

Tips for Bok supporters traveling to the World Cup

It's September which, for the rugby fans among us, means one thing: the kick-off to the Rugby World Cup 2015!



Held this year in the United Kingdom, Bok supporters from across the country are gearing up to cross the pond and show their support to our boys in green and gold.

Getting there is pretty easy but getting around may be a different kettle of fish. FlightSite, an official travel agent of the Rugby World Cup, has done the legwork for you to sum up top tips to tackle travelling within the UK:

Savvy travel between Brighton, Birmingham, Newcastle and London: If you're a true rugby fan you'll be in it for the long haul from the get-go. South Africa will start its leg of the World Cup on 19 September 2015, taking on Japan in Brighton. Then they're up against Samoa on the 26 September, Scotland on the 3 October and USA on the 7 October.

To follow them from city to city, you can either rent a car, jump on a train or bus or fly. But make sure you avoid the queues by booking before you depart.

■ **TIP: Pre-booking in South Africa is more cost-effective. This is because you're paying in Rands and not Pounds, thus side-stepping expensive exchange rates. Call FlightSite for its competitive packages.**

By train, plane or automobile? The UK has an established network of transport options to get you from A to B. Among a car, train, bus or plane, each has its perks but also its drawbacks so weigh-up what you'll be doing in each destination before deciding how to get there. FlightSite recommends taking the train as it is the cheapest option yet faster than a bus. Carriers include BritRail and National Rail and tickets range in price of between £45 and £75 one-way. However, the train stations can get really busy immediately after the match so you may want to stay on a little and take a trip to the Fanzone on the beach to drink in - literally and figuratively - what the seaside city has to offer.

■ **TIP: FlightSite recommends that travellers invest in an Oyster card. It allows you to travel within and around London prior to departure. The card costs £5 and thereafter travellers load an amount of their choice.**

Get to the stadium early for South Africa's World Cup kick-off: The Ireland vs. Canada match will be aired on the big-screens inside the stadium at 14h30 and gates open at 14h15. So while the Bokke take on Japan's Brave Blossoms only at 16h45, getting into the spirit earlier on is sure to fire you up for the real thing.

Buzzing Birmingham: Once South Africa has defeated the Japanese (positive thinking!) the Bok's next opponent is Samoa. The match will be played at Villa Park at 16h45, but the UK's official Rugby World Cup website advises you get to the stadium at least 90 minutes before kick-off. Birmingham is also expected to be buzzing, as besides the rugby, there are other major events taking place in the city, so it's probably wise to add lots of extra time just to get to the stadium. Knowing which seat you are in, as well as which gate to use, will save you precious minutes too. Consider printing out this handy map in advance to help you get around as quickly as possible.

❏ **TIP: Travel light. No buggies or prams are allowed in the station and only one bag per person.**

One night (or more) in Newcastle: It's over 200 miles (or 322km) from Birmingham to Newcastle, or approximately four hours by car. So once the boys have taken on the Samoans it'll be time to make the great trek north. Once a ship-building city, today Newcastle is known for its thumping nightlife.

Boasting plenty of pubs, bars and clubs, this city is worth exploring after-hours. It's also known for its proud and spirited locals, or "Geordies" as they are more colloquially called, who also make great hosts at the city's many guesthouses, B&BS and hotels. Take in all this city has to offer before the game on the 3rd October when South Africa gets ready to shake-up Scotland. But book accommodation as soon as possible if you've not already.

❏ **TIP: Packages are limited but can still be booked through FlightSite.co.za.**

Onwards to London Town: With only a few days between the Scotland and USA match, and 280 miles to cover, you'd be best hopping on a train or plane. It will take you three hours to get from north to south of the country by train - excluding the time it takes to get to and from the station - so allow yourself a day to make the trip.

London is the UK's crown jewel for obvious reasons so you'll want to spend some time before or after the game sight-seeing. If you've not been to London before, on your bucket list should be the London Eye, Big Ben, Buckingham Palace, Trafalgar Square and Notting Hill. On match-day, you'll need to get to the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park in Newham which is located in the East End of the city. It is a no-park venue so do not try to get there by car. While overland and underground trains are likely to be your best bets - Stratford is the nearest station - they will also be very full. Walking or cycling may be a better option if you're not staying too far away.

Rugby World Cup survival kit: While the UK is not a big country, travelling from one side to the other, and all over its cities, will be tiring. Make sure you have a pair of comfortable shoes, and plasters for blisters; water and snacks; a pack of tissues (public loos may run out of toilet paper); small change (also for the loos); a camera; brolly in case it rains; sun hat and sunscreen in case it's hot and a travel wallet to keep train tickets handy - all safely tucked inside a secure backpack or shoulder bag.

Who to follow for any travel updates: Even with water-tight planning, things could go wrong and trains, busses or planes may be late. To stay up-to-date on travel advice around the Rugby World Cup make sure you follow [@RWC2015Travel](https://twitter.com/RWC2015Travel) as well as [@FlightSite](https://twitter.com/FlightSite) which will retweet any important announcements.

You can also visit www.rugbyworldcup.com to find all sorts of useful information, www.flightsite.co.za to book international flights, or call FlightSite on 0860 23 24 25 for assistance on all internal transport and travel packages in the UK.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>