rail to travel to work

- The Labour Force Survey asks questions on how people usually travel to work. In autumn 2001, 1.6 million people usually travelled to work by rail, 7% of the total number in employment. Of these, about 60% used surface rail, 40% used London Underground.

The text and charts are available from the DfT website at www.transtat.dft.gov.uk/personal. Other NTS publications include 12 further factsheets on a number of topics; the main results of the NTS in "National Travel Survey: Update 1999/2001" and in "Focus on Personal Travel: 2001 Edition" (1998/2000 data) and the Technical Report. These are also all available from the website. For further information, copies of the factsheets, Bulletin and any queries please contact national.travelsurvey@dft.gov.uk or telephone on 020 7944 3097.