



_PHOTO: HENRY STANCU/TORONTO STAR

A seat is not for your feet.

TUE JAN 8, 2013

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PEOPLE

TTC: Toronto's terrible commuters

Meet 10 types of TTC riders who make your daily commute that much more miserable.

BY: KIM HUGHES

Ask any habitual TTC rider about the comportment of fellow passengers and they'll tell you, with the conquered resignation of a mother of twins negotiating the breakfast-cereal aisle, that it sucks and sucks large.

True, the vast majority of riders are polite and mindful of the comfort of others. But just a few bad apples crammed into a westbound Bloor train between Pape and Yonge at 8 a.m. on a Tuesday morning can inflict misery wildly disproportionate to their numbers. And mysteriously, their ranks seem to be swelling of late. Have these TTC ne'er-do-wells simply forgotten the proper rules of conduct or is flagrant ass-clownery now hip?

With the dawn of a new year, it's time to call out these seat-hogging, doorway-blocking mofos and itemize the Top 10 worst behavioral offences on the TTC, just in case anyone out there is unsure of what constitutes beastly manners. If you recognize yourself on this list, know that your fellow riders *loathe* you. But it's never too late to change.

1. Backpack Wearers

This offence is so obvious that the TTC actually plays loud-speaker announcements reminding students—and let's be blunt: it's almost always students—to hold their backpacks in their hands when riding. But no, they keep them firmly strapped on, knocking others passengers about like bowling pins while sucking up huge amounts of extra standing space. Sherpas facing down Everest don't cling to their stuff this tightly. If you wear a backpack, take it off when entering a TTC vehicle and hold it until you disembark. You're already getting a break on the price of the fare, Junior. Make it count.

2. Doorway Standers

Is there really any confusion about why this particular act is totally annoying? No? So why are you

blocking the narrow passage where the masses must nimbly exit or enter in roughly the time it takes for a queue to form outside Grand Electric on a Thursday night? It's not like you're a frail old lady afraid to miss her stop. Oh, and we especially *love* it when you stand there blithely reading the paper or checking your iPhone, taking up even more room. Sit down, jackass, or move inside the car.

3. Front-end Clumpers

Few things are more exasperating than watching a bus bypass a stop full of hopeful passengers because it's ostensibly full when, in reality, people are merely clustered up front and there is a vast expanse of empty space in the back past the rear doors. When the overhead announcement helpfully says, "Please move back," just do it.

4. Seat Hogs

Unless you paid two fares, don't take up two seats. Trust us when we tell you that your purse, unlike us, won't mind sitting on your lap.

5. Outside Sitters

A raging personal peeve, this offence refers to the worthless scum who sit on the outer side of those two-seat benches, forcing anyone who wants to take the window seat to first ask them to move and then, most often (since the Outside Sitter won't actually stand up to let you in, but will merely shift his or her legs imperceptibly to the side) will force you to crawl over them to get in and out. If you are going to sit on one of those two-seat benches, push over to the window side and leave the outside seat vacant for the next person. And if you're either not prepared to do that or simply too tall to squeeze inside, then don't make me ask you to move. Offer it graciously using eye contact and stand the hell up already to let me in and out.

6. Loud Talkers

News flash: Though exciting to you and maybe (just maybe) your seat mate, your adventures in shopping/arguing/TV-watching are dull, dull, dull to the rest of us. So pipe down and let us glare at the Outside Sitters in relative peace. Coda: If you are a teenage girl in the company of at least one other teenage girl, I *guarantee* this refers to you.

7. Loud-Earbud Wearers

Lady Gaga (or Kanye West or Motörhead) might sound better cranked up to 11, but the distorted bleed emanating from your skull is torture for those nearby. Unless you are sitting next to an Outside Sitter who made you crawl over them—in which case, please turn those babies up to 12—be a kind music lover and dial it down a shade.

8. Eaters

I once watched a woman on the Yonge subway line crack open a styrofoam takeout box of steaming hot noodles and begin slurping them voraciously, flinging bits of vegetable onto the floor and sending the entire car into an olfactory nightmare reminiscent of the infamous garbage strike of summer 2009. If you eat anything on the TTC other than a granola bar or carrot sticks discreetly drawn from a Ziploc bag, you are a menace who should be slapped. I don't care if you're rushing to work—this is public transit. Nobody wants to watch you eat a meal.

