

# MAKING RAIL ACCESSIBLE

Helping Older and  
Disabled Passengers

A guide to our Accessible Travel Policy

May 2020

crosscountry



# CrossCountry routes

## Where can we take you?

 Change at one of these stations to avoid changing at Birmingham New Street - see website for details



CrossCountry routes  Summer weekend services 

Please note: not all stations are shown

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# Introduction

CrossCountry is committed to helping people use the railways confidently, appreciating the different needs of the communities we serve.

We appreciate that not all disabilities are visible, CrossCountry strives to provide rail services which are truly accessible, so that customers can travel in confidence, safe in the knowledge that extra help is available at each stage of their journey. We hope this leaflet is particularly helpful for people with mental health conditions, Autism and Asperger Syndrome, sensory processing difficulties, cognitive impairment, hearing loss, low or restricted vision and 'non-visible' physical health conditions, e.g. cancer, chronic pain, diabetes, heart and respiratory conditions.

This leaflet, 'Making Rail Accessible' provides a practical guide to travelling with CrossCountry, explaining what we do to assist passengers with a range of additional needs and the standards of service they can reasonably expect. For customers who use our services to or from stations in Wales (Cardiff Central, Newport, Severn Tunnel Junction, Caldicot and Chepstow) we will be happy to provide printed copies of this leaflet and our Accessible Travel Policy in the Welsh language, available on request to our Passenger Assist booking team.

We will explain how to find details of the assistance available, facilities and information you will need to help you to plan your journey.

Our commitment to helping all customers, particularly older and disabled people to travel in confidence includes:

- assistance at the stations we serve and our trains, or when making connections
- alternative accessible transport when our stations or trains are inaccessible
- clear, consistent and up-to-date customer information
- a range of discounts to reduce the cost of travel for disabled people and a companion

## Assistance: what is available and how to get it

Even if you have not booked assistance in advance, we will provide assistance at any station served by CrossCountry, that is accessible to you, during the hours that our trains are scheduled to serve that station. Most of the stations we serve are staffed

and all our trains have Train Managers or Senior Conductors on-board, so where staff are available, they will always help you and provide assistance that you request, where reasonably practicable. At staffed stations served by CrossCountry, the station operator's staff provide assistance on our behalf. If they are not immediately visible to you on arrival at the station, they can be contacted at the Meeting Point, which will normally be signed from the main station entrance, or via an electronic Help Point. If the station is unstaffed our on-board staff will assist you from the platform onto the train.

## Passenger Assist

If you can arrange your travel in advance, we participate in an assistance booking system called Passenger Assist. This is a rail industry-wide system used to book assistance at stations for passengers during their journey and to buy your ticket and reserve seats and wheelchair spaces on trains where reservations are available.

The ability to travel as and when you wish is important to everyone, so we are working closely with our suppliers and rail industry partners to reduce the notice period for booking assistance.

To book assistance, please contact our Passenger Assist team free of charge who are available 0800-2000 seven days a week when CrossCountry trains are running. We currently do not run any trains on 25 and 26 December. We commit to extending our call-centre opening hours from 2000 to 2200 as soon as possible:

**Phone:** 0800 030 9224 (Freephone, including from mobiles)

**Text Relay:** 0800 030 9230

**Email:** [assistance@crosscountrytrains.co.uk](mailto:assistance@crosscountrytrains.co.uk)

**Online:** [crosscountrytrains.co.uk/passenger-assistance-request](https://crosscountrytrains.co.uk/passenger-assistance-request)

We will provide booking confirmation by email, where you have provided your details; or by post if requested.

We commit to sufficient resourcing so that your call will be answered within 20 seconds and aim to respond to email and online requests within 4 working hours. We monitor our performance against these targets on a regular basis.

CrossCountry works with other train companies and station operators to agreed processes for booking and providing assistance. This means that if your journey involves a change of train onto other operators' services, assistance can be booked through a single point of contact. We can book assistance for your whole rail journey, even where part of the journey is with other

train operators and for all staffed stations across the National Rail network.

When booking assistance, our Passenger Assist team check the station accessibility information, which is also available to view through links from the CrossCountry website: [crosscountrytrains.co.uk/stations](https://www.crosscountrytrains.co.uk/stations), for the stations we serve, and through the website [nationalrail.co.uk](https://www.nationalrail.co.uk) for other stations, to consider your individual needs and to ensure there is sufficient time to make any connections in your journey. We can provide station information by post on request, including in alternative formats such as large print.

