

GUIDE TO NSW TRAINLINK JOURNEYS

NOTE: The times for NSW TrainLink services in *Train Times* provide both arrival and departure times. However, NSW TrainLink's own Public timetables only quote arrival times. Hence, NSW TrainLink trains often depart closer to the quoted arrival time. Be sure to be at the station by this time.

NSW TrainLink is the middle and long distance passenger train operating unit of Transport for New South Wales, a NSW State Government body.

The daylight and overnight XPTs are operated by NSW TrainLink. The XPTs (abbreviation for eXpress Passenger Trains) were introduced in 1982. The motive power portion is based on the British Rail 125 High Speed trains. XPTs only achieve their maximum speed over fairly short portions of lines, such as between Albury and Wagga Wagga. These trains have always been used very intensively. The set comprises Economy class saloon carriages, First class saloon carriages, a Buffet cum First class carriage in the middle of the train (usually carriage C), and a peculiar First class carriage, usually at the southern end. This comprises compartments which are converted to two sleeping berths for overnight travel or seating for three passengers for day travel. In 2015 the NSW state government announced that it will commence procedures for replacements of the XPTs and Explorers. More details of XPTs are at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_South_Wales_XPT or at http://www.nswtrainlink.info/your_journey/fleet/xpt

The buffet on the XPTs and Explorer DMUs sell a fairly good range of food. For lunch and dinner, an alternative is offered described as a "hot meal" which is of slightly higher standard. Food is not eaten in the buffet but has to be taken back to passengers' seats.

Day accommodation on either the XPTs or the Explorer Diesel Multiple Units is either in First class or Economy class. In fact, there is very little difference between the classes – just a smidgen more legroom, a smidgen more reclining to the seat, and closer to the buffet in First. The real difference seems to be that in First class there is a higher proportion of grey hair.

NSW TrainLink is the replacement of the former NSW Countrylink and the outer suburban portion of the former NSW CityRail. More details at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NSW_TrainLink

In the greater Sydney area, NSW TrainLink operates over tracks which are controlled by Transport for NSW, a State government body. In rural areas, TrainLink operates over tracks controlled by the Australian Rail Track Corporation, a Federal government body, or by John Holland Rail NSW Country Regional Network. This follows massive reorganisation of railways in recent years. ARTC control almost all interstate mainlines, the very busy NSW Hunter Valley coal network and a few other lines in NSW and Victoria. More details at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Australian_Rail_Track_Corporation or at www.artc.com.au

NSW TrainLink also has an extensive network of rural buses which connect with their trains. These offer a seamless journey with integrated ticketing and timetables (and even colour schemes).

The journeys through the electrified Greater Sydney area, ie, Macarthur-Sydney, Sydney-Broadmeadow, Sydney-Lithgow, and Sydney-Nowra are over tracks owned

by Transport for NSW. The journeys from Macarthur to Melbourne, Broadmeadow to Brisbane, Broadmeadow-Werris Creek-Moree and Parkes to Broken Hill are over track controlled by the Australian Rail Track Corporation. The journeys from Canberra to Joppa Junction (near Goulburn), Junee to Griffith, Lithgow to Dubbo/ Parkes and Werris Creek to Armidale are over track controlled by John Holland Rail NSW Country Regional Network.

These notes include some places additional to those at which the train stops. These are *in italics* and the non-stop times of these are in 10 point.

MELBOURNE-ALBURY-YASS-SYDNEY

Place	Day XPT times	Km. from Melb.	Notes
Melbourne Southern Cross, platform 1	830	0	This is a large and distinctive station. It was completely rebuilt from 2002 to 2006. There is one point near the main Spencer/Collins Streets entrance where, without moving, you can watch the regional diesel trains arriving and departing every few minutes, the electric suburban trains passing through every few minutes and the trams outside every few seconds. Alternatively, use the upstairs passage ways – one at each end – as vantage points for the trains. The curvy roof is not only for appearance, but also to disperse the diesel fumes. The portion of the station for regional trains (including platform 1) is controlled by V/Line. The portion for suburban trains is controlled by Metro Trains Melbourne. More details at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Southern_Cross_railway_station
			The interstate standard gauge line is quite separate from the lines used by suburban and regional trains. Soon after departure it goes over the North Melbourne viaduct spanning all the other tracks. The Regional Rail Link (opened 21 June 2015) then junctions off. The line is controlled by Centralised Traffic Control (CTC) situated at Junee.
<i>Dynon</i>		4	Dynon locomotive depot and Dynon freight yards. There are lots of nice areas in Melbourne, but you sure don't see them along this route. There is lots of light industry, rail yards and dreary suburbs.
<i>West Dynon Junction</i>	838	7	Bridge over Maribyrnong River, followed by short tunnel.
<i>West Footscray Junction</i>	842		Six running tracks – 2 (broad gauge electrified) belong to Metro Trains Melbourne, 2 (broad gauge) belong to