9. Heedless Leg Positioners

Perhaps you were raised by wolves on the frozen tundra and were never informed that putting your filthy feet up on seats intended for the rears of your fellow riders betrays a ghastly lack of manners. So we're telling you now: Putting your filthy feet up on seats intended for the rears of your fellow

riders betrays a ghastly lack of manners. Ditto for stretching your legs out into the aisles or crossing your legs and then dozing off so passengers have to step over and around you. This is not a game of Twister.


10. Litter Bugs

In 2013, does anyone really need to be reminded to *not* leave their empty coffee cups and juice bottles rolling around on the seats and floors of transit vehicles? Evidently, yes, so here goes: See those bin-like things situated every 10 feet throughout the city and at TTC stations? They're called "garbage and recycling receptacles" and they're—wait for it—intended to collect garbage and recycling. Crazy coincidence, huh? Also, gum-chewers who spit their used wads of Juicy Fruit onto platforms and sidewalks should be fined Singapore-style and forced to clean it up on their hands and knees using a butter knife. Ah well... a girl can dream.

Are there any other annoying TTC behaviours that tick you off? Share them in the comments section below.

TAGS *buses, Commuting, Etiquette, Subways, TTC*

post a comment 

Latest 

Steve

What about nail clipping??? WTF is that about? Do you not have a bathroom? You disgusting PIG... that is soooo nasty. You're clipping your nails in public sending clippings flying with your germs, then brushing off the clippings from your lap.... makes me want to vomit .

 2  0

10:32 am on May 4, 2014

 Reply  Report

At the same time...

Even though riding the TTC buses in Scarborough sucks, it can make you laugh at times or at the very least, remind you how stupid/weird some people are. You'd see a girl with a Michael Kors handbag getting off the bus to go work at her job at McDonalds. You'd see a high school guy in September with a empty, brand new backpack and the same guy in June with STILL the same empty brand new backpack. You'd see future cast members for 'Teen Mom' which airs on MTV standing in

front of various projects throughout Scarborough ready to board the bus. You'd see Phillipino girls bust out their skirts AS SOON AS the temperature is 0 degree celsius or when snow STARTS to melt. You've got people riding the bus with really no purpose except to go to their friends house and smoke a joint. So yeah, you get to meet people that you'd never see, say you lived in an area like Rosedale.

 0  0

2:45 pm on April 20, 2014

 Reply  Report

Get me out of here

Have you tried riding the TTC buses in Scarborough? You got barely 18 year old girls blocking the front of the bus with giant strollers holding 2 or 3 kids. I swear the TTC should roll out buses to cater just to these type of people. Secondly, you got high schoolers and people in their 20s and 30s who still have that high school mentality, who think segregation still exists and therefore make it a mission to ride in the back of the bus, usually taking up as much seats as possible. Then you got people who lack personal hygiene sprinkled throughout the bus. But the worst is that person who boards the bus and doesn't have enough for the fare and all you here is "I aint payin no mother fu###in extra 25 cent up in this bit#h son!" At this point, the bus isn't moving anywhere until the bus driver realizes he's talking to a retard. And off the bus goes...now late and still miserable as ever. Take the TTC buses in Scarborough....you owe it to yourself. It's an experience you'd want to forget. Sort of like having to take a shit badly and a TTC washroom is the only nearest facility available.

 1  0

2:27 pm on April 20, 2014

 Reply  Report

and u know it

Anonymous your a dumbass.

 0  0

2:37 pm on April 6, 2014

 Reply  Report

mike

What a cry baby. Buy a car then omg find something worth blogging about using words like "scum" i mean come on nobody if forcing you to get on the train but the funny thing is im more than sure your not ttics favorite customer so suck it up!

 1  1

10:51 am on April 6, 2014

 Reply  Report

C.Sanchez

I disagree with the Eaters part . If they are being discreet as possible why is it a big deal? Some people work long days doing physical jobs , u never know. Another thing being complained about that shouldn't be a big deal is people putting on makeup. How the hell is that an "annoying" behaviour? Nothing wrong with it.

