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TOP TIPS FOR BEATING RAIL PRICE HIKES

RAIL travellers feeling the pinch due to another wave of fare increases can beat 'trainflation' by smarter online buying according to a leading online rail ticket retailer.

With several train operating companies increasing ticket prices on unregulated fares this weekend – some by as much as 11% - thetrainline.com is keen to help rail passengers get the right ticket at the best price.

Ben Pearson, commercial director of thetrainline.com says, "In the current climate, we understand that rail fare increases must be a bitter pill to swallow for passengers feeling the pinch. Our statistics show, however, that in spite of year-on year price increases, we are actually helping people beat what we call 'trainflation'. On average, customers buying their train tickets through thetrainline.com are actually paying less than they were last year; for example, customers who bought tickets through the site in April this year paid 4% less than those who bought rail tickets in the same month last year*.

By booking in advance online, our customers regularly save on average 43% compared to those who buy 'turn up and go' tickets from the station on the day of travel."

thetrainline.com's top tips for saving money:

- **Be flexible** - Best Fare Finder (www.farefinder.thetrainline.com) shows when you need to travel for the cheapest tickets. It's ideal for those whose travel date is flexible
- **Stay alert** - Ticket Alerts (<http://www.ticketalert.thetrainline.com>) offer travellers email alerts of cheap fares on favourite routes as soon as Advance tickets go on sale
- **Beat the clock** – by specifying your time of travel. Tickets requiring you to travel on specific trains (Advance and Off-Peak) tend to be cheaper than Anytime fares
- **Opt for off-peak** – avoid the more expensive, peak times. Peak times can vary between different train operators but as a rule of thumb off-peak is after 9am weekdays and after the evening rush hour, around 7pm
- **Stay single** - two single tickets are often cheaper than a return, so be sure to click on

the 'two singles could be cheaper' banner during the fare selection process

- **Carry a card** - having a railcard could save you 1/3 off rail fares. Go to www.railcard.co.uk for more details on which railcard you may be eligible for
- **Be alternative** – some routes are operated by several train companies and quite often the slower, longer journeys will be cheaper than the faster one
- **Try a different route** – You may be able to get a cheaper ticket by going on a different route or using a different departure station. For instance people travelling from Birmingham to London can go from Birmingham New Street to Euston or Birmingham Moor Street to Marylebone using different train operators.

ENDS

* Average ticket price on the last Monday in April 2008 (£61.27) compared with average ticket price on the last Monday in April 2009 (£58.89)

For further information, please contact:

thetrainline.com press office at Seventy Seven PR on 020 7492 0974 or email thetrainline@77pr.co.uk.

thetrainline.com analysed fare data across a five year period looking at the average ticket price paid by its customers across all routes for which it sells tickets. The average ticket price includes all ticket types and travel classes. Since 1999, thetrainline.com has sold to 3.3 million travellers making over 14 million transactions.

About thetrainline.com

thetrainline.com is the leading UK rail ticket retailer and rail ticket information provider, offering fast and easy access to timetables, fares, reservations and tickets through its Internet site and contact centre operations in the UK train travel sector. In addition to its own website, www.thetrainline.com, it operates retail websites for 15 Train Operating Companies who sell rail tickets online, as well as providing a rail business travel service direct to a number of blue chip corporations and travel agents.