

# Singapore 2012

## Public Transport Guide and the Circle Line Attractions

- What you need to know
- The EZ-Link Card
- Single Trip Ticket
- The Singapore Tourist Pass
- Travelling on trains
- Travelling by buses
- Lost & Found
- Travelling with taxis
- The Circle Line Attractions

## **What you need to know**

In the following sections, I will highlight the basics of the Singapore's island-wide transportation system, how to use fare cards, and show you how you can sightsee the key attractions for free on the train system by using the Circle Line Tour itinerary.

### ***Making use of the system***

One thing about Singapore's efficient transport system (buses, trains and taxis) is that it demands of you to learn how the system functions before you can reap its efficiencies. For a visitor who intends to spend only a few days in the country, this may be too tedious.

You certainly don't want to load your head with all the surcharges, schedules, discounts, sales promotion schemes and the various participating establishments from where you can claim all these small "privileges" – which by the way, is a way of life for most common folks here.

What you want to know is how to use the system quickly instead of spending your valuable time here figuring out how things work just to get back a few dollars.

All you need to know is that there are two "cards", which you can use to help you get around the island on buses and trains – the EZ-Link fare card and the Singapore Tourist Pass (despite its

name, the latter is not a pass for you to stay in Singapore but it is the name given to a fare card specially designed for short-staying tourists).

If your purpose is just to see all the key attractions Singapore has to offer in a short span of time – say within one to three days – then the Singapore Tourist Pass is the only card you will need. But if you intend to stay longer and to travel all over the island, then, the EZ-Link card is the way to go. (You may visit the Singapore Circle Line Tour web site at [www.singaporecirclelinetour.com](http://www.singaporecirclelinetour.com).)

However, if you do not intend to travel much except for one or two trips from your hotel, then you could simply buy the train's single trip tickets from the ticket machine at the train stations or simply pay with coins when you board a bus (note: single trip tickets are only meant for trains and cannot be used on buses).

### ***For the physically challenged***

All train stations are equipped with wheelchair-friendly features such as access ramps, passenger lifts and wider ticket gates. Train station staff are at hand to offer assistance if needed.

The bus companies are progressively making their vehicles friendlier to the elderly and those who have special needs. Buses plying the roads in town, the tourist belt area and near

medical facilities are usually equipped with features to facilitate boarding for the elderly and those on wheelchairs. Bus drivers are trained to provide assistance to wheelchair-bound passengers (a list of routes for such buses are provided below).

A number of cab companies such as SMRT (Tel 6555 8888), Comfort (Tel 6552 2828) and CityCab (Tel 6452 5252) operate taxis for wheelchair-bound customers. Their drivers are attuned to their special needs (see how to book a cab right below this post).

### ***Operating hours***

Buses operate between the hours of 05:30 am to 11:30 pm daily, including Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays.

The first train of the day on most routes starts at 05:30 am or 06:05 am on weekdays, and about 30 minutes later on Saturdays and Sundays. The last train usually reaches its final destination close to 12:00 midnight, so if you are heading back in the evening it is best to be at the station at 11:00 pm if you are somewhere near the beginning of the route. If you are just a few stations away from the final station, you might very well be able to catch your last train as late as 11:30 pm.

## **The EZ-Link Card (for trains and buses)**

### ***One fare card for all travel***

The EZ-Link card (it stores prepaid value) is essentially a “smart card”, meaning, it can do quite a few things other than simply using it to travel on buses and trains. It can be used to pay charges at retail outlets, restaurants, government departments and a range of regular services – but you need not bother with these, as already mentioned.



EZ-Link Card in various colours

It is more cost-effective to use the EZ-Link card rather than to buy single trip tickets if you intend to make more than a few trips during your stay here. This is because you get automatic, built-in rebates when you use the card for

transfer between trains, between buses, and between train and bus. The purchase of the EZ-Link card is \$15. It has a ticket value of \$7 and a \$3 refundable value. The rest (\$5) is “cost” and non-refundable. If your average trip (one way) is \$1.20, you will get around 5.8 trips, without taking into account the transfer rebates, which goes to recouping a portion of the non-refundable \$5.