The most annoying thing for me, however are the loud talkers especially those in groups. HOW do they not realize how obnoxious they are? Especially when there is giggling and shrieking involved. Guranteed if they are teens/early twenties. Also super annoying are the princessy young girls that think their bag deserves a seat and believe theyre too good to share space with anyone else.

 1  1

5:53 pm on March 30, 2014

 Reply  Report

Moi

My pet peeve are WOMEN and sexually ambiguous men who sit sideways on forward facing subway seats. What the fuck?

 0  2

5:04 pm on March 21, 2014

 Reply  Report

Nick

I will almost guarantee that I have a longer and more excruciating commute than almost all of you. I have so far been taking the subway the last four years of high school and it sucks. Car is the simpler, comfier and more efficient way of travelling (*I know its worse for the environment). Although this is mostly due to cramped space and ungrateful passengers. When you're forty and think you deserve a seat for the next five stops, you don't. When there is a free spot use your words don't ram. And most importantly if you wish to exit a busy train make room for other passengers. These things have become pet peeves of mine and frustrate me endlessly. If we where all more considerate of each other it would be an easier trip for all.

PS: I will eat my food if I want. Try coming home going on an hour and a half commute on an empty stomach after school and a basketball practice, in winter.

 5  2

9:26 pm on February 6, 2014

 Reply  Report

Anonymous

Those who are AGAINST the author of this column are

ILL MANNERED
INCONSIDERATE
UNDISCIPLINED

Trinity Spadina Dave

 6  5

4:04 pm on January 6, 2014

 Reply  Report

Veteran TTC Rider

I find this article to be preachy and much like a litany of do-this and don't-do-that orders. The author sounds like my nagging mother. However, can I blame the author? Not at all. I think the author realizes that most of the culprits highlighted in her article are those of the younger age. Nagging may just be effective in instilling in them proper behavior in the TTC. I know it was effective for me granted no one will ask how long I took to finally listen to my parents. The bottom line is that if you choose to use TTC as your main mode of transportation, make sure to pack lots of patience. People aren't normally malicious. They are more than able to change. Don't be afraid to speak up when you see a friend or someone exhibiting the above-discussed behaviours or better yet, model the right subway behaviours. We can all achieve the "better way" and we can achieve that without being or sounding like a tyrant.

 2  7

11:56 pm on January 5, 2014

 Reply  Report

Anonymous

you are absolutely incorrect.

The outside sitting, doorway standing, front end clumping seat hogs are ALMOST always older people. Because they hope their odds are in favour that younger people won't be so "rude" as to ask them to move.

 7  0

8:12 am on January 6, 2014

 Report

Anonymous

@Veteran TTC Rider who said

“They are more than able to change. Don’t be afraid to speak up when you see a friend or someone exhibiting the above-discussed behaviours or better yet, model the right subway behaviours”

one risks getting punched in the face if one dares tell someone to TAKE HIS DIRTY FEET OFF THE SEAT

or at least be told off in foul language

 2  0

3:38 pm on January 6, 2014

 Report

TIM DEVLIN

It used to be called upbringing but now its a total downer. Sadly the people in the article and the children of those who don’t know any better and so never taught their kids any manners. I see mother’s in Loblaw’s with all its seating for food lovers and fabulous glass show cases...mother’s and fathers say nothing when kids with Slush Soaked boots stand on the seats, wipe their hand and even lick the glass show cases that someone will have to polish again. I even see women who are daycare workers who sit and drink coffee while kids climb all over everything and at times climb up glass shelves but are ignored by those suppose to be teaching them ... the blind leading the blind...

 6  0

12:51 pm on January 5, 2014

 Reply  Report

GLB

You briefly mentioned leg-crossers who doze off. Even worse are people (often women) who cross their legs in a crowded subway car while conscious. Such people imagine that a person sitting down has an inalienable right to cross their legs, leaving a dirty shoe dangling out in the aisle where passengers are standing.

