



Railway Crime Facts

Railway crime is a big problem for the people who run the railway tracks and the trains.

Railway crime takes place at railway stations, on trains and on railway tracks.

At railway stations, crimes include stealing cars and from cars, hurting station users or staff, theft from customers and damaging station buildings.

On trains, crimes include stealing peoples' suitcases, hurting passengers or train staff and damage by football hooligans.

On railway tracks, crimes include walking on or across the railway line without using an official crossing, throwing things at trains, putting things on the track in front of trains, dumping rubbish at the side of tracks and damaging or spraying graffiti on railway buildings.

These are some of the shocking facts about railway crime:

- Half of all damage to trains is usually caused by children between the ages of 5 and 16 throwing rocks or bricks from the side of the tracks or putting things on the tracks.
- 4 million objects are thrown at trains every year.
- 640,000 objects are put on the tracks in front of trains every year.
- It costs the railway industry £260 million every year to repair damaged trains and tracks, replace staff who may have been shocked or injured and in delays to trains.
- It is estimated 27 million crimes of going on the railway tracks without permission (trespass) are carried out each year - 17million of these crimes are committed by adults and 10 million by children under the age of 16.
- It is estimated these crimes of going on the railway tracks without permission are carried out by 1 million adults and 1.3 million children under the age of 16.

British Transport Police is a special police force that deals with all railway crime.

- British Transport Police will visit the homes and schools of young children who carry out acts of railway crime.
- Walking on or near the tracks without permission, except at an official crossing, is a crime – people can be fined up to £1,000.
- Throwing things at trains is a crime – people can be sent to prison for life for a serious offence.
- Putting things on the track that can damage or derail a train is a crime - people can be sent to prison for life for a serious offence.

Going on or near the railway tracks, either to take a short cut or to carry out other acts of railway crime, is very dangerous.

- A train cannot stop quickly or swerve like a car. Even a slow moving freight train cannot stop quickly as it can weigh up to 2,000 tonnes.
- At a speed of 225 kilometres an hour an inter-city train can travel over 2,000 metres (20 football pitches) in 30 seconds.
- If the driver puts on his emergency brakes it would take 2 kilometres metres for an inter-city train to stop.
- Track switching points can trap feet causing serious injury or trap someone in front of a train.
- Electricity from overhead cables on the railway can ‘jump’ across gaps because it is at a high voltage of 25,000 volts – you do not have to actually touch the cables to be badly burnt or killed.
- Dangling anything near a high voltage overhead cable can result in the electricity jumping and travelling up the item being held.
- Some railway tracks have a ‘live’ extra rail that looks like a normal railway line but carries electricity at 750 volts, enough to cause very serious burn injuries or even death if you step on it.