### ***Where to buy the card***

Purchases of EZ-Link card can be made at train stations at the following counters:

- (i) Ticket Sales Office/Counter (manned by ticket sellers)
- (ii) Passenger Service Counter (manned by Station Control personnel)



You may add value to your EZ-Link card anytime by increments of \$10 minimum at the above two counters and also at any Automated Ticket Machine in all train stations. The automated machine accepts \$2, \$5 and \$10 notes. However, it does not dispense new EZ-Link cards.

Do note, however, that the operating hours of the Ticket Sales Office/Counter varies from station to station while the Passenger Service Counter is opened between 05:30 am and 12:00 midnight. Automated Ticket Machines are opened all the time.

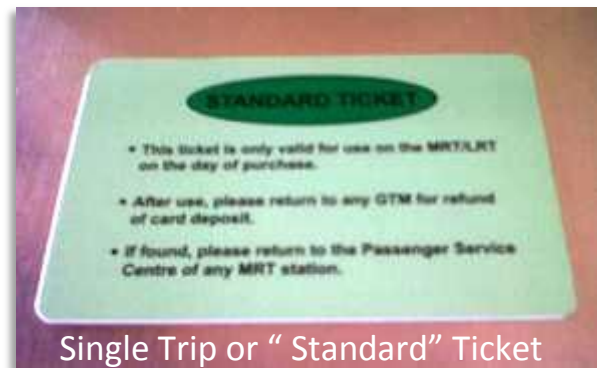
For more information, you may call the Transit Link's EZ-Link Card Hotlines at 1800 – 225 5663 or 6496 8300 (both Mondays to Sundays, 08:00 am to 06:00 pm – except public holidays).

The MRT customer service line is at 1800 – 336 8900 (Mondays to Fridays, 7.30am to 6.30pm).

## Single Trip Ticket (only for trains, not buses)

If you do not intend to make many train trips, it is better you buy single-trip, one-way, tickets from the Automated Ticket Machine. It is also called the Standard Ticket. You pay the exact fare for the distance you travel plus a \$1 deposit, which you can retrieve from the ticket machine when you complete your journey.

Single trip tickets are coloured green and are valid only on the day of purchase. It has an allowance of 30 minutes above the estimated travelling time. This means that you should purchase it only when you are about to board the train.



Single trip tickets are available only for travelling on trains and not on buses (see Travelling On Buses below)

### ***Buying Single Trip ticket from the Automated Ticket Machine***

*Step 1:* Look at the wide touch-screen showing the train routes and press on the station you want to go to (see picture of Automated Ticket Machine above).

*Step 2:* Insert your coin or note into the slot(s) on the upper right of the machine.



*Step 3: Collect your single trip card and change.*

The ticket machine accepts the following coins and notes:

- Coins: 10 cents, 20 cents, 50 cents and \$1
- Notes: \$2 and \$5

The machine will return you the change. The personnel at the Passenger Service Counter nearby also provide change if you happen to have a large note.

### ***Using the Single Trip ticket***



Fig 1

To open the ticket gate, swipe the card over the card reader, which is positioned right on top the gate or



Fig 2

gantry (see Fig 1).



Fig 3

Do the same to exit the station. To retrieve your \$1 deposit, place your ticket on the ticket



Fig 4



reader on the Ticket Machine (see Fig 2). You will be prompted to insert the card into the slot.

Insert your card when prompted (Fig 3). And collect your money from the dispensing slot by pushing open the plastic flap (Fig 4).

Ask the personnel from the Passenger Service counter for help if necessary.

You may call the Transit Link's EZ Link Card Hotlines at 1800 – 2255 663 or 6496 8300 (Mondays to Sundays, 08:00 am to 06:00 pm – except public holidays) for more information on single trip tickets.

### **The Singapore Tourist Pass (for trains and buses)**

This pass is not an entry pass into Singapore. It is an island-wide fare pass for Tourist that gives you unlimited rides on buses and trains for the days you purchase. You can buy the Singapore Tourist Pass for a single day, two days or three days travel at a price of \$18, \$26 and \$34 respectively.



