**Embargo 00.01 20 July 2017**

**Brits brace themselves for a summer of carmageddon**

* *Who gets to sit where, music choices and whether the window should be up or down are revealed as the most common car arguments*
* *A third of parents have had to abandon their family trips altogether due to arguments*
* *A quarter of parents believe their family has more arguments in the car over any other transport*
* *Almost two thirds think arguments could be avoided by using the train*

New research released today by Virgin Trains reveals the biggest “cargument” triggers for British parents ahead of the much-anticipated busiest weekend on the roads as an estimated 3.4 million\*\*\* cars hit the road this Saturday as the great summer getaway begins.

The nationwide study of over 2,000 parents found that almost half of families have argued in the car in the last week alone – with 62 per cent believing arguments could have been avoided had they opted to travel by train.

With many schools breaking up this Friday (July 21) and thousands of families hitting the road, arguments will include who gets to sit where, what music is played and whether windows should be down or up.

Close to 50 per cent of parents revealed that they use the car “most of the time” when going on long-distance journeys, but just as many (46 per cent) agreed the train was the far better experience. One third have even had to cut their journeys short after in-car arguments got out of hand.

What’s more 75 per cent have felt frustrated at being stuck behind the wheel when the kids started misbehaving. One frantic dad who didn’t stop for a toilet break commented how he instantly regretted it!

.

Psychologist and relationship expert, Dr Becky Spelman, who teamed up with Virgin Trains on the research said: “Your brain is in a hyper-vigilant state when driving; on top of concentrating on the road there are so many distractions. This will affect how we regulate both our emotions and reactions, so it’s no surprise that 46 per cent of parents think travelling by train is the best option.

“The study also found that 62 per cent believe their kids argue in the car because of boredom and 19 per cent because they think they can get away with it whilst their parents are behind the wheel. Both triggers are avoidable on the train.”

Parenting blogger and mum of three, Becky Freeman of The Spirited Puddle Jumper, agrees: "Our family loves using the train wherever possible for long journeys, especially now we have three children in tow. I'm still haunted by a car journey back from Somerset to South East London that took seven hours as opposed to four because of motorway tailbacks and road closures. There was fighting, whinging, endless toilet stops and tears (mine!) - never again. Not only do we rarely argue on the train, there is space to move around, things for the kids to do and a toilet is never far away- something you can't put a price on!”

Patrick McCall, Co-Chairman of Virgin Trains, which commissioned the research, added: "Our on-board Wi-Fi, refreshments on tap, movies, magazines and more on Beam, and, of course, toilets are the perfect solution to these avoidable car arguments – getting holidays off to the best start and giving families more quality time together from the moment they leave the house."

To help families tackle the season of ‘carguments’ and start their trip in a more relaxing and enjoyable way, Virgin Trains is launching a summer family promotion\* on its East Coast route, offering 50 per cent off family travel on selected routes between August 7 and September 10, for journeys booked between July 31 and September 2. On the west coast, Virgin Trains’ family ticket\*\* is a super flexible, anytime Standard return that can be booked for as little as £99 for a journey from London to Manchester or Liverpool for a family of four.

For more details please visit [Virgin Trains West Coast](https://www.virgintrains.co.uk/) and [Virgin Trains East Coast](https://www.virgintrainseastcoast.com/).

* ENDS –

For further information contact Kaper, Rosie Stewart

[virgintrainsec@kaper.uk.com](mailto:virgintrainsec@kaper.uk.com) / 020 3301 2210, 07729 186 633.

**NOTES TO EDITORS**

**The top 10 ‘cargument’ triggers for UK families are:**

1. Who gets to sit where?
2. What plays on the stereo
3. Whether windows should be down or up
4. Temperature too hot
5. Kids kicking the back of the seat in front
6. The volume of gadgets like iPads, Nintendo DSes etc being too high
7. Who has to sit in the 'middle' seat
8. That someone broke wind
9. Someone keeps singing an annoying song
10. Air conditioning too cold

**Top 5 reasons why parents think kids argue on car journeys:**

1. Boredom
2. They know they can wind up their siblings as there's nowhere for them to go
3. Hungry
4. They think they can get away with more as the parents are usually in the front and can't stop them
5. They just like arguing

**Research**

Research was commissioned by Virgin Trains and was carried out by independent third-party research supplier OnePoll in July 2017. The research profiled 2,000 UK parents of 0-16 year olds who drive.