			V/Line for regional passenger trains, 2 (standard gauge) belong to the Australian Rail Track Corporation for interstate trains – these are the lines the XPT uses. Also the Tottenham Marshalling yard – main freight yard for Melbourne.
<i>Sunshine</i>	845		Parallel to electrified suburban / regional line
<i>Albion</i>			Double track dual gauge line, including two high bridges.
Broadmeadows	854-856	Ap.28 (the km. posts show different distances as they have a different route).	Pick up stop, or set down stop, only. Parallel to electrified suburban / regional line.
			Parallel to regional line. This appears to be a three track mainline. It is not. The XPT is on the single track standard gauge (1.435metre, 4 ft 8 1/2 inches) line used for interstate trains. The two lines alongside are broad gauge (1.6 metre, 5 ft 3 inches) line used by Victorian intrastate trains. On the standard gauge there are crossing loops which have recently been extended to provide for running crosses. These are so long that the ARTC devised a new name for them – “Passing Lanes”. At these Passing Lanes, it appears to be a four track railway. (Railways built to different gauges in the different states is one of the great bugbears of Australian history. When the first railways were being built in the 1850s the various colonies did agree to build them to the same gauge. But then NSW reneged on the agreement - not once, but twice.)
<i>Craigieburn</i>	Ap. 900	Ap.41	The big ugly building to the east of the line is where Australian banknotes are printed, and banknotes of many other countries. The Australian invention of polymer banknotes has been a great export success. Craigieburn is the end of Melbourne electric suburban trains. To generalise: Most place names in the areas first settled by Europeans in Australia are British derived names. Place names in areas settled later are more usually the original

			Aboriginal names. Although it looks like you are traversing a plain, in fact the line is climbing
<i>Heathcote Junction</i>	Ap.911	Ap.63	The major geographical feature all along the east coast of Australia is the Great Dividing Range, with a small coastal plain to the east and endless plains to the west. Here you cross the Great Dividing Range, but at a point where it is petering out and hardly noticeable.
			The country is now pleasantly hilly. After crossing the Goulburn River, you pass through -
Kilmore East	922-932		Not a passenger stop. The XPT is scheduled to stop here for ten minutes for a cross with a freight train, but usually this stop is not necessary in view of the lengthy "Passing Lane".
Seymour	948-950	110	Pick up stop only. The line now becomes a double track standard gauge line. The northbound XPT is usually routed via the West line, but both lines are signalled for two-way running. The countryside is now fairly flat, but very productive.
Benalla	1041-1043	206	Junction station.
<i>Glenrowan</i>	1057	230	The summit of a small range.
Wangaratta	1106-1108	245	
<i>Wodonga</i>	1140	Ap. 298	Wodonga is on a bypass line opened a few years ago. Across the Murray River, the border between Victoria and New South Wales. Bizarrely, the border is not in the middle of the river, but goes along the southern bank of the river. The Murray River with its many tributaries is a major feature of Australia as they drain an enormous area of SE Australia. However, here the river is disappointingly small.
	Day XPT times	Km. from Sydney (Km. posts on eastern side of line).	
Albury	1149-	646	Biggest city between Melbourne and

	1155		Canberra.
			The railway now traverses very flat but very productive country. The main product grown in this area is wheat. Wheat silos are at most stations. In December and January, these will all be very busy receiving the harvest. Along the flat, straight stretch, the train usually goes fast. The railway is now single track, but with frequent and very lengthy "Passing Lanes".
Culcairn	1221	597	
Henty	1232	580	
The Rock	1249	550	The Rock is a massive feature suddenly rising out of the flat countryside to the west of the line.
Wagga Wagga	1307-1311	521	Now a long bridge over the Murrumbidgee River and its floodplain.
Harefield	1329-1341	498	Not a passenger stop. A stop to cross the southbound XPT on the single track line - if both trains are running to time.
Junee	1351-1354	486	An important junction station. Double track resumes.
			From Junee, all the way to almost all the to Sydney the railway runs through hilly country. It basically runs against the grain of the country. Hence there are many gradients up and down.
<i>Bethungra Spiral</i>	1413	456	Here the northbound line takes a very peculiar course to maintain moderate gradients. It does a complete spiral around a hill. The southbound line just goes straight down the hill.
<i>Frampton</i>			The northbound and southbound tracks separate for a short distance as the northbound line takes a longer route to climb up the hill.
Cootamundra	1438-1442	430	Here there is a big changeover of passengers. Many get out to take the bus to Canberra. They will be replaced by other passengers connecting from buses from all over southern NSW. An important junction station.
			In many places, there are remnants of the original railway alignment where the railway was first built as cheaply as possible in the early days of settlement.
<i>Wallendbeen</i>	1459	408	For a while here you are actually going south east.
<i>Demondrille</i>	1509	392	Once the junction for a cross-country line to

