

FOOTPLATE EXPERIENCE

SAFETY BRIEFING

This information is important. Please read it carefully and make a mental note of the points raised. We will remind you of the safety aspects of your course again on the day you are with us.

Railways are inherently dangerous places. Trains are heavy and cannot stop quickly. On most steam engines, the view from the cab is also limited. Get in the way of a moving train and there is a fair chance the driver will not see you and even if he does, he may not be able to avoid you. So, stay off the track or keep well clear of it. That goes for your guests too! Always cross the line by a footbridge or crossing point, never walk on or close to the track.

Those of you who are joining us in the cab may have to walk close to the railway line, so keep your eyes and ears open and follow the instructions of the staff. Wherever possible, always use designated crossing points. Beware of slip or trip hazards such as oily sleepers or ground level signaling equipment.

If you injure yourself, or feel unwell during the course, please report it to the driver immediately. All locomotives carry a first aid kit so if you are injured, we can quickly patch you up. If you require expert assistance, we can arrange that for you. If you are injured or unwell and feel you cannot continue with the course, don't worry, you can always come back on another occasion to finish off the parts you have missed. Please don't spoil your day by trying to carry on when you are not feeling up to it.

Your guests travelling as passengers should treat this train just as you would any other train. They MUST stay on the platforms and not be tempted to wander onto the line. They should always follow the advice of your guard.

The consumption of alcohol is not permitted either before or during the course. This requirement also includes your guests. Under certain circumstances, course participants may be required to undergo compulsory drugs and alcohol testing.

STEAM LOCOMOTIVES

The cab of a steam locomotive is about two metres from the ground. To get into the cab you will need to climb vertical steps. There are usually three metal steps with a handrail each side. These steps may be wet and slippery, so be careful. Use the handrails sliding your hands up them as you climb up. There's one final step into the cab itself. Do not release your grip on the handrails until you are safely in the cab.

The main part of the cab floor is normally made of wood and this may also be wet and oily, so take care, it could be slippery. Part of the cab floor is also metal, particularly the area around the tender, so be careful when you tread onto the metal bits as they are likely to be slippery and littered with lumps of coal.

When on the footplate, remember that everything in front of you is hot, so don't be tempted to touch pipes or fittings or worse hang on to them if you lose your balance. Always wear your gloves. This will protect you from burns if you do inadvertently touch something that is hot and help protect your hands if you knock them against something sharp or hard. The same goes for your head. Always wear your hat. This not only helps to keep your head clean but also protects it should you bump your head on something hard.

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You will notice that you are much higher in the cab than you would be on the train, so keep your head in when passing under bridges. Never hang out and look back at the same time. You might strike your head on signaling equipment or platform canopies. For this reason too, don't be tempted to climb onto the coal in the tender. You can get a lovely photo of the cab from up there but if you knock your head on a bridge, it could be the last photo you ever take!

Some engines don't have doors on the cab entrances, so be careful not to fall out. Moreover, please, if you want to leave the cab, only do so when the engine is stationary. Remember there may be other trains around. Ask the driver or fireman which is the best side to leave and follow their instructions. Remember, there are at least three steps down to ground level that could be wet and slippery. When leaving the cab, always turn around and face the engine. Use the handrails provided and look down at your feet to make sure your foot is firmly on a step before moving your other foot.

When you are driving and firing, the driver and fireman will tell you what to do and how to do it safely. So just relax and enjoy the experience. If you don't feel up to firing, tell the fireman and sit back and watch how it's done. It's very relaxing to watch others working! Always follow the instructions of the driver and fireman. Don't try and do anything yourself, you could injure yourself or someone else if you do something without being instructed to do so. If there is a need to evacuate the cab, follow the driver's instructions.

DIESEL LOCOMOTIVES

Much of the advice concerning steam locomotives also applies to diesels and is largely a matter of common sense.

If you want to leave the cab, only do so when the locomotive is stationary. Remember there may be other trains around. Ask the driver which is the best side to leave from and follow the driver's instructions.

When you are driving, the driver will tell you what to do and how to do it safely. So just relax and enjoy the experience. Always follow the instructions of the driver. Don't try to do anything by yourself. You could injure yourself or someone else if you do something without being instructed to do so.

When driving or riding in the cab, stay seated, do not lean out of the windows unnecessarily and do not open any of the cab doors, unless told otherwise. In the rear cab, many of the controls are 'live' so please do not be tempted to touch any of these, as problems or even serious damage could occur. If there is a need to evacuate the front or rear cab, follow the driver's instructions. Please do not venture into the engine room unless accompanied by the driver or second man.

AND FINALLY . . .

Driving a steam or diesel locomotive is a very satisfying experience and we know you are going to enjoy yourself. Remember the safety advice we have given you and if you are not sure of any of the points raised, please ask.

We will run over these points with you again at the commencement of your course.

Thank you for taking the time to read this.

We look forward to seeing you on your course and trust you will have an enjoyable and safe day with us.