

Travel to Ireland by Ferry: Routes, Costs & Booking Guide

UK to Ireland Ferry Routes

Holyhead ↔ Dublin

- **Operators:** Stena Line, Irish Ferries
- **Frequency:** Up to 4 sailings daily
- **Duration:** 2 h 15–3 h 25 depending on vessel (e.g., Dublin Swift is fastest)
- **Example Prices:** Starting ~£25–£40 (about €30–€45) one-way for foot passengers; vehicles cost more.
- **Onboard Facilities:** Dining, lounges, shopping, kids play zones, cabins available.
- **Additional Option:** Rail + Sea (Sail Rail tickets) from London and major UK stations, starting from £46.10 (~€60) return to Dublin. Includes train and ferry ticket.

Fishguard ↔ Rosslare

- **Operator:** Stena Line
- **Journey Time:** ~3 h 30 min
- **Frequency:** ~once daily
- **Approx Cost:** £40–£60 one-way per foot passenger, cars extra

Liverpool/Birkenhead ↔ Belfast

- **Operators:** Stena Line, P&O Ferries
- **Journey Duration:** ~8 hours
- **Frequency:** ~1 crossing per day (up to 2)
- **Lowest Fares:** ~£38–£50 for foot passengers; vehicles additional

Pembroke ↔ Rosslare

- **Operator:** Irish Ferries
- **Duration:** ~4 hours
- **Frequency:** Up to 2 sailings/day
- **Prices:** From €47–48 per person (economy class)

France → Ireland Ferry Routes

Cherbourg ↔ Dublin

- **Operators:** Irish Ferries (and sometimes Brittany Ferries/Stena Line)
- **Journey Time:** ~18–19 hours
- **Frequency:** 4–6 crossings weekly

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- **Prices:** From €156–€203 or more for a standard deck seat; cabins cost extra (higher peak season fares).

Cherbourg ↔ Rosslare

- **Operators:** Brittany Ferries, Stena Line
- **Duration:** ~18 hours 30 min
- **Frequency:** Up to 5 times weekly
- **Price Range:** From €87–€156 one-way

Roscoff ↔ Cork

- **Operator:** Brittany Ferries
- **Duration:** ~13–14 hours (shortest sea route)
- **Frequency:** Up to 2–3 sailings per week
- **Lowest Prices:** From €72–€140 (no cabin); cabins ~€150+

Route	Time	Frequency	Approx Cost (One Way, Foot)	Notes
Holyhead–Dublin	2 h 15–3 h 25	3–4 times/day	£25–£45	Fastest UK–Ireland sea crossing; city-to-city convenience
Fishguard–Rosslare	~3 h 30	Daily (≈1)	£40–£60	Suitable alternative when Holyhead is disrupted
Liverpool–Belfast	~8 h	Daily (≈1)	£38–£50	Often used for northern routes; scenic option
Pembroke–Rosslare	~4 h	Up to 2/day	€48 (bus/ferry style)	Affordable entry point to SE Ireland
Cherbourg–Dublin	18–19 h	4–6×/week	€150–€203	Direct mainland France–Dublin option
Cherbourg–Rosslare	~18 h 30	Up to 5×/week	€87–€156	Preferable if heading to southeast Ireland
Roscoff–Cork	13–14 h	2–3×/week	€72–€150+	Ideal for southern Ireland destinations

Practical Tips

- **Advanced booking** recommended for best fares and cabin promotions.
- **"Kids Go Free" offer** via Stena on UK-Ireland routes until Jan 2026—requires code at booking.
- All operators offer passenger and vehicle sailings; most allow pets and luggage.
- **Sail Rail (UK train + ferry)** provides seamless end-to-end tickets for UK travellers.
- Ferries offer amenities: restaurant/cafes, lounges, duty-free shopping, entertainment, cabins, Wi-Fi

Summary

- **Quickest UK–Ireland:** Holyhead–Dublin (2¼–3¼ h).
- **Cheapest foot-travel route from UK:** Liverpool–Belfast or Folkestone options via Sail Rail from ~£46 return.
- **Most direct from France:** Cherbourg–Dublin (~19 h) or Roscoff–Cork (~14 h).