			Western NSW. In steam days, there was huge coaling stage here, and locomotives were refuelled without uncoupling from their passenger trains.
Harden	1514-1515	386	Harden is typical of many inland Australian country towns, in that it has lost a high proportion of its population in recent years. Australians now love living on the coast.
<i>Bowning</i>		329	
Yass Junction	1605-1607	318	Junction for the former tiny branchline into Yass Town, which ran along the street there. The planned railway from Yass to Canberra was never built.
<i>Gunning</i>	1637	279	
<i>Cullerin</i>			This is the worst section of the line from the engineering point of view. The line twists and turns with tight curves as it crosses the Great Dividing Range. This section is immediately followed by a section of straightness and high speed, as the line crosses the Breadalbane Plain.
<i>Joppa Junction</i>	1708	231	Junction for the line to Canberra.
Goulburn	1715-1718	225	
<i>Bundanoon</i>	1753	162	
Moss Vale	1804-1806	146	These are the Southern Highland towns – very nice.
<i>Bowral</i>	1811	136	
<i>Mittagong</i>	1815	132	Now through a rugged mountainous area.
<i>Picton</i>	1848	85	You have now descended to the coastal plain.
			To get over a ridge, the two tracks are on different levels.
<i>Macarthur</i>	1907	57	The start of the huge Sydney suburban area, and the start of suburban electric trains
Campbelltown	1909-1911	55 (46 via East Hills line).	A set down only stop. Now endless dreary suburbs. Immediately to the west of the double track electrified passenger line (owned by Transport for NSW) is the single track South Sydney Freight Line owned by the Australian Rail Track Corporation. This provides interstate freight trains with an independent line into Sydney, clear of the suburban trains.
<i>Glenfield</i>	1922	33	A four way junction - immediately south of the station is a flyover for suburban trains, immediately north of the station is another flyover for suburban train, so conflicting

			moves are never made. Then there is yet another flyover to bring the ARTC freight line from the east to the west of the suburban line.
<i>East Hills</i>		24	Bridge over Georges River
<i>Revesby</i>	1933	21	Four tracks from here.
<i>Wolli Creek Junction</i>		7	Junction for Illawarra (South Coast) line. Very, very busy line from here.
<i>Illawarra Junction</i>		2	The six-track mainline from the west and north joins in. There are now ten tracks (plus two more underground).
			The attractive stone station to the west (left hand side) was the Mortuary Station, where Funeral trains departed until the 1930s.
Sydney, usually platform 1 or 2.	1953	0	Sydney Central station is at the southern edge of the central business district. It is a magnificent structure – both architecturally and for railway operating. It is huge – 25 platforms (2 underground). Most are terminating platforms for long distance and middle distance trains. But there are also through platforms used by suburban trains. More details at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_railway_station,_Sydney Suburban trains continue by underground lines to the centre of the city. A double track line continues over the Sydney Harbour Bridge.

Occasionally long distance trains from the South are diverted via an earlier built line via Strathfield. The description of this is:

<i>Campbelltown</i>	55	Now endless dreary suburbs. The construction you will see alongside the line is for a new line to provide freight trains with an independent line into Sydney, clear of the suburban trains.
<i>Glenfield</i>		A four way junction - immediately south of the station is a flyover for suburban trains, immediately north of the station is another flyover for suburban train, so conflicting moves are ever made. Then there is yet another flyover to bring the ARTC freight line from the east to the west of the suburban line.
<i>Liverpool</i>	36	
<i>Sefton Park Junctions</i>	21	A suburban line and the ARTC freight line goes off to the east.
<i>Lidcombe</i>	17	Olympic Park (for the 2000 Olympics) is very close to the north (but you can't see it). Four tracks now.
<i>Strathfield</i>	12	Major junction station of western and northern lines. Very, very busy line now, with six tracks. Dense inner suburbs.

