

PLANES, TRAINS AND AUTOMOBILES: Communicative Activities



Practical Case

Welcome to Barcelona

Getting here.

By plane.


Domestic and international flights land at El Prat de Llobregat Airport, 12 km southwest of Barcelona. The Aerobus links the airport to Pl. Catalunya, the center of Barcelona (40 min.; every 15 min.). RENFE trains provide cheaper airport transportation (20-25 min.; every 30 min.). The most useful stops are Estació Barcelona-Sants and Plaça Catalunya, which link up with the metro. Tickets are sold at the red machines. The city bus offers  inexpensive night service. A taxi ride between Barcelona and the airport costs around 30 €. Taxi ranks are found directly outside the terminals, with services 24 hours. The journey to Barcelona takes 25 minutes.



Three main national airlines operate at El Prat Airport: Iberia has extensive coverage and student discounts. Air Europa and Spanair offer cheaper fares. All major international airlines serve Barcelona, including British Airways and Delta and many low-cost airlines.

An alternative is flying to Gerona Airport, which is to the North and served extensively by Ryanair, and catching a shuttle to Barcelona in under an hour.

By train.

A North-South coastal route is traversed by Spain's domestic rail services which are renowned for their  reliability, efficiency and good value. The views on this route are often very attractive and it's possible to travel directly, at least once a day, to Barcelona from as far away as Seville. Regular services also run directly from many major Spanish cities, with several trains running daily to Madrid. Then there are the services to France, including services to Paris, Marseille and Nice, but they usually involve a change of trains at the border. Trains run under the city centre and stop at Barcelona's principal train station Estació Sants, just west of La Ramblas. Some local services also stop at Plaça de Catalunya, due north, while Estació França, east of Las Ramblas is less frequented. In Spain you have the option of the local Talgo, the faster Intercity and the long-distance high-speed AVE. For general information about trains call RENFE or visit its web page.

By car.

Arriving from France and the North, you have a choice of driving on the express highway (E-15) or the more scenic coastal road along the Costa Brava. There is also a route over the Pyrenees, through Andorra which enters Spain at Puigcerdà and follows the N-152 to Barcelona. From Madrid, the N-2 is an easy highway to follow, through Zaragoza and onto the A-2 to El Vendrell and A-7 motorway to Barcelona. The E-15 also arrives in Barcelona from the south making it easy to get to from the Costa Blanca and Valencia. Vehicles drive on the right in Spain.

By bus.

The main intercity bus station is located northeast of La Ramblas: Estació d'Autobuses del Nord. The station has food, money exchange and luggage storage. Other buses, particularly international buses, arrive at the Estació d'Autobuses de Sants, next to the train station.

Self-evaluation

**Which one of the options is NOT true?
El Prat Airport...**

- is 12 km southwest of Barcelona.
- is served by both domestic and international flights.
- is the only airport for visitors going to Barcelona.
- cannot be reached by bus at night.

If you take a train in Spain...

- you will have to book your seat on the internet or by phone.
- you will find the service is reliable.
- you will have to change trains at the border.
- you have the option of the local Talgo, the faster Intercity and the long-distance high-speed AVE.

If you go to Barcelona by car...

- you have to pass Zaragoza if you come from Madrid.
- make sure you drive on the left.
- you can come from France over the Pyrenees.
- you have a choice of highway and coastal road when you arrive from France.

The Estació d'Autobuses del Nord...

- is the main intercity bus station in Barcelona.
- is located northwest of Las Ramblas.
- has baggage storage facilities.
- has food stalls.



A step ahead

You can now watch a video on how to get a taxi or a shuttle from the airport.

[Text summary](#)

1. Reading Activity

Paris-London train sets rail speed record.

23 May.

A half-full passenger train has broken the rail speed record between London and Paris. The 18-carriage Eurostar train sped through the English countryside along a new \$11 billion track, shaving 32 minutes off the regular time. The train reached speeds of 330 kph to reach London in a time of two hours, three minutes and 39 seconds. British rail chiefs took delight in the achievement as for the very first time, the train was faster in England than it was in France. The traditional route went through the commuter rail networks south of London. Maintenance works in France did mean the train arrived three minutes late. The new track includes a 19-km-long tunnel which means the train can speed under London, before arriving at the remodelled St. Pancras International Station.



Regular services are due to begin from the 14th of November. Eurostar has scheduled the journey to take two hours and fifteen minutes – 20 minutes quicker than at present. Railway bosses believe the time saving will make the train a much more competitive option than taking the plane. Departing from and arriving in city centres will be much more appealing to business people who want to avoid airports outside of cities. The train also means they can work on their computers and online. With return fares to be set at less than \$120, it is likely that there will be a price war among airlines. Eurostar's chief executive Richard Brown said the record marked Britain's "entry into the European high-speed rail club". It also makes London to Paris day trips much more doable.