Getting to Holyhead from London (for crossing)

By Train: London Euston → Holyhead

- Operator: **Avanti West Coast / TfW**
- Duration: ~3h 44m (fastest); most trains around ~3 h 55 min
- Frequency: ~15 trains per day

Ticket Costs (Advance fare):

- Starting from **£28–55** (~\$45 / €45) one way

Options & Tips:

- **Railcard friendly**—saves ~1/3 off
- **Split-ticketing** can reduce fares by ~30%

Alternate Route: London Paddington → Holyhead

Summary Table

Route	Duration	Foot Price (€ / £)	Car + Driver (€ / £)
Holyhead → Dublin	2h15–3h30	€40–50 (~£35–45)	€160–200 (~£140–175)
Fishguard → Rosslare	~3h30	~£40–60	~£250–300
Liverpool → Belfast	~8h	~£38–50	~£200+
Pembroke → Rosslare	~4h	~€48	~€150+
Cherbourg → Dublin	~18–19h	€156–203	~€300+
Cherbourg → Rosslare	~18h 30	€87–156	~€250–300
Roscoff → Cork	~13–14h	€72–140	~€200–300+

Practical Tips & Recommendations

- **Best value (UK foot passenger):** Holyhead → Dublin — short, frequent crossings, fares ~€40–50
- **Cheapest rail-ferry package from London:** *Sail Rail ticket* starts from ~£46–60 return, includes train + ferry
- **Getting to Holyhead:** Fastest by train from London Euston (~£28–55) or via split ticketing for savings.
- **Advance booking** is recommended to secure lower fares, cabins, and preferred sailings.
- **Day-trip “booze cruise” deals:** Stena Line occasionally offers promotional return fares around €10–12—these are foot-passenger round trips with a short stopover in Holyhead (not suitable for onward travel)
- **Schedule flexibility:** Book flights, ferries, and trains with flexible cancellation options (Flexi fares) where possible.
- **Vehicle planning:** Car ferry bookings handle vehicles of varied sizes; charges vary by time of day and season.

Final Travel Advice

- **For most convenient, budget-friendly travel** from the UK: Take a train to Holyhead (€40–50).
- **For travel from France:** Roscoff → Cork (14h) or Cherbourg → Dublin (~19h) offer regular sailings—ideal for passengers or vehicles.
- **Sail Rail** packages are excellent for UK delegates who prefer rail routes over airports, blending scenic travel and ease of check-in.

How to Book Ferries Between Holyhead & Dublin

Booking via Operators

1. **Irish Ferries**
Visit the official site for **best fares** and a smooth booking experience:
irishferries.com
2. **Stena Line**
Book directly or explore premium options (e.g. lounges, cabins):
stenaline.co.uk/holyhead-dublin (or .ie) [Direct Ferries](#) [Stena Line+1](#) [Stena Line+1](#)

Booking via Aggregators & Comparison Sites

- **Direct Ferries / a Ferry**
Compare fares across Irish Ferries and Stena Line in one place:
[DirectFerries – Holyhead ↔ Dublin](#) [Stena Line+8](#) [Direct Ferries+8](#) [Direct Ferries+8](#)
[aFerry – Holyhead ↔ Dublin](#) [Direct Ferries+2](#) [aFerry+2](#) [aFerry+2](#)
- **Wanderu**
Compare prices for Stena Line with helpful filters and route guidance:

Booking Tips & Recommendations

- **Book directly** via Irish Ferries or Stena Line—this minimizes risk of booking fees or hidden costs. Reddit users confirm both operator sites are equally reliable.
- **Compare aggregator deals** using DirectFerries, aFerry, or Wanderu to check real-time pricing across operators.
- **Advance bookings** (about 28+ days ahead) often yield better prices. Leveraging platforms like Omio gives insight into fare trends.
- **Look for offers** like Stena Line’s “Kids Go Free” promo (valid until Jan 2026; applies to Economy or Flexi Fare car bookings). Use code “KIDS” at checkout.
- **Sail Rail (train + ferry combos)** from UK stations such as London Euston deliver all-in-one tickets from £46–60 return