<i>Illawarra Junction</i>	2	The Illawarra line comes in. There are now ten tracks (plus two more underground).
		The attractive stone station to the west (left hand side) was the Mortuary Station, where Funeral trains departed until the 1930s.
Sydney Central, usually platform 1 or 2	0	Sydney Central station is at the southern edge of the central business district. It is a magnificent structure – both architecturally and for railway operating. It is huge – 25 platforms (2 underground). Most are terminating platforms for long distance and middle distance trains. But there are through platforms used by suburban trains. More details at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_railway_station,_Sydney Suburban trains continue by underground lines to the centre of the city. A double track line continues over the Sydney Harbour Bridge.

CANBERRA – SYDNEY

The track from Canberra to Joppa Junction is controlled by John Holland Rail NSW Country Regional Network.

Place	Km from Sydney	Notes
Canberra	330	The railway station of the capital city of this vast country is just a tiny one platform place.
Queanbeyan	322	From this station until the third tunnel the railway forms the border. The railway itself and land on the eastern side (on your right) are in New South Wales, whereas land on the western side (your left) is in the Australian Capital Territory. Just over the State border is this very higgledy-piggledy town, to be a counterpoint to the over-planned Canberra.
		The scenic highlight of this trip: The railway goes through the spectacular Molonglo River Gorge. This is on the western side of the train. If necessary shift seats to look at this. But there may a minor problem. At about this time, the conductor usually comes through the train checking tickets. When trains are full, they get very grumpy at passengers not in their designated seats. If the train is not full, they are tolerant.
Bungendore	294	
		The line now cross the Great Dividing Range, but at this point, it is not very prominent. In fact, the countryside is a bit bleak.
<i>Crisps Creek Siding</i>	264	Six mornings a week two large trains arrive here full of Sydney garbage, which is gradually filling up a nearby, former open-cut mine.
Tarago	263	
<i>Joppa Junction</i>	231	The Canberra line now joins the main Melbourne-Sydney double track line.

From here see the description in the Melbourne-Sydney table above.

JUNEE – GRIFFITH

Place	Km	Notes
Junee	486	NSW TrainLink operates a train to Griffith merely once a week – a political decision. However, there are also many TrainLink buses to Griffith.
Coolamon	523	One of many towns serving this fertile, wheat-growing area. Along this line, there are many wheat silos served by the railway.
Narrandera	584	Formerly an important junction station.
Leeton	613	The country is now very flat, but, irrigated with water from Burrunjuck Dam, is very fertile. Many food crops are grown.
Griffith	640	This town is the important centre of this rich agricultural district. Griffith is particularly ethnically diverse, even by Australian standards. A large proportion of the population is of Italian background. There are also many Indians and Pacific Islanders.

SYDNEY – BRISBANE

Place	Km from Sydney	Notes
Sydney Central, usually platform 1 or 2	0	Sydney Central station is at the southern edge of the central business district. It is a magnificent structure – both architecturally and for railway operating. It is huge – 25 platforms (2 underground). Most are terminating platforms for long distance and middle distance trains. But there are through platforms used by suburban trains. More details at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_railway_station,_Sydney Suburban trains continue by underground lines to the centre of the city. A double track line continues over the Sydney Harbour Bridge.
		The attractive stone station to the west (right hand side) was the Mortuary Station, where Funeral trains departed until the 1930s
		Very, very busy suburban line. Six tracks. Dense inner suburbs.
Strathfield	12	Major junction for western and northern lines.
	17	Bridge over Parramatta River. Mixture of 2, 3 or 4 tracks. Leafy, upmarket suburbs.
Hornsby	34	Junction for the line to Sydney via the North Shore.
<i>Cowan</i>	49	The top of the ridge. The line now descends very steeply to the Hawkesbury River. There are great views (interrupted by a number of short tunnels).
<i>Hawkesbury River</i>	57	Big bridge. The pylons of the original bridge, replaced in 1946, remain alongside.
		Very beautiful along the Mullet Creek, although marred by an electricity transmission line. On the other side of the Creek note the houses. These are accessible only by boats from the tiny stations. Then through one of Australia's longest tunnels.
Gosford	81	
Wyong	101	
Fassifern	142	
Broadmeadow	162	This is the main station for the big industrial city of Newcastle. Newcastle has been through some hard times in recent years as heavy industry has restructured. This is the end of the electrified railway - no more local electric trains.
		A very, very busy section of railway with local diesel passenger trains, general freight trains, and especially, lots of huge trains conveying coal to port for export. This is claimed to be the busiest coal railway in the world. Four tracks, two for passenger and general freight trains and two for coal trains.
Maitland	193	This is perhaps the best train-watching and train-photographing location in Australia – for both variety of trains