\*\*\* RAC predict a total of 37 million leisure trips will be made over the first two weeks of the school holidays. Saturday is predicted as the busiest day of the weekend for UK getaway traffic with 3.4 million journeys being made.

**Terms and Conditions:**

\*FAMILY PROMOTION (Virgin Trains on the east coast)

1.50% discount applies to lowest Virgin Trains East Coast Standard Advance and First Advance tickets only, booked between 31 July and 02 September 2017 inclusive, for travel between 7th August and 10 September 2017 inclusive (excluding 25 to 28 August inclusive), on selected Virgin Trains East Coast services.

2. At least one child (age 5-15) must be travelling with the group.

3. The 50% discount is valid for Virgin Trains East Coast train services only for journeys (in both directions) between the following stations Newcastle, Durham, Darlington, York, Doncaster, Retford, Newark Northgate, Harrogate, Skipton, Wakefield Westgate, Leeds, Grantham, Peterborough and London King’s Cross

4. 50% discount can only be used when booking through the promotional link [www.virgintrainseastcoast.com/family-promo](http://www.virgintrainseastcoast.com/family-promo)

5. To access this offer please complete the form on this page. To access the offer a valid email address and enter a pin code to access the offer.

6. The code is valid for one transaction for up to Eight Passengers with a combination of Adults and children. At least one child (age -15) must be travelling with the group. (each way) for use

7. 50% discount code can only be used once.

8. Tickets must be booked by 23.59 on 02 Sep 2017  and are valid on booked date and train only.

9. This discount is not valid for Virgin Trains services on the west coast route.

10. Discount is not valid in conjunction with any other offers, discounts or Railcards and vouchers.

11. Tickets are subject to availability and there is very limited availability at peak times.

12. Usual Advance terms and conditions apply. Please click here <https://www.virgintrainseastcoast.com/rail-travel/your-ticket/train-ticket-options/advance-tickets/#Tab\_436

\*\* FAMILY TICKET (Virgin Trains on the west coast)