If a station you wish to travel from or to is inaccessible to you, we will provide alternative transport, at no extra charge, to the nearest or most convenient station to enable you to continue your journey. For example, if there is only access via steps to some or all platforms, we will arrange alternative accessible road transport (such as a taxi) for you to the nearest suitable alternative station that is accessible to you. Please contact our Passenger Assist team, who will discuss your needs in order to arrange appropriate assistance.

Assistance and extra help are available at each stage of your journey, if and when you need it.

This includes:

## Before you travel

- Help with planning your journey
- Explaining the accessibility of our network and the facilities available at the station and on the train
- Making seat reservations on CrossCountry services and those operated by other train companies
- Providing the opportunity to purchase tickets, including Advance fares, for your journey at the same time as booking assistance

## At the station

- Assistance with getting on and off the train at every station that is accessible to you
- Help with luggage at staffed stations
- Help through the station and to your platform, at larger staffed stations
- Boarding and alighting with wheelchairs, scooters and mobility aids
- Assistance to and from connecting train services and onward transport such as bus, tram and taxi within the station area

We know that staff training plays an important part in delivering

a railway which is accessible for everyone, so we work hard to provide our CrossCountry staff with the skills and understanding they need to assist customers with a range of accessibility requirements including visible and non-visible disabilities.

## What to expect: our commitment to passengers at every stage of the journey

### Before you travel

We understand it is important for you to have accurate, helpful information available when planning your journey so you know what to expect at our stations and on trains and can travel with confidence.

Station information, including the accessibility of the stations we serve and the facilities available such as parking and staff availability can be found through links from our website: [crosscountrytrains.co.uk/accessibletravel/stations](https://crosscountrytrains.co.uk/accessibletravel/stations).

Similarly, information relating to the accessibility of our trains and other useful information can be found on our website: [crosscountrytrains.co.uk/accessibletravel](https://crosscountrytrains.co.uk/accessibletravel). Our Passenger Assist booking team are happy to discuss journey planning with you, and provide station and train seating plan information by post on request, including in alternative formats such as large print.

Our mobile app and website show live train times, and both provide information regarding any current or future significant changes or delays to CrossCountry services.

### How to buy tickets

We have a range of options available for buying tickets ahead of travel or on the day, including:

#### Online

Our website [crosscountrytrains.co.uk](https://crosscountrytrains.co.uk) offers a range of tickets and journey planning tools. You can receive your tickets on a smartphone via the CrossCountry Train Tickets app, by First Class post (please allow five days for delivery); or collect your pre-paid tickets from ticket machines at many of the stations we serve.

#### On mobile/app

You can buy your ticket on your smartphone anytime, anywhere with the free CrossCountry Train Tickets app. Buy tickets securely on our app and collect your tickets within 15 minutes from station ticket machines or if you've selected the mobile ticket

delivery option, just show your smart phone to the Train Manager or Senior Conductor on the train.

### **Ticket Machines at stations**

Ticket machines are available at many of the 120 stations CrossCountry serves. You can buy a range of tickets for immediate use and they accept most credit/debit cards as well as cash.

Please check your journey times and individual ticket restrictions when purchasing your ticket to be sure that it is valid for your planned train. Please be aware that First Class tickets will not be able to be used by wheelchair users who are unable to transfer to a seat for journeys operated by our Turbostar trains on routes between Birmingham New Street and Cambridge, Cardiff Central, Leicester, Nottingham and Stansted Airport. This is because both wheelchair spaces are located in Standard Class.

### **Station ticket offices**

You can buy the full range of tickets from staffed ticket offices. Ticket offices across the CrossCountry network will accept all major credit/debit cards, cash and Rail Travel vouchers.

### **On trains**

At stations where no ticket office or ticket machines are provided, or the ticket office is closed; tickets can be purchase from our Train Manager or Senior Conductor on the train.

We understand that disabilities are not always visible and if you are concerned about purchasing tickets, please contact staff at stations or on trains or our Passenger Assist booking team for advice.

Along with all other train operators, we participate in several schemes offering discounted fares, which are detailed below.