The Singapore Tourist Pass

There is an additional fee of \$10 deposit, which will be refunded if you surrender your pass at the counters listed below within 5 days from the date of purchase.

However, any unused value will not be refunded.

Upon expiry, you may extend your “rental” period of the pass by another 5 days. Or you may continue to use the pass as an EZ-Link card by adding value to it with cash at any of the MRT Ticket Machines, Ticket Office Counters or Passenger Service Counters located within the train station.

If you wish to keep the card as a souvenir, your \$10 deposit will be forfeited. There is no fine.

(You can purchase the card online. However, the deposit of S\$10 is non-refundable. The card must be used within 1 year of purchase date. [http://www.chowiz.com.sg/stpmakepurchase/.](http://www.chowiz.com.sg/stpmakepurchase/))

Some web sites may tell you that the Singapore Tourist Pass is sold at selected Singapore Visitor’s Centre branches but this has been discontinued. Currently (as of October 2011), you can buy them from the following train stations:

<b>Train Station Ticket Office</b>	<b>Operating Hours</b>
Changi Airport*	12:00pm to 03:45pm (daily) 04:45pm to 07:30pm (daily)
Orchard	10:00am to 09:00pm (daily)
Chinatown*	12:00pm to 03:45pm (daily) 04:45pm to 07:30pm (daily)
City Hall	09:00am to 09:00pm (daily)
Raffles Place	08:00am to 09:00pm (weekdays) 08:00am to 05:00pm (Saturdays) (Closed Sundays & Public Holidays)
Ang Mo Kio	08:00am to 09:00pm (daily)
Harbour Front*	10:00am to 09:00pm (daily)
Bugis	10:00am to 09:00pm (daily)
*There is a 1-hour break between 03:45pm and 04:45pm for these locations	

It is advisable to obtain confirmation on the operating hours of these counters from the Singapore Tourism Board hotline at Tourist Line: 1800 736 2000 (toll-free in Singapore only) in case of last minute changes which we may not be able to inform you in time.



The Singapore Tourist Pass is for island-wide travelling on the train (including LRT – the Light Rail Transport system in residential towns) and bus networks. It cannot be used for travel on “premium bus services” like Express, Fast Forward, Night Owl, Night Rider and Chinatown Direct Services. The

Singapore Tourist Pass customer service hotline is at 6223 2282 (office hours only).

## Travelling on Trains



Place card over top of gantry

The EZ-Link card reader in train stations is found on the top of each train ticket gate (sometimes referred to as the “MRT gantry”). Just swipe your EZ-Link card over it to open the gantry door so that you may pass through it.



Be sure to enter through a gate that has a green arrow sign. The red X sign indicates that passengers are coming through from the opposite side. Just follow the crowd if in doubt.

### *Paying in cash*

MRT gantries do not accept cash. It accepts only EZ-Link cards, Singapore Tourist Pass and Single Trip/Standard tickets.

## Travelling By Buses



All public buses in Singapore display road destinations and numbers clearly on the



header of the vehicles. All public buses are operated by two companies – SMRT Buses Ltd and SBS Transit. The EZ-Link card can be used on all public buses.



Card Reader on buses

Card reading devices are placed at the entrance and exit of each bus. Just swipe the card over the card reading device when you board and when you alight from the bus (there are posters inside the buses telling you not to swipe the card unless you are alighting).

You will hear a distinctive “beep” sound upon swiping the card and a flashing green light on the device. This means the card reader has accepted your card. If you do not hear any beep sound, you should hover the card over the reading panel (see pic above) until you hear the beep.

If you hear a series of beeps and a flashing red light, it means the stored value in your card has been depleted and you will need to pay the journey with cash.

If you accidentally fail to get the reader to read your card when boarding, you will also hear a series of beep sounds when you attempt to alight. In this case, you will need to go to the boarding reader at the bus' entrance to have your card read and then go to the exit door to do the same to alight.

