Features

Navigate NYC
Which route is faster?

Sometimes, you’ve got two options to get to where you’re going. We tested a few common situations to find out which is faster.

7 VS. S

The situation: You’re at Times Square and want to transfer to get to Grand Central.

The verdict: The shuttle runs more often (an average of four to six minutes, compared with the 7’s average of six to eight). Take it, unless you’ve disembarked near the 7 train, in which case, save yourself the walk.

L VS. J M

The situation: Late at night, the L seems to take foreevvveer (indeed, after 1:30 am, it runs every 20 minutes). Should you take the J or M, and then walk or hitch a cab?

The verdict: Believe it or not, the J and M run less frequently than the L—not because of scheduling, but because of frequent track work. Take the L.

E VS. G

The situation: You live in Brooklyn (let’s say Park Slope) and want to get to Queens Plaza. Lucky you—the G train connects the two boroughs, so no need to go all the way into Manhattan and all the way back out to Queens!

The verdict: Scratch that. During peak hours, the G doesn’t go to Queens Plaza. It’s actually faster to head into Manhattan and transfer to the E. Although real pros take the bus (see When the bus is faster).

2 3 VS. 1 AC

The situation: You live uptown, work in Midtown West and are debating on whether to take the express (and then walk the long blocks toward the river) or the local and transfer at 50th Street and walk fewer blocks.

The verdict: Take the local and transfer. Despite the time it takes to switch trains, it’s still faster than the express route, which lets you out in the tourist and commuter hell that is Penn Station.

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TRIP PLANNER ON THE GO

The MTA’s route planner is now available on cell phone browsers, in beta mode. Enter your start and end points, and it calculates the fastest trip, taking service changes into account. The cooler-than-top-stop part? It coordinates with bus times, so you can transfer easily. (tripplanner.mta.info/mobile)

SUBWAY STATUS

This new feature provides service advisories, but is more about social networking. "Toss tell you which friends in your network ride your train (which makes avoiding them easier) and offers a focused arena for Missed Connections—like listings ("I made eye contact. You were wearing a rainbow sweater."). Also, there’s complaining. Lots of complaining. "Why the hell is it that they run 1 trains in pairs?" writes a rider. If they are going to do that shit, they should just bring the 3 back." (apps.facebook.com/subwaystatus/train.php)