If you are unable to buy a ticket before your journey, because the facilities are inaccessible or unavailable, you can do so without penalty during the journey or at the destination station and enjoy any reduction to which you are entitled, such as using a Disabled Persons Railcard.

## **Discounts and Railcards**

### **If you are visually-impaired**

If you are a visually impaired person travelling with a companion and you do not hold a railcard, the following discounts on Anytime/Day tickets apply for both of you:

- Anytime Single or Return – 34% discount
- Anytime Day Single – 34% discount
- Anytime Day return – 50% discount

No concession applies if you are travelling alone or do not hold a railcard.

To obtain these discounts a document confirming your disability, issued by a recognised institution (for example Government Department, Local Authority, Guide Dog Ownership certification or RNIB) is required. Discounted tickets without a railcard can only be purchased at a Ticket Office.

- Season tickets – you can be issued with one adult season ticket to cover two persons; the two travelling for the price of one. A different companion may travel with you on different days.

## If you remain in your wheelchair for a rail journey

If you remain in your wheelchair throughout the journey and you do not hold a railcard, the following discounts on Anytime/Day tickets will apply:

- Anytime Single/Return – 34% discount
- Anytime Day Single – 34% discount
- Anytime Day Return – 50% discount

The same discount will apply for one person travelling with you.

## Disabled Persons Railcard

The Disabled Persons Railcard is a type of discount card for tickets that allows those living with disabilities to save up to 1/3 on rail travel. If you're travelling with another adult, they will also receive 1/3 off their rail fare.

There are no time restrictions on the Disabled Persons Railcard, so you can use it to get a discount on tickets at any time of the day. Further details of eligibility criteria and how to apply for a railcard can be found at:

**Website:** [disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk](http://disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk)

**Email:** [disability@raildeliverygroup.com](mailto:disability@raildeliverygroup.com)

**Call:** 0345 605 0525

**Textphone:** 0345 601 0132 (for people with hearing impairments)

Disabled Persons Railcard discounts are available on tickets sold by our on-board Train Managers, Senior Conductors, station ticket machines, ticket offices and website & mobile app.

When purchasing a ticket on our website, there are prominent messages in place to advise customers that assistance is available for their journey. We continue to ensure that our Customer Relations call centre team offer our assistance service to

customers who mention they have a Disabled Persons Railcard. We also work closely with station operators to ensure that ticket office staff always offer the Passenger Assist booking service to customers who are Disabled Persons Railcard holders, however this is not yet available at every station on the day of travel.

## Senior Railcard

Available to anyone over the age of 60, a Senior Railcard provides the opportunity to save up to 1/3 on rail travel in the UK. Senior Railcards can be purchased online, over the phone or at any station ticket office with your passport or UK driving licence as proof of age.

Further details of eligibility criteria and how to apply for a get a railcard can be found at:

**Website:** [senior-railcard.co.uk](http://senior-railcard.co.uk)

**Email:** [railcardhelp@railcards-online.co.uk](mailto:railcardhelp@railcards-online.co.uk)

**Call:** 0345 300 0250

There may be other Railcards which are suitable for you. Please visit [railcard.co.uk](http://railcard.co.uk) for further information.

## Wheelchairs

All CrossCountry trains can accommodate customers using a wheelchair, in the clearly designated spaces on-board, providing they fit within the following dimensions:

Width: 700mm

Length: (including footplates) 1,200mm

Height: (including the user) 1,350mm

Weight: (including the user) 300kg

If your wheelchair exceeds the above dimensions, please contact our Passenger Assist booking team free of charge on 0800 030 9224, Text Relay 0800 030 9230 who will be able to offer advice. We provide two designated wheelchair spaces on each of our trains. On our long-distance services operated by our Voyager and High-Speed trains there is one in First Class and one in Standard. On our Turbostar trains which link Birmingham New Street with Cardiff Central, Cambridge, Leicester, Nottingham and Stansted Airport both wheelchair spaces are located in Standard accommodation, in the same coach. If you are reserving a wheelchair space in advance, we will always aim to reserve the adjacent seats for a travelling companion or family members. If you have not reserved a wheelchair space in advance, our On-board Staff will make every effort to find seating for a companion or family members as near as possible to the wheelchair space. Please note that any un-booked wheelchair spaces are available on a strictly first come, first served basis.

