

LIVE, WORK & INVEST IN DUBAI · 30 JULY 2026 · 10 MIN READ

Public transport in Dubai: plan the network, not one route

Metro, tram, bus, marine transport and taxis work best as one connected system. The decisive detail is often the last kilometre.

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Dubai's public-transport network includes Metro Red and Green lines, Dubai Tram, buses, marine services and regulated taxis. The nol system supports travel across multiple public modes, while fare calculation depends on zones and the journey made.

Routes, fares and operating times change. Use the RTA website and official apps for current information on the day of travel, especially around public holidays, major events or network works.

Key facts

INTEGRATED TRAVEL

Metro, tram, bus and marine journeys can use nol subject to the product and current fare rules.

FARE BASIS

RTA publishes zone-based fares and transfer conditions.

BEST HOUSING TEST

Measure door-to-door time, including the last kilometre in summer conditions.

Understand zones, cards and transfers

RTA divides the network into zones and publishes the fare structure for nol products. Choose the card or ticket type that matches residence, frequency and class of travel. Keep enough balance before entering a paid area and tap correctly at the start and end of the journey.

RTA explains that qualifying transfers between modes within the allowed time can be treated as one journey, subject to its current limits. This can make a bus-to-Metro trip more efficient, but only if the route and timing work in practice.

Design around the last mile

A building described as “near the Metro” may still involve a hot, indirect or unsafe walk. Test the exact door-to-platform journey, including crossings, lifts, station entrances and the return trip after dark. Feeder buses, tram, taxis, cycling and walking can close the gap.

When choosing a home or office, compare total door-to-door time and reliability rather than map distance. Check whether the station or bus stop is accessible for prams, luggage or mobility needs and whether the route remains practical in summer.

Use each mode for its strength

Metro can provide predictable movement along major corridors; the tram serves key neighbourhood connections; buses extend coverage; marine transport can be both functional and location-specific; taxis provide flexible point-to-point travel. The best routine may combine several.

Build alternatives for late-night journeys, service interruptions and areas outside rail coverage. For airport trips, account for luggage, terminal location and operating hours. Regulated taxi and official booking channels reduce uncertainty.

Travel safely and accessibly

Follow designated-cabin, priority-seat, platform and crossing rules. Keep bags clear of doors and avoid blocking movement. RTA publishes accessibility and service information for People of Determination; confirm the relevant station or mode when planning a critical journey.

Save the RTA timetable and fare pages rather than relying on a screenshot that can become outdated. For a recurring commute, test at the actual start and finish times before committing to housing or employment arrangements.

Practical checklist

- Choose the right nol product
- Check current fare and balance
- Test the exact last-mile route
- Save a taxi or alternative route
- Confirm holiday operating times
- Review accessibility for each station

Official sources

SOURCE CHECK Official UAE government references. Links verified 4 August 2026.

1. **RTA nol fares**
2. **RTA public-transport timetable**
3. **RTA public transport**
4. **RTA journey planner**

Online edition: <https://iraaglobal.com/insights/dubai-public-transport/>

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More insight for the decisions ahead.

Keep exploring practical guidance from IRAA Global, or move from reading to a focused conversation with our advisory team.

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Tax-readiness quick check

1. Confirm the responsible legal entity and registration position.
2. Reconcile the accounts, tax adjustments and supporting evidence.
3. Document ownership, review and approval before filing.

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