		and frequency of trains. You turn off the line to the inland onto the North Coast line. In fact you never see the coast, except briefly near Coffs Harbour. This important railway was originally a series of unimportant local lines which were connected together. And it usually still seems like that, as it continually twists and turns. It has been upgraded with some curves removed. It is single track controlled by Centralised Traffic Control (CTC) situated at Broadmeadow.
		Across the Hunter River.
Dungog	245	Rich dairying country.
Gloucester	309	
<i>Bundook</i>	335	Crossing loop where passenger trains often cross.
Wingham	367	
Taree	379	Town on the Manning River.
Kendall	418	Town on the Camden Haven River.
Wauchope (pronounced War Hope)	455	The station for nearby historic town of Port Macquarie.
		Over the Hastings River. Over the Macleay River.
Kempsey	504	
Eungai	535	
Macksville	552	
Nambucca Heads	565	Over the Nambucca River.
Urunga	581	
		Over the Bellinger River.
Sawtell	601	
		In daylight, you get glimpses of the sea.
Coffs Harbour	608	
Grafton	696	Over the Clarence River. This bridge is very large and double deck – road on the upper deck, rail on the lower deck. The scenery in the next section is scrubby and uninteresting.
Casino	806	
Kyogle	834	Climbing.
		There is a spiral to ease the gradient for northbound trains. Then the Border Tunnel under the Macpherson Ranges. The NSW/Queensland state border is halfway through the tunnel. Then the line descends.
<i>Kagaru</i>		The Melbourne to Brisbane Inland Freight Railway, if built, will come in here.
<i>Acacia Ridge</i>	974	Freight yard. The interstate line from this point is dual gauge – standard and narrow gauges. Brisbane suburbs start.
<i>Salisbury</i>	976	Queensland Rail’s line from the Gold Coast comes in. It is a mainly double track, electrified, narrow gauge line. The dual gauged interstate line alongside is now also used by northbound electric trains from the Gold Coast.

<i>Park Road</i>	984	Major junction for suburban trains and for freight trains to the Port of Brisbane (the latter via a large flyover.)
		The Brisbane Convention Centre complex is alongside and partially built over the railway. The Southbank Parklands are nearby.
<i>South Brisbane</i>	987	Until 1978 when the bridge over the Brisbane River was built, the interstate line terminated here.
		Merivale Bridge over the wide Brisbane River – impressive views. Two dual-gauge tracks over the bridge.
Brisbane Roma Street, also known as Brisbane Transit Centre.	989	Terminus for interstate and Queensland long-distance passenger trains, and a through station for the busy electrified suburban train network.

SYDNEY – DUBBO & BROKEN HILL

All along the East Coast of Australia, there is a narrow coastal plain, usually heavily populated, then a steep ascent of a mountain range parallel to the coast known as the Great Dividing Range. The descent on the western side of this Range is usually easier. This is followed by rolling hills gradually giving up to the seemingly endless western plains. The NSW Western line is great example of all this.

Place	Km	Notes
Sydney Central	0	Sydney Central station is at the southern edge of the central business district. It is a magnificent structure – both architecturally and for railway operating. It is huge – 25 platforms (2 underground). Most are terminating platforms for long distance and middle distance trains. But there are through platforms used by suburban trains. More details at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_railway_station,_Sydney Suburban trains continue by underground lines to the centre of the city. A double track line continues over the Sydney Harbour Bridge. Ten tracks a short distance to Illawarra Junction, then six tracks.
		The attractive stone station to the west (right hand side) was the Mortuary Station, where Funeral trains departed until the 1930s
		Very, very busy suburban line. Dense inner suburbs.
Strathfield	12	Major junction for western and northern lines.
Homebush		Four tracks from here.
Lidcombe	17	Olympic Park (for the 2000 Olympics) is very close to the north (but you can't see it).
Auburn	19	
Granville	21	Junction for the original mainline to the south. Following is the direct triangle connection from west to south.
Parramatta	23	An area of settlement from the earliest days of European settlement in Australia. Now generally regarded as the second most important business centre of Sydney.
Westmead	25	A flyunder converts tracks from up, down, up, down configuration to down, down, up, up.
Seven Hills	32	A flyover takes down Richmond branchline and terminating trains over the mainline.
Blacktown	35	Large six platform station. Junction for the Richmond branch. Continues through the seemingly endless western suburbs.
St Marys	47	Four tracks reduce to two.
Penrith	55	Bridge over the Nepean River. The road bridge alongside was the original railway bridge.
Emu Plains	57	The steep ascent of the Blue Mountains begins. A very pretty section of railway through the wild country of the Glenbrook Gorge replaced the line through a tunnel, which itself was a replacement for the original line which ascended via a zig zag.
Glenbrook	67	This railway is very busy with local electric passenger trains, coal trains and some long distance passenger and freight trains.