## Mobility Scooters

We know how important mobility scooters are for some of our customers. So, we're more than happy to accommodate certain types of mobility scooters on our trains.

We can accept mobility scooters on-board our trains if they have a small triangular footprint and do not exceed the following dimensions:

Width: 700mm

Length: 1,200mm

Height: (including the user) 1,350mm

Weight: (including the user) 300kg

Please seek the advice of our Passenger Assist booking team free of charge on 0800 030 9224, Text Relay 0800 030 9230 to check that that your scooter is within the above dimensions before attempting to bring it on-board our trains.

Larger powered scooters cannot be conveyed on CrossCountry trains due to their weight, dimensions and lack of manoeuvrability. They may also pose a safety risk to other customers and our staff.

Users with scooters which can be folded down into lightweight manageable components may take their scooter onto the train as luggage. Customers or a travelling companion will need to be able to carry the folded scooter on or off the train. It should be stowed in the luggage rack or dedicated luggage compartment in Coach D of our Voyager trains.

Other train operators and transport companies may not take your scooter on-board. If you need to travel with another train operator or transport company to complete your journey, please make sure you or your booking agent checks their arrangements for travelling with mobility scooters.

## At the station

CrossCountry does not manage any of the 120 stations our trains call at. The facilities at stations vary considerably across the network. Many of the stations we serve are staffed, while some have staff presence for part of the day and the remainder have no station-based staff.

At larger stations, such as Birmingham New Street, Leeds and Manchester Piccadilly, dedicated information points are located on the station concourse, with clear signage to their location within the station. The information points have variable height counters with information screens and leaflets positioned so that they can be accessed by everyone.

At staffed stations, where assistance is delivered by the station operator's staff on our behalf, a clearly marked Meeting Point is provided, to help customers who have booked assistance to locate and meet with staff. We recommend you arrive at the station 20 minutes prior to the departure of your train.

If you have not booked assistance when you arrive at a station, please speak with a member of staff or at an unstaffed station, please proceed to the platform and attract the attention of the on-board staff when the train arrives. Our on-board staff are trained to look for customers who may need assistance when arriving at a station.

When you have boarded a train, the station staff will communicate with our Train Manager or Senior Conductor and destination station staff, where appropriate, to ensure you are provided with assistance to get off the train.

When a train arrives at a staffed station, the station staff will ensure that customers who have booked through Passenger Assist are helped off the train as soon as possible and in any event within five minutes of the train's arrival at its final destination station, where reasonably practicable. At un-staffed stations, our on-board staff will assist you off the train.

When booking assistance, if your journey involves a station which does not have staff available at the time you are travelling, our Passenger Assist booking team will take this into account, together with the type of assistance you require and the overall accessibility of the station to ensure you can complete your journey. If our Passenger Assist booking team believes there is any risk of you not being provided with sufficient assistance at a particular station, they will discuss options with you and provide an alternative journey plan, assistance or transport to get you to your destination.

## **Connections and onward travel**

If there's not a direct CrossCountry train for your journey, you can get to many places by making just one change. Where a change of train is necessary we will ensure that this change can be made as easily as possible by suggesting alternative connecting stations or through the use of Passenger Assist at stations. We have identified alternative interchange locations to Birmingham New Street, as this can be a difficult place to change between trains. These include Cheltenham Spa, Derby, Leamington Spa and Wolverhampton. These stations can often be easier and more convenient places to change trains. Our Passenger Assist booking team will be pleased to give you advice on connections.

Our Passenger Assist booking team and station staff will provide you with information on how to make connections with other modes of transport, both prior to your journey and when travelling through the stations our trains serve. There is also a useful information poster displayed at all National Rail stations, which provides onward connection information and local maps.

## Assistance with luggage

We recognise that luggage can be difficult to manage in the station environment for many disabled and older people. If you need your luggage carried, please tell us when you book assistance so we can ensure that station staff, where available, are ready to help. Assistance can be given in taking customers and their luggage from train to station entrances (and vice versa) and when transferring between trains; wherever reasonably practicable.

Railway staff must be able to lift luggage items safely, so please bear in mind the limits set out in the National Rail Conditions of Travel, which state that you may bring with you three items of luggage.