Note: if the remaining value of your card falls to below \$5, you will be reminded with two flashing lights on the card reader when you board or exit a bus. However, you will be able to take the trip without any problem since this is only a reminder.

### ***Paying in cash***

Do note that the driver will not provide any change, so it is best you carry coins with you. Ask the driver about the fare by telling him your destination and then drop the coins (notes also accepted but no change will be given) into the small slot machine beside the driver's seat.



Coin machine



Ticket Dispenser

The bus driver will print and dispense a ticket. Be sure to collect your ticket from the ticket dispensing machine, which is also next to the driver's seat.



## ***Travelling for the physically challenged and those with toddlers***

Buses plying the roads in town, the tourist belt area and near medical facilities are usually equipped with features to facilitate boarding for the elderly and those on wheelchairs.



A WAB bus from SBS Transit

Such features include lower boarding floor, boarding ramp, grab bars and designated space for strollers and wheel chairs either near the driver's seat or near

the exit door.

You can access a list of WAB (Wheelchair Accessible Buses) and their routes from the two bus operators here:

[http://www.mdas.org.sg/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=19&Itemid=20](http://www.mdas.org.sg/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=19&Itemid=20)

You may also access this page for more information about travelling for the physically challenged:

<http://app.www.sg/faq.aspx?cat=21>



### ***Road diversions***

Note: some buses plying between Holland Village and town area (Orchard Road and Marina Bay area) may be diverted on certain occasions such as National Day, F1 Grand Prix and during the Chinese New Year festivities. Check with the bus companies beforehand if you intend to travel by bus during these days.

### ***How to ask for directions***

A large number of nationals from China have found jobs as bus drivers in Singapore. They have been taught basic English but do not expect an account of routes or an explanation of where you are now on the map you are holding. Tell them your destination clearly and avoid speaking in sentences.

It is better to enquire from bystanders at the bus stops and lookup the exact bus fares (if you are paying cash rather than using the EZ-Link card or the Singapore Tourist Pass) on the route panel installed at bus stops. If the person you encounter does not speak English, ask another. There are 5 million residents here and at least 3 million of them speak English.

Or you may call these hotlines to enquire about routes:

**SMRT Hotline: 1800 – 3368 900**

Operating hours: Mondays – Fridays (excluding public holidays)

7.30am – 6.30pm

<http://www.smrt.com.sg>

**SBS Transit Hotline: 1800 – 2872 727**

Operating hours: Mondays to Fridays (excluding public holidays)

8am – 6pm.

<http://www.sbstransit.com.sg/>

### ***The Night Rider & Night Owl Bus Services***

These services are available on Fridays, Saturdays and the eves of public holidays and they ply specifically from Marina Centre and Resorts World Sentosa to the various housing estates.

The bus arrives every 20 to 35 minutes and the fare is a flat \$4.20 and \$4.50 for adults between City and housing estates.

SBS' Night Owl operates between 12:00 midnight and 02:00 am. Check their web site:

[http://www.sbstransit.com.sg/transport/trpt\\_bus\\_niteowl.aspx](http://www.sbstransit.com.sg/transport/trpt_bus_niteowl.aspx)

SMRT's Night Rider operates between 11:30 pm and 04:35 am. Check their web site:

<http://www.smrt.com.sg/Buses/BusServicesMaps/NightRider.aspx>

You may also download the latest copy of their Night Rider service leaflet here:

[http://www.smrt.com.sg/buses/documents/night\\_rider/SMRT\\_NightRiderService\\_Guide.pdf](http://www.smrt.com.sg/buses/documents/night_rider/SMRT_NightRiderService_Guide.pdf)

## **Lost & Found**

SBS Transit – 6383 7211 (office hours)

SMRT Buses – 6767 3300 (12.00pm and 7.00pm from Monday to Saturday)

## **Travelling with Taxis**

The initial “flag down” meter fare is between S\$3.00 and \$3.90 (depending on cab types), which pays for the first 1 km. After that, it’s (i) \$0.22 for every 400 meters or every 350 meters (if after the first 10km) and (ii) for every 45 seconds if the cab is caught in a jam.