 3  0

11:04 am on January 5, 2014

 Reply  Report

Anonymous A

Great article. It covers most terrible commuters but I have a few more comments and additional awful rider types to add:

4. Seat Hogs – ADDENDUM

What do you do when an elderly person, disabled or pregnant woman walks on a busy train, bus or streetcar? You get up and offer the seat. It is up the them to refuse it, but the point is, be courteous and get up.

It amazes me to see the lack of basic respect and common courtesy from riders who keep their butts firmly on their seats after noticing (or pretending not to notice) an elderly person, disabled person or a mamma-to-be who may need temporary sitting comfort more than you do. You may have had a long day at work, but let me tell you their daily lives are guaranteed 10 times harder.

11. Public Displayers of Hygiene

Many a time I have been on the bus, streetcar or subway train to find to my complete surprise and utter disgust of people whipping out nail clippers and shamelessly snipping away, letting their dirty clippings fly freely. This title also applies to riders (typically women) who apply their complete make-up faces on in public, from tweezing to moisturizing, right down to the finishing touch of mascara. No one needs to see this except your own reflection in the privacy of your own home.

12. Entry/Exit Pushers

This one applies to all of those who passive aggressively push their way in and out. You're on the subway train, waiting to get off at St. George. The train stops, the doors open but you can't walk out straight-left-or right. Why? Because the waiting pushers are blocking your exit-way and already trying to push their ways into a flock of people. These people need to learn to stand to the side of the doors, wait for people to exit, then board the train. It's common sense, yet it pushers attempt the same stupidity everyday then get offended if they in turn get pushed out of the way.

14. Stroller Complainers

A few months ago, a common passenger who automatically qualifies as a terrible commuter due to her ridiculous complaint, caused a huge rift amongst TTC riders in relation to people with strollers on public transport. She proposed that extra fare be charged to passengers who carry strollers on to public transit because strollers take up too much space, and ultimately slow down a bus commute, as the bus lowers itself first for stroller convenience, then raises itself up afterwards to continue on the route.

Imposing a ridiculous extra charge fee to these parents, families, babysitters, nannies, etc is insanity. We might as well charge any senior who uses a mobility device like a cane or walker, or a disabled person for using a wheelchair and I don't see that proposal being popular. Can you imagine how hard it is for them to have to endure people's scathing eyes and thoughts like this idiot commuter, in order to make what should be a simple trip to the grocery store? Yes they take up more space, but get over it and walk around the stroller.

 11  6

1:48 pm on January 4, 2014

 Reply  Report

Trouser Snake

So good to be taking my car and not having to deal with the BS blue collar public transit. Especially nice not having to listen to the verbal diarrhea from whiners like the author of this useless article.

This is a reminder to all young people to study and work hard so you can afford a car. Remember that public transit is for transients.

 6  39

11:38 am on January 4, 2014

 Reply  Report

bet

Yes, instead you get the high-falutin privilege of dealing with bad drivers, reckless cyclists and pedestrians, bad weather, bad lighting conditions, suburban butt expansion, not to mention gas station scammers, squeegee kids, creepy parking garages, and escaped mental inmates hiding in the backseat of your car with a machete.

 13  2

6:51 pm on January 4, 2014

 Report

Gladys

I don't know where you get the idea that the masses of unwashed blue color workers are the clientele for the TTC. Try going down to the financial district from 6 to 8 a.m. you will see the mighty white color workers carrying their gucci briefcases and Michael Kors purses. Do you think they pay to drive their cars into the core and then park them. No way. There are 100 hundred thousand students in Toronto and at least 20 thousand of them go to school on the TTC. Parents working in the core, in white color jobs travel with their kids to get to daycare. So in conclusion the TTC serves a diverse population of four million people.

 11  0

8:24 am on January 5, 2014

 Report

Christine

You're RUDE. You probably drive a car because you don't have enough social skills to ride public transit. Not everyone who takes the ttc does it because they don't have an education or are unable to afford a car. Some people HAVE cars and take transit as a CHOICE. Some commuters do it to help the environment, or to avoid sharing the road with assholes such as yourself.

You should be embarrassed, with that nasty attitude you have. Everyone on the ttc will have a better day just because YOU are not on it.