Adapted from <http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/0709/070906-eurostar.html>

Self-evaluation

Decide if the following sentences are true or false according to the text.
A Paris-London train broke the world rail speed record.

- True.
- False.

The train reduced the normal journey time by over half an hour.

True

- True.
- False.

The train arrived in London dead on time.

- True.
- False.

There is a new tunnel that goes under London.

- True.
- False.

Regular services on the new route will begin next year.

- True.
- False.

Railway bosses still believe flying is a better option.

- True.
- False.

The shorter train journey time will start a price war among airlines.

- True.
- False.

More people will probably take day trips between London and Paris.

- True.
- False.

Self-evaluation

Match the words with their meanings. Write the number.

Matching exercise

Synonym	Number	Word from the text
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Repairs.	<input type="radio"/>	1. Carriage
Choice.	<input type="radio"/>	2. Delight
Scheduled.	<input type="radio"/>	3. Maintenance
Clipping.	<input type="radio"/>	4. Option
Car.	<input type="radio"/>	5. Due
Pleasure.	<input type="radio"/>	6. Shaving

Enviar



A step ahead

You can visit here the Eurostar web page.

[Eurostar.](#)

2. Listening Activity

Autoevaluación

Listen to the text and fill in the gaps.

[Script](#)

The Royal Scotsman is Scotland's very own [redacted] cruise train, offering 2, 3, 4, 5 or 7 night tours of the Scottish Highlands. Run by the same people who [redacted] the Venice Simplon Orient Express, the Royal Scotsman sets the same top-end standards of service, [redacted] & cuisine. They aim to create the [redacted] of a Scottish 5-star country house hotel, and they succeed. The 9-coach train carries a maximum of only 36 passengers with a passenger to [redacted] ratio of just 3 to 1, so it does indeed feel very [redacted]. Having experienced the Royal Scotsman, I have to say that it's a pretty unbeatable combination of superb scenery on Britain's most [redacted] train routes, country-house all-inclusive luxury with great food, wine & service plus some extremely well-chosen off-train [redacted]. A trip on the Royal Scotsman doesn't come [redacted] but if it's a special occasion or a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to see a lot of Scotland in a very short time, you really won't be disappointed. You can check Royal Scotsman itineraries, prices and [redacted] and book tours online at www.royalscotsman.com.



Enviar



A step ahead

Here you have a information on the Grand Tour of Great Britain. It is a 7-night round-Britain itinerary new for 2017. Find out about prices, departure times and itinerary.

[Grand Tour of Great Britain.](#)

Listening Activity 2



Listening Comprehension

Listen to this conversation at the check-in. Answer the questions.

1. Is the passenger's flight direct?
2. Which travel documents does the check-in attendant request?
3. What is the passenger's concern about his carry-on bag? Is it a problem? Why (not)?
4. What security questions is the passenger asked?
5. What is the passenger's seating preference?
6. What's the seat number and where is it?
7. What should the passenger check in his bag?
8. What's the gate number and when should he go there?
9. Why should the passenger go through security now?
10. Where is the security check?

[Mostrar retroalimentación](#)

3. Speaking Activity

Find a partner to practise being a tourist and a RENFE agent. Use the [RENFE web site](#) to find the information.



4. Writing Activity






Imagine that you want to rent an economy car for three days during a trip to Malta.

- ✓ You don't need car insurance, but you need a car that has unlimited mileage.
- ✓ Search for two or three car rental agencies and compare them to see which company will give you the best deal.
- ✓ Consider cost, car features, and mileage as part of your research.
- ✓ Write about your findings on the forum of the unit. Let's see who gets the best deal!



Appendix: Licences of Resources

Licences of Resources used in Communicative A

Resource (1)	Resource information (1)	Resource (2)	
	<p>By: MorBCN. Licence: <u>CC</u> by-<u>nc-sa</u>. From: http://www.flickr.com/photos/bcnbits/468186933/</p>		<p>By: os Licenc From: info/41</p>
	<p>By: Train Chartering & Private Rail Cars. Licence: CC by-sa. From: http://www.flickr.com/photos/14589121@N00/3230939953/</p>		<p>By: <u>CE</u> Licenc From:</p>
	<p>By: Maribel Álvarez. Licence: Uso educativo no comercial para plataformas públicas de Formación Profesional a distancia. From: Montaje sobre la siguiente imagen:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ By: Stockbyte ✓ Licence: Uso educativo no comercial para plataformas públicas de Formación Profesional a distancia. ✓ From: CD-DVD Num. CD SD174. 		<p>By: He Licenc From: http://v</p>