Valley Heights	77	Now the ascent of the Blue Mountains becomes really fearsome – a gradient of 1 in 33, or 3%.
Springwood	80	Urban development in the Blue Mountains is in a thin strip following the railway. There are brief glimpses of the valleys below.
Lawson	96	Part of the series of pretty Blue Mountain villages.
Wentworth Falls	103	
Katoomba	110	The major centre of tourism in the Blue Mountains. Stunning scenic attractions and views nearby.
Blackheath	121	At 1065 metres, the highest station crossing the Mountains.
Mt Victoria	127	Attractive old stone station building.
Newnes Jnc	142	There is now a major deviation, dating from 1910. This comprises a series of ten tunnels in quick succession in very rugged country. The deviation replaced the Great Zig Zag, the original – impressive but inefficient way the railway descended the western side of the Great Dividing Range. Between the ten tunnels are magnificent, but brief, glimpses into the valley below.
Zig Zag	151	Alongside the tiny platform is the depot of the Zig Zag Railway which is attempting to run heritage trains on the original alignment of the zig zag.
Lithgow	156	Locomotive depot. The end of railway electrification. The site of Australia's first steelworks.
Hermitage	157	The point where control of the railway infrastructure changes from Transport for New South Wales, a NSW state government body, to the lessee, John Holland Rail NSW Country Regional Network.
Wallerawang	171	Attractive old stone station building. From here, to Tarana, the line has been reduced to one track.
Rydal	181	Through attractive hilly country, with heavy earthworks.
Tarana	198	Double track resumes. The alignment of a former branchline to Oberon can be seen climbing steeply up the hill to the south.
Kelso	237	Single track now. Bridge over the Macquarie River.
Bathurst	239	Significant city. One of the first inland settlements in Australia.
Newbridge	274	Double track resumes for a few km.
Murrobo	287	Double to single track.
Blayney	290	Was a junction for a cross-country line to the south.
Spring Hill	309	Double track resumes for a few km.
Orange Fork Junction.	321	Single track now.
Orange	323	Significant city.
Stuart Town	398	The hills are getting smaller as the western plains get closer.
Dubbo	462	Significant city. Major interchange point from train to connecting buses.

ORANGE – BROKEN HILL

Molong	360	The hills are getting smaller as the western plains get closer.
Parkes	446	A significant railway junction. East-west freight trains, having travelled from Sydney via the more easily graded line via Cootamundra, now join this line. This will also be the future junction of the Melbourne-Brisbane Inland Freight Railway. At this point, control of the railway infrastructure changes from John Holland Rail NSW Country Regional Network to the Australian Rail Track Corporation, a Federal Government body.
Condobolin	546	The country is now flat and uninteresting.
Menindee	1007	Bridge over the Darling River. Site of the Menindee Lakes, which fill after good rains and are empty in drought years.
Broken Hill	1125	A very isolated city. Was once the site of a very rich mineral field – lead, zinc, copper – but now largely worked out. This mineral wealth was the basis of the Broken Hill Billiton Company, now one of the biggest mineral companies in the world. Broken Hill is now largely dependent on tourism.

SYDNEY – WOLLONGONG – KIAMA – NOWRA

Service on the South Coast line is by comfortable, double-deck Electric Multiple Unit trains as far as Kiama. Choose the upper deck for better views. If joining a train starting at Central station, walk to the front of the train, as this will be less crowded. From Kiama, there are connecting Diesel Multiple Unit trains.

Most trains on this line commence/terminate their journeys at Bondi Junction, an eastern suburb. They start their journeys traversing the Eastern Suburbs suburban line, performing suburban train duties. Other trains commence/terminate their journeys at Sydney Central station, the main station of this vast metropolis.