## Station accessibility information

For information on whether the following accessible services and facilities are available at any station served by CrossCountry trains please see our website [crosscountrytrains.co.uk/accessible-travel/stations](https://www.crosscountrytrains.co.uk/accessible-travel/stations), select the station name and follow the link to where you can find up to date information about:

- Level of platform accessibility and how access is provided (e.g. lifts, ramps or steps)
- Disabled Parking
- Accessible Set Down and Pick-Up Points
- Ticket office opening hours
- Meeting Points for assistance
- Staffing hours and Assistance availability
- Accessible Ticket machines
- Customer Information systems
- Help Points (either staffed or audio contact with the station operator's customer contact centre)
- Accessible toilets (including National Key toilets)
- Induction Loops
- Tactile paving
- Station Wheelchair availability
- Accessible waterproof waiting facilities
- Catering facilities
- Secure Station Accreditation

We are committed to working with station operators and Network Rail to find ways to further improve accessibility at the stations CrossCountry serves.

## On the train

An overview of each type of train used on CrossCountry services is available on our website, [crosscountrytrains.co.uk/accessibletravel/trains](https://www.crosscountrytrains.co.uk/accessibletravel/trains), including information on the general accessibility of each type and details of the routes on which different types of train are scheduled to run.

Following investment by CrossCountry in refurbishing our older trains, from January 2020 all CrossCountry trains will offer:

- At least two wheelchair spaces
- At least one Accessible toilet
- A Boarding ramp
- Designated priority seating
- Aural information
- Visual information
- A Train Manager or Senior Conductor to provide assistance during the journey on every train.

All our trains are fitted with public address systems, and our Train Managers and Senior Conductors are trained to make clear and concise announcements giving train information, including details of the next station and will do so on all services that do not have pre-recorded announcements.

Our Train Managers and Senior Conductors are also trained to take into account the needs of visually impaired, deaf or hearing-impaired people when walking through the train and providing information.

## Seats on trains

We offer seat reservations on CrossCountry trains for all journeys, and our Passenger Assist booking team will always try to find the most suitable available seat for you. However, if you are unable to book in advance of travel, our Train Manager or Senior Conductor will make every effort to help older and disabled passengers find a seat on-board.

Priority seating, which has extra legroom and situated near the doors, is available in each coach on all of our trains. Priority seats are clearly labelled, and other passengers are requested to give up the seat, if required by an older or disabled person.

Wheelchair spaces are available on all of our trains, and our on-board staff assist in ensuring these dedicated spaces are kept clear and wheelchair users are given priority for this space. Signage adjacent to designated wheelchair spaces makes it clear wheelchair users must be given priority by law. Customers who have pre-booked wheelchair spaces receive priority over those who have not booked.

Our staff are trained to recognize assistance card schemes, such as the Sunflower lanyard, and will be pleased to offer assistance to the card-holder, including finding them Priority seats.

## Assistance dogs

Assistance dogs are welcome on all CrossCountry trains, free of charge, and can travel in any part of the train. Our on-board staff will be happy to ensure that you are in the most appropriate seating on-board the train, which will usually be a Priority seat, to make the journey comfortable for both you and your dog.

## Ramps

Portable ramps are available at staffed stations served by CrossCountry and on-board all our trains to facilitate boarding and alighting from trains. The ramps are specifically designed to fit the train you are travelling on, so that customers with reduced mobility can safely move onto and off the trains.

Ramps are available for all customers who require assistance. If you have not booked assistance, please advise a member of station staff where available, or the Train Manager or Senior Conductor who will arrange for the ramp to be put in place.

## If things do not go as planned

We try to do everything we can to avoid them, but sometimes delays or cancellations will happen.

We promise that if you are delayed, we will give you as much information as we can about what is happening.

When a journey changes, or we experience disruption to services, we will provide information about changes to train times, and alternative travel arrangements, in both aural and visual formats by Public Address announcements and Information Screens displayed at stations and on our trains.

Where reasonably practicable, for significant changes and disruption during a journey, our Train Managers and Senior Conductors will pass through the train to check if customers require further support, and where possible, provide assistance as required.

If you have booked assistance in advance, where possible we will contact you to make alternative arrangements, particularly if there is significant disruption such as severe weather events. If things do not go as planned on the day of travel, we will always make sure that you reach your final destination, whether you have booked assistance or not.