There is also a host of “surcharges”, which may be added to the above fares (see table below).

If you try to hail a cab between the drivers’ shift hours (occurring at different times among the taxi companies but normally between 5pm and 8pm), it might take a while. So, you might have to telephone and book a cab (surcharge is based on “Current Booking Surcharge”) or it could be close to impossible. This is also true for rainy days.

Note: taxi fare from the airport (located in the eastern part of the island) to Jurong (the western part of Singapore) can be expected to cost between \$40 and \$80 – depending on the type of cabs and the surcharges applied. Black limousine cabs cost the most. Usually, at the airport taxi stand queue where the taxis are lining up, the usher will ask if you wish to board the more expensive limo cab or the “normal” cab before he points you to the cab. Limo cabs are Mercedes Benz and Chrysler vehicles. The black limo refers to the Chrysler cab, as shown above.



Here are the “Dial-A-Cab” hotlines of the 7 cab companies:

**CityCab: 6552 1111**

**Comfort: 6552 1111**

**Premier: 63636888**

**Prime: 6778 0808**

**SMART: 6485 7777**

**SMRT/TIBS: 6555 8888**

**Trans Cab: 6555 3333**

For limousine cabs:

**Limousine Cab: 6535 3534**

**Prime Limousine: 6778 0808**

**SMART Cabs: 6485 7777**

**SMRT Taxis: 6555 8888**

**Comfort Limo: 6552 2828**

**Premier Taxis: 6544 6687**

**Limo Transport: 6535 3534**

**Limo Taxi Cab: 8388 3885**

DESCRIPTION	SURCHARGE HOURS	SURCHARGE AMOUNT S\$
<b>Current Booking Surcharge</b> (calling the cab company and asking for an immediate cab)	<u>Mondays to Fridays</u> 6.00am to 9.30am (NA on PHs) 6.00pm to 12.00midnight (All days)	3.30
<b>Current Booking Surcharge</b> (calling the cab company and asking for an immediate cab).	<u>Mondays to Sundays</u> All other times	2.30
<b>Advanced Booking Surcharge</b> (giving the taxi company a half hour notice in advance – this can also be for the next morning)	All hours	8.00
<b>Late Night Hours Surcharge</b>	<u>Mondays to Sundays</u> 12am to 5.59am	50% of metered fare
<b>City Area Surcharge</b> Applicable for cab hired within the Central Business District (CBD) area or “restricted zones” and at the time of boarding.	<u>Mondays to Saturdays</u> 5pm to midnight (not applicable on Public Holidays. Payable on top of the Peak Period Premium).	3.00
<b>Peak Period Premium Surcharge</b>	<u>Mondays to Fridays</u> 6.00am to 9.30am (NA on PHs) 6.00pm to 12.00midnight (All days)	25% of metered fare
<b>Electronic Road Pricing (ERP) Surcharge</b>	Passengers are required to bear the ERP charge shown on the upper display of the In-vehicle Unit. The ERP charge is deducted each time the taxi passes under an ERP gantry.	

## The Circle Line Attractions

The Circle Line is Singapore’s newest train line which circles the business-shopping-recreational belt that is located within the southern half of Singapore.

For visitors who want to sample a cross-section of what Singapore has to offer in the shortest time, or who wish to see

Singapore at your own pace, the Circle Line Tour is an ideal option.

The Circle Line will take you to the following train stations where their surrounding key attractions are within walking distances:

- Esplanade
- Promenade
- Bishan
- Botanic Gardens
- Holland Village
- Haw Par Villa
- Harbour Front (Vivo City)

You may visit <http://www.singaporecirclelinetour.com> for the complete Circle Line Tour Guide.

*This guide is sponsored by Solomon~Worth SMT Pte Ltd, the publisher of:*

*Holland-Village-Singapore*

<http://www.holland-village-singapore.com>

*Singapore Circle Line Tour*

<http://www.singaporecirclelinetour.com>