Place	Km	Notes
Bondi Junction	7	This is a two-platform, underground station, with a bus interchange above. Bondi is a very densely populated suburb – probably the most densely inhabited part of Australia. The “Junction” in the suburb name refers to a former tramway junction.
		The railway is mainly in tunnel, but with one, short open-air section.
Edgecliff	5	This is a two-platform, underground station, with a bus interchange above. Edgecliff is a densely populated suburb.
		This section is mainly on viaduct.
Kings Cross	3	This is a two-platform, underground station. Kings Cross is a very densely populated suburb and entertainment centre.
		This section is mainly on viaduct, giving great views of the city skyline.
Martin Place	2	This is a two-platform, spacious, underground station in the centre of Sydney’s financial and business district.
Town Hall	1	This is a six-platform, underground station. As well as the Eastern Suburbs line, there is the City Circle line (underground at this point) and the City to North Shore via Sydney Harbour Bridge line (underground at this point).

		This is the busiest station in the Sydney suburban train network.
		The City Circle and North Shore lines leave their tunnels and continue to Central on a viaduct. However, the Eastern Suburbs line – our line – continues at a lower level in tunnel.
Sydney Central	0	<p>Sydney Central station is at the southern edge of the central business district. It is a magnificent structure – both architecturally and for railway operating. It is huge – 25 platforms (2 underground). Most are terminating platforms for long distance and middle distance trains. But there are through platforms used by suburban trains.</p> <p>More details at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_railway_station,_Sydney</p> <p>Suburban trains continue by underground lines to the centre of the city. Ten tracks a short distance to Illawarra Junction, then four tracks</p> <p>Our line – the Eastern Suburbs/Illawarra line – uses the two underground platforms. Other trains for the Wollongong/Kiama line – the South Coast line - start/terminate at the above ground platforms of Central station.</p>
		If you are on the surface lines (not on the underground lines) you will see an attractive stone station to the west (right hand side). This was the Mortuary Station, where Funeral trains departed until the 1930s.
Redfern	1	Extremely busy suburban station. There are twelve platforms and running lines – ten on the surface and two underground.
Illawarra Junction	2	Six surface lines diverge here and go to the western, northern and south-west suburbs.
Erskineville Junction	3	The underground lines now come to the surface and join the surface lines.
		Very, very busy suburban line. Four tracks. Dense inner suburbs. In the 1950s, work commenced to increase this section of line to six tracks, but plans changed and the project was not completed. Much of this work can still be seen.
Sydenham	5	<p>Six platforms.</p> <p>The Bankstown line diverges here. It is proposed that the Sydney Metro line, currently under construction, will, after passing from the North Shore under Sydney Harbour and the City centre will come to the surface here. Then it will take over the Bankstown line, which will be converted from suburban train operation to automatic, metro-style operation.</p> <p>The freight line to Botany passes overhead.</p>
Tempe	7	Four tracks continue
		<p>NSW TrainLink’s XPT and Explorer DMU maintenance depot to the west.</p> <p>Direct connection from the south to the Metropolitan Goods lines to the west for freight (mainly coal) trains.</p>
Wolli Creek	7	Some trains diverge just before here to the East Hills line. The Airport line (which from the City via the Airport has been underground) passes underneath here, and connects to the East Hills line.

Rockdale	10	Most stations on this stretch of line are four platforms – two island platforms. Rockdale fits this pattern, but, in addition, has a busy shopping centre built above it.
Hurstville	15	Most stations on this stretch of line are four platforms – two island platforms. Hurstville fits this pattern, but, in addition, has a busy shopping centre built above it. Four tracks reduce to two tracks.
Mortdale	17	Station followed by suburban electric train depot.
Oatley	18	
		Significant bridge over the Georges River – great views both ways.
Como	21	
Sutherland	25	Junction for the suburban Cronulla line.
Loftus	26	The Sydney Tramway Museum is immediately to the east.
		The Royal National Park is to the east, suburbs to the west.
Waterfall	39	End of suburban train operations.
		The line now twists and turns through the very rugged country of the coastal escarpment. There is continuous curvature through dense bush, and bridges and tunnels. The coastal escarpment is unstable. Consequently, the Stanwell Park viaduct has had to be reinforced, and there are proposals to substantially rebuild the line in a lengthy tunnel. However, this is unlikely for a long time.
Helensburgh	46	Occasional suburban trains are extended to this isolated station.
Coal Cliff	59	The pristine nature of the countryside is marred by coal mines. Soon after Coal Cliff, there is the Coal Cliff tunnel. This is on a short 2 km single track section. Leaving the tunnel, there is a great view of the coastline.
Autinmer	69	We are now on the coastal plain. But the steep, coastal escarpment is very close and continuous to the west. This is coal mining area. We are in the northern suburbs of the major city of Wollongong.
Thirroul	70	Local Wollongong electric, suburban trains commence/terminate here.
Wollongong	83	A surprisingly small and unpretentious station for a major city (just two platforms, plus a down bay platform).
Coniston	84	Junction for the double track, freight line to Port Kembla Inner Harbour and junction for the double track, electrified, passenger and freight line to Port Kembla. The local suburban trains ex Thirroul go along the branch to Port Kembla. Port Kembla is very important for the export of coal and of wheat. Steelworks can be seen to the east.
		A short, 1 km, section of single line occurs, before the loop line from Port Kembla joins this line.
Unanderra	88	Junction for the cross-country line to join the main Southern line at Moss Vale. This line climbs very, very, steeply up the coastal escarpment. It carries heavy freight traffic from (steel) and to (wheat) Port Kembla going to southern NSW and to interstate