Our CrossCountry mobile app and website show live train times, and Help Points are available at many stations providing a link to

the station operator's Customer Information team who are also able to assist you in continuing your journey.

## Alternative transport

In the event we need to use alternative transport, we aim to use rail replacement buses or coaches which are fully accessible. Through our sister company, Arriva Road Transport, we work with regular suppliers for rail replacement transport so that we can request fully accessible vehicles are provided during periods of disruption. However, this is sometimes more challenging when sourcing vehicles at short notice, particularly as the availability of accessible vehicles can be limited in some geographical areas.

## If things go wrong

Customers are at the heart of all that we do, and we work hard to ensure we deliver assistance in the right way for every journey. However, sometimes things go wrong, and we may not be able to provide the level of service that we promised.

Your feedback is important to us. So, if assistance has not been provided in the way you expected, whether you booked in advance or not, please contact our Passenger Assist booking team and we will investigate why this happened, and what action we intend to take to ensure it does not happen again.

We understand the inconvenience caused when assistance is not delivered, so we will also provide you with appropriate redress for your journey.

## Where to get more information and how to get in touch

Our Accessible Travel Policy complements this leaflet and sets out in detail our policies and approach towards providing assistance for older and disabled customers, and those that need extra help; and how we meet our regulatory obligations. It is available on our website: [crosscountrytrains.co.uk/accessibletravel](https://crosscountrytrains.co.uk/accessibletravel).

Alternative formats such as audio and large print versions of both this leaflet and our Accessible Travel Policy are available on request, by calling our Passenger Assist booking team by phone or Text Relay, and on our website, free of charge. We aim to provide this to you within seven working days.

Information is important, so we will ensure that accessibility information relating to the stations we serve and our trains is readily available to you and is kept up-to-date by CrossCountry and the station operators responsible. This is available in an

online PDF format, available at: [crosscountrytrains.co.uk/accessibletravel](http://crosscountrytrains.co.uk/accessibletravel), which is accessible using screen readers or other software with accessibility features (for example, Adobe Reader) and can be easily accessed via personal mobile devices. Links are provided to take you direct to station operator's accessible travel website pages for stations information. We can also provide train and station information by post on request, including in alternative formats such as large print.

## Contact Us

Our Passenger Assist booking team can provide further information regarding our services, including any queries on the day of travel. We would also be grateful to hear your feedback on services, and if you have any suggestions or would like to get involved with improving accessibility.

We are available 0800-2000, seven days a week, except 25 and 26 December. We commit to extending our call-centre opening hours from 0800-2200 as soon as possible:

**Phone:** 0800 030 9224 (Freephone, including from mobiles)  
from 0800 – 2000.

**Text Relay:** 0800 030 9230 from 0800-2000.

At other times you can call the National Freephone Passenger Assist number: 0800 022 3720,  
Textphone 0845 60 50 600 or  
SMS to 60083.

**Email:** [customer.relations@crosscountrytrains.co.uk](mailto:customer.relations@crosscountrytrains.co.uk) at any time

**Online:** [crosscountrytrains.co.uk](http://crosscountrytrains.co.uk) at any time

**Social media:** Facebook – [www.facebook.com/Crosscountrytrains](http://www.facebook.com/Crosscountrytrains)  
Twitter - @crosscountryuk

### Or by post:

Passenger Assistance  
CrossCountry  
5th Floor, Cannon House  
18 The Priory Queensway  
Birmingham B4 6BS

We really hope you will not have any reason to complain when you are travelling with us. However, if you do, please speak to someone on the train or the station and they will try to sort out the problem there and then.

If you would rather, you can contact our Customer Relations Centre, or email us at [customer.relations@crosscountrytrains.co.uk](mailto:customer.relations@crosscountrytrains.co.uk). Please give us the opportunity to try to resolve your complaint. If you're unhappy with the final response you receive, you have the right to appeal to the Rail Ombudsman.

**Rail Ombudsman**

Phone: 0330 094 0362

Textphone: 0330 094 0363

Email: [info@railombudsman.org](mailto:info@railombudsman.org)

By Post: FREEPOST – RAIL OMBUDSMAN



**For further information visit:  
[crosscountrytrains.co.uk](http://crosscountrytrains.co.uk)  
or call us on 0344 736 9123**