1. These terms and conditions (“terms”) apply to the discounted fares offered by Virgin Trains for Families travelling into and out of London during the Promotion Period (the “promotional fares”). These terms apply in addition to Virgin Trains' full ticket terms and conditions, available at [www.virgintrains.com/terms-conditions](https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.virgintrains.co.uk%2Fterms-conditions&h=ATPyrZC1g01NJJAnDA7UudZSyv_-YSLQJGZG2hWm_wYNmH_ErTspyMlcGO6NmGBSBtLzljtZqIIBHL7qGuJM5kTRfWPHknKPaN41I2to-w6fGPUzXxqW7-cpCsL8NmAZn0ACHEbq9y8YdA) or by calling 0344 556 5650, and in the event of any conflict between any of these terms and the full ticket terms and conditions these terms will prevail.
2. The 'Family ticket' promotional fares are available for purchase all year round (inclusive).
3. The 'Family ticket' promotional fares are available for travel at anytime for destinations along the West Coast Mainline (subject to planned engineering works taking place), view [https://www.virgintrains.co.uk/travel-updates/planned-improvements](https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.virgintrains.co.uk%2Ftravel-updates%2Fplanned-improvements&h=ATPyrZC1g01NJJAnDA7UudZSyv_-YSLQJGZG2hWm_wYNmH_ErTspyMlcGO6NmGBSBtLzljtZqIIBHL7qGuJM5kTRfWPHknKPaN41I2to-w6fGPUzXxqW7-cpCsL8NmAZn0ACHEbq9y8YdA).
4. The return leg of the journey is flexible and must be used within 1 month of the outward travel date, travelling at any time, on any Virgin Train along the West Coast Mainline.
5. The 'Family ticket' promotional fares are available on all routes on the Virgin Trains network along the West Coast Mainline, as long as the journey is from or to London Euston.
6. The 'Family ticket' promotional fares only apply to a Family purchasing all tickets required for travel at the same time. For the purpose of the promotional fares, a 'Family 'is defined as: minimum 1 adult and 1 child; maximum 2 adults, 4 children.
7. The 'Family ticket' promotional fares are only available on services operated by Virgin Trains. If you are in any doubt as to whether a certain train is run by Virgin Trains, you should check with the staff before boarding.
8. The promotional fares are available in Standard class only.
9. The promotional fares are available for purchase on [www.virgintrains.com](https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.virgintrains.co.uk%2F&h=ATPyrZC1g01NJJAnDA7UudZSyv_-YSLQJGZG2hWm_wYNmH_ErTspyMlcGO6NmGBSBtLzljtZqIIBHL7qGuJM5kTRfWPHknKPaN41I2to-w6fGPUzXxqW7-cpCsL8NmAZn0ACHEbq9y8YdA) and at stations.
10. The promotional fares are available for purchase during the promotion Period until 23:59 on the day before travel.
11. Seat reservations are compulsory and free of charge for the outward journey only. Customers must travel on the trains and seats that they reserve. If customers travel on different dates or trains to those reserved, they will have to purchase a new ticket at the full fare.
12. Other discounts including Railcards and Group discounts do not apply to the Promotional fares.
13. The promotional fares are subject to availability and requested journeys cannot be guaranteed.
14. Tickets purchased on the promotional fares are non-refundable.
15. Tickets can be collected at FastTicket machines at the relevant stations or sent via post only.
16. If you have specific needs or require journey assistance when travelling by train, please contact Journey Care on 08000 158 123 at least 24 hours before your journey.
17. All travel is subject to The National Conditions of Carriage, copies of which may be obtained from ticket offices.
18. In the event of unforeseen circumstances, Virgin Trains reserves the right to cancel the promotion without prior notice.
19. Virgin Trains reserves the right to revise the terms and conditions, information materials and notices on this website from time to time or to temporarily or permanently discontinue the website or any part of it from time to time without prior notice should circumstances make such action reasonably necessary. You should review the terms and conditions each time you visit this website.
20. Virgin Trains endeavours to ensure that the information on this website is accurate but makes no representations or warranties as to accuracy and accepts no liability for the same.
21. Personal information provided by you to the site will be used in accordance with the laws enforced under the Data Protection Virgin Trains Privacy Policy, available at [www.virgintrains.co.uk/privacy-policy](https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.virgintrains.co.uk%2Fprivacy-policy&h=ATPyrZC1g01NJJAnDA7UudZSyv_-YSLQJGZG2hWm_wYNmH_ErTspyMlcGO6NmGBSBtLzljtZqIIBHL7qGuJM5kTRfWPHknKPaN41I2to-w6fGPUzXxqW7-cpCsL8NmAZn0ACHEbq9y8YdA).
22. This promotion is run by West Coast Trains Limited: Registered in England and Wales No. 3007940. Registered office: The Battleship Building, 179 Harrow Road, London W2 6NB.

**About Virgin Trains:**

Stagecoach and Virgin are working in partnership to operate the East Coast and West Coast inter-city routes under the Virgin Trains brand. Together, they are on track to revolutionise rail travel across the UK.

The combined network connects some of the nation’s most iconic destinations including Glasgow, Liverpool, Birmingham, Manchester, Edinburgh, Newcastle, Leeds, York and London.

Virgin Trains is committed to delivering a high speed, high frequency service, offering shorter journey times, more comfortable travel and excellent customer service. Customers consistently rate Virgin Trains as one of the top long-distance rail franchise operators in the National Rail Passenger Survey (NRPS) commissioned by industry watchdog, Transport Focus.

On the East Coast route, £140m is being invested to create a more personalised travel experience. We have already invested over £40m in our existing fleet, including £21m refurbishing the interiors and £16m towards improving the engines of our trains. Customers can now benefit from 42 additional services between Edinburgh and London every week, and an extra 22 Saturday services between Leeds and London – a total of 1.74 million additional seats since May 2016. 2018 will see the introduction of completely new Azuma trains being built in the UK by Hitachi.

The West Coast route has a proud record of challenging the status quo - from introducing tilting Pendolino trains, to a pioneering automated delay repay scheme and becoming the first franchised rail operator to offer m-Tickets for all ticket types.

Visit the Virgin Trains Media Room - [virgintrains.co.uk/about/media-room](http://www.virgintrains.co.uk/about/media-room) - for the latest news, images and videos. Subscribe [here](http://www.mynewsdesk.com/follow/47939) for regular news from Virgin Trains.

Press Office: 0845 000 3333.