Fuck you, dude.

 10  0

12:58 pm on January 5, 2014

 Report

Trowse Snake

Although I'm not a fan of public transit, I will say that I can appreciate it for what it is: an intricate and complex sewage system that doesn't work. While it might be carrying the city's excrement, it doesn't do anything to dispose of it. Talk about throwing money down the toilet.

 1  11

2:38 pm on January 5, 2014

 Report

lucas

Seriously? probably about the single most smug comment I've read in years.

I make a pretty good penny, I studied hard....I even own A CAR...but I still take public transit to work...becasue unlike you, the world wasn't put here to service me, its the other way around... I am here to contribute the world in a positive way...

I help by removing myself from gridlock, making YOUR LIFE better on the roads. I help by essentially participating in a giant car-pool, using much smaller amounts of fosil fuels.... and finally, I say the 10-\$15 day on parking... i.e. not having to park.

Thanks but no thanks... I'm not selfish enough to think that public transit is only for transients.

...but you help drive the point home the author brought up about people who were raised with no manners... you should be ashamed.

 7  0

1:39 pm on January 6, 2014

 Report

Trouser Snake

I am not rude or smug and my manners are just fine. I am just of the opinion that the TTC is not the better way but the bitter way. Buses and subways pack everyone in like cattle, carrying so many disgusting sweat hogs that you have to take a shower every time you take TTC...and use steel wool just to scrub off the dirt. I don't blame TTC employees for the way they act because frankly, I probably would be just as rude if I had to deal with that type of vermin day in and day out. People talk about the lack of human decency on public transit but the reality is human decency applies to humans, not to the filthy trash that use the service. All bus terminals should end at the city dump because that's where the users belong.

 0  9

3:22 pm on January 6, 2014

 Report

Mongoose

You are rude and smug. Just listen to yourself. You think you are better than everyone else.

Who are you to call others "filthy trash"? You think you're an authority on human decency?

Nothing you have written is decent. Your words demonstrate your own lack of humanity. I feel

sorry for you. Trouser Snake is the perfect name for you. It describes a slithering little dick. Funnier still, you named yourself that. Probably because you hate yourself as much as those who know you do. You don't take the TTC so you aren't entitled to an opinion on the matter. Loser!

 2  0

8:01 pm on January 24, 2014

 Report

Outsider

I am an infrequent TTC user but unfortunately have run into most types described in the article. Toronto is full with troglodytes! Where do these people come from?

Unfortunately inconsiderate behaviour has been spreading to the sidewalks, too. I could compile a top 10 sidewalk sins but don't want to get off topic.

The TTC had a tongue-in-cheek video about a private car service a few months ago that hopefully had some educational impact. It shows lack of class as a society if we have to conduct basic public campaigns such as this but I guess our options are limited if parents do not teach kids how to ride transit or behave generally.

How we can claim to be a world class city with so many hicks in this town I am not sure.

 11  0

8:55 pm on January 3, 2014

 Reply  Report

Red Herring

Yes, Toronto has plenty of troglodytes but many supposedly world class cities like Paris and London have are full of them too.

I have seen cities practically without them—Stockholm and Zurich. Toronto is just in the middle of the pack.

 2  2

11:25 am on January 5, 2014

 Report

bobbyjofrances

In the past I have considered making up stickers or cards to hand people when they are badly behaved on the TTC. Perhaps that would be a solution: we all get stickers with each of the named offences (pictorial stickers with feet on seats and grubby shoes/eating food with a big X through it – you get the idea) and then paste them onto the backpack, the back of the coat, the bag or just hand them to the offender so that they are aware that their behaviour is offensive. I can imagine that some offenders might get off a streetcar or subway covered in stickers. Who knows we may end up with a sticker or two ourselves given that we all at some stage do something offensive on the TTC. I recognise that I am at times a two-seater but will try not to do that in future.

 6  0

8:45 pm on January 3, 2014

 Reply  Report

Anon

Be careful when you do that because someone may punch you in the face these days. Too much hostility out there.

 0  0

5:24 pm on March 11, 2014

 Report