		<p>destinations. The first section of this line is duplicated. You can also see masts for proposed electrification. However, due to a change of plans, this was not completed.</p> <p>There are occasional tourist trains on this extremely scenic cross-country line.</p> <p>The South Coast line - described here – continues as a single-track, electrified line.</p>
Dapto	95	<p>The line continues through a mixture of suburbs and countryside. It is fairly flat.</p>
Kiama	119	<p>Kiama is an attractive town.</p> <p>Kiama is the terminus of the frequent, electric trains from Bondi/Sydney. To continue, it is necessary to change to Diesel Multiple Unit trains (called Endeavours). The change is via cross-platform interchange. The DMU service is much less frequent.</p>
		<p>Omega Tunnels – four short tunnels in quick succession.</p>
		<p>The Kiama-Nowra section of line is the only non-electrified line controlled by Transport for NSW. The line is through gentle, rolling hills, with occasional views of the sea.</p>
Berry	141	<p>An attractive, little, country town.</p>
Nowra-Bomaderr.	153	<p>The railway to the important town of Nowra does not get to the town, but terminates on the northern bank of the Shoalhaven River opposite Nowra. In fact, the station is officially called Nowra-Bomaderry, after the suburb it is situated in.</p> <p>The railway was never extended beyond this point, although the further South Coast area of NSW is well populated. This is because, until the 1930s, this area was served by coastal shipping.</p>

NSW NORTH WESTERN LINE

For the description from Sydney to Maitland, see the first portion of the description of the journey from Sydney to Brisbane above.

Place	Km	Notes
Maitland	192.5	This is perhaps the best train-watching and train-photographing location in Australia for both frequency of trains and variety of trains – local passenger trains, long-distance passenger trains, enormous coal trains, long-distance freight trains.
East Greta Junction	193	The mainline to Brisbane turns off to the north. The privately-owned South Maitland Railway (coal trains) turns off the south. Four tracks reduce to two tracks. The very heavy coal trains continue on this line, as well as passenger and freight trains.
Farley	197	Two tracks expand to three tracks. The second track for up (towards the coast) is more easily graded for heavy coal trains. There are many coal mines in this area. Despite this, it is also a very rich agricultural area.
Greta	210	Three tracks to two. Pacific National train support facility alongside.
Branxton	216	Two tracks to three. The second track for up (towards the coast) is more easily graded for heavy coal trains.
Whittingham	234	Three tracks to two.
Singleton	239	At frequent intervals, there are junctions to lines to coal mines.
Muswellbrook	289	Junction for the line to Ulan which carries significant coal traffic. But much coal traffic also remains on this line. Two tracks to one.
Scone	315	Furthest point of local passenger trains from Newcastle.
Murrurundi	353	Ascent of Liverpool Range begins.
Ardglen	363	Top of the Range.
Werris Creek	411	Large station at this important station once housed a railway hotel. Alongside this station is the Australian Railway Workers Memorial.
		NEW ENGLAND LINE
Tamworth	455	Important city. On the original – inland – Sydney to Brisbane mainline.
		Rugged, mountainous country.
Armidale	579	University city.
		NW LINE
Gunnedah	476	
Narrabri Coal Junction	540	The final of many coal mines along this line.
Narrabri	569	Junction station. The country is now flat and uninteresting, but fertile with much wheat grown.
Moree	666	Spa centre.

