

National Travel Survey: 2010



When people travel

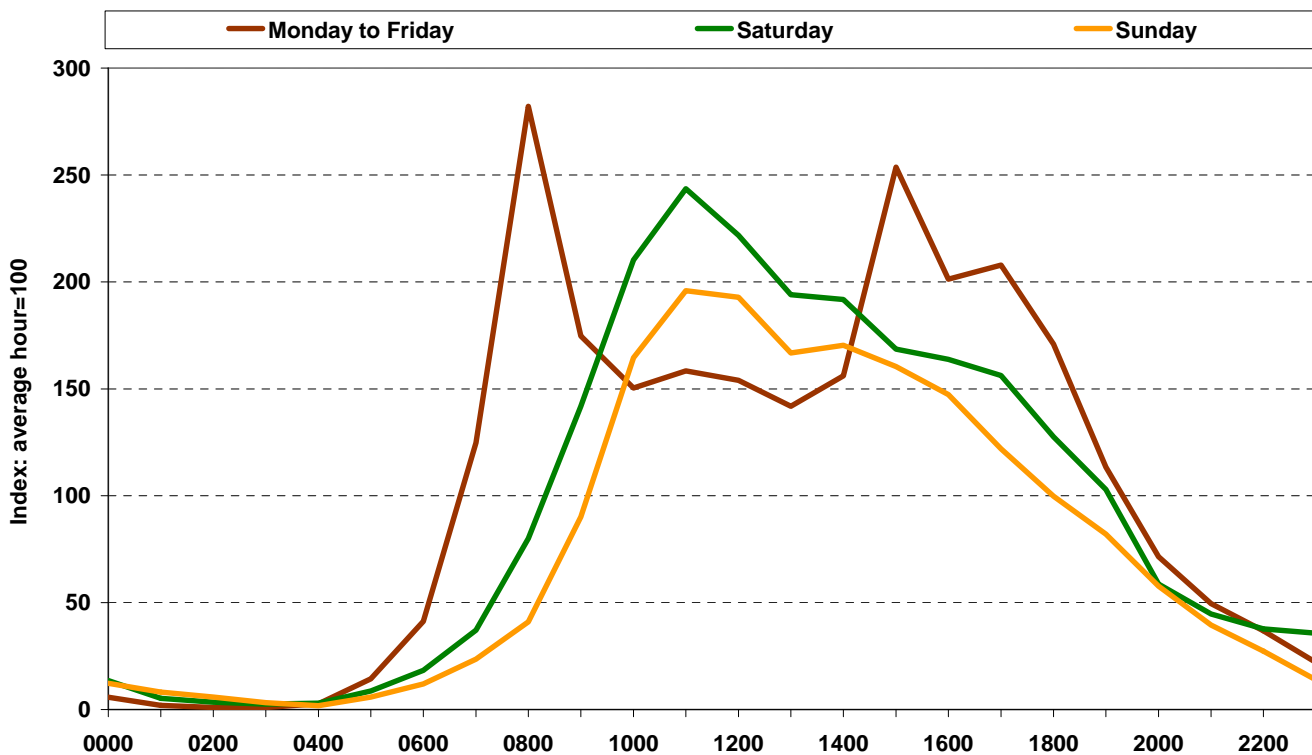
This section looks at how patterns of travel change according to the hour of the day, day of the week and the month in which people travel, with a particular focus on variation by mode and purpose.

Trips by time of day

The chart below shows an index of trips in progress by time of day and day of week.

Trips in progress by time of day and day of week - index: Great Britain, 2010

(NTS web table NTS0501)



- On a weekday (Monday to Friday) the number of trips in progress peaks between 8:00 and 8:59 in the morning and again between 15:00 and 15:59 in the afternoon, this is mainly driven by education related trips. The afternoon peak is more spread out than the morning peak.
- At weekends, the number of trips in progress peaks only once each day, during the hour between 11:00 and 11:59. The Sunday peak is smaller and flatter than the Saturday peak.

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- The distribution of car driver trips by hour is broadly similar to that for overall trips although the weekday evening peak for car drivers occurs between 17:00 and 17:59 which is two hours after the peak for all-mode trips.

Trips by start time and purpose (weekdays only)

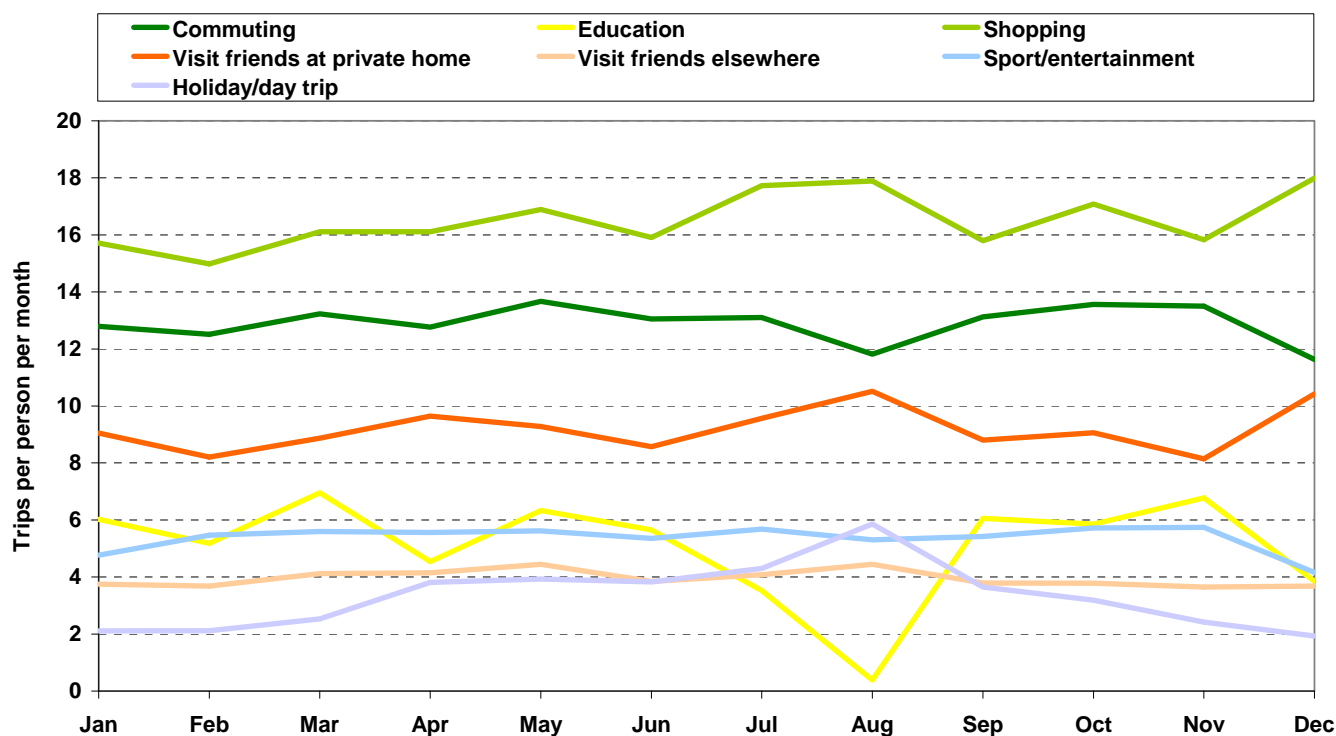
- Commuting was the most common purpose for trips starting during every hour between 02:00 until 07:59 and between 16:00 and 17:59 on an average weekday during 2006/10. Between 08:00 and 08:59 education was the most common reason for travel, accounting for 29% of trips, with an additional 18% escorting others to education.
- Most shopping trips on a weekday start between 10:00 and 12:59, with 36% in total starting between these times. In the late evening, the main reasons for travel are for visiting friends/entertainment/sport, with 39% of these trips starting between 18:00 and 23:59.
- Commuting trips have a 2-hour peak between 07:00 and 8:59, with 31% of these trips starting during this time.
- 41% of education trips started between 08:00 and 08:59 with a further 32% of education trips between 15:00 and 15:59.
- Business trips are more evenly distributed throughout the daytime, as are personal business trips (such as visiting the doctor, hairdresser or a library) and holiday/day trips.

Daily trip patterns

- People make the fewest trips on Sundays – an average of 108 trips per person per year, compared to 137 on Saturdays and 149 on weekdays (Monday to Friday).
- Friday is the busiest day in terms of the total number of trips made (154 trips per person per year). During the week, trips made on a Friday for the purposes of shopping and visiting friends at home or elsewhere are higher than on a Monday to Thursday.
- Weekdays are the busiest days for commuting. However, commuting trips are slightly lower on Fridays and Mondays (27 trips per person per year each) than other weekdays (Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursday all have 29 trips each).
- On Saturdays more trips are made for the purposes of shopping and sport/entertainment than on any other day. To put these into context, 44 shopping trips per person per year were made on a Saturday compared to 26 trips on an average weekday.
- Trips to visit friends are most common on the weekend with an average of 21 trips to visit friends at home and 11 to visit them elsewhere per year.

Monthly trip patterns

Average number of trips by month and selected purposes: Great Britain, 2006/10
(NTS web table NTS0505)



- Monthly patterns in numbers of trips vary according to trip purpose, with patterns of work, education and holiday trips reflecting the influence of school and other holidays. In terms of modal choice, the prevailing weather in certain months will affect certain modes of travel.
- On average in 2006/10 the total number of trips made each month peaked above 85 trips per person per year in March, May and October. February and December had the fewest number of trips (76 trips), while March and May had the highest (87 trips).
- Corresponding with the school holidays in August, trips for education purposes are very low and the number of trips made for holidays or day trips peaks. Commuting and business trips also fell during the school holidays.
- A combination of seasonal and holiday-related patterns are visible in people's choice of mode – bicycle and walking trips are at their lowest in the winter, whereas car passenger trips, as a proportion of all trips, are at their highest during the school holiday months of August and December.

Detailed statistics (tables and charts) on “when people travel” can be found on National Travel Survey 2010 web page at: <http://www.dft.gov.uk/statistics/releases/national-travel-survey-2010>, table numbers [NTS0501](#) to [NTS0506](#).

Background notes

1. Further information about the National Travel Survey can be found at:

<http://www.dft.gov.uk/statistics/series/national-travel-survey>

2. Full guidance on the methods used to conduct the survey, response rates, weighting methodology and survey materials can be found in the National Travel Survey 2010 Technical Report at:

<http://assets.dft.gov.uk/statistics/series/national-travel-survey/nts2010-technical.pdf>

3. A Notes & Definitions document which includes background to the NTS, response rates, sample size & standard error information and a full list of definitions can be found at:

<http://assets.dft.gov.uk/statistics/releases/national-travel-survey-2010/nts2010-notes.pdf>

4. Most of the tables and charts in this section show data from several survey years which have been grouped together in order to provide a larger sample size for more robust analysis. For example, 5 years of survey data combined from 2006 to 2010 is denoted as 2006/10.

5. Table and chart NTS0501 compares the amount of travelling taking place during each hour of the day by using an index. This shows the average across all hours throughout the week as 100. For example, when an hour has the value 200 this means that people are making twice as many trips during that hour as during an average hour.