The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Lifehacks for Moscow: Train Discounts and Batteries

By The Moscow Times

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Travel

What's the cheapest way to travel around Russia?

TMT: Other than hitchhiking and bumming rides — which we don't recommend — the cheapest way is by train. But only once a year.

Russian Railways offers everyone a terrific birthday present. On your birthday or up to seven days before or after you can buy a ticket to anywhere in Russia for half price. This includes tickets on the Sapsan — nothing better than a birthday weekend in St. Petersburg — and both economy- and business-class tickets. The offer doesn't extend to first class or office seats (seats facing each other across a table) on the Sapsan.

You aren't the only one who benefits from the birthday treat. Three friends or relatives of the birthday boy or girl traveling along also get the same 50 percent discount.

The only trick: you have to go to the Russian Railways ticket offices in person to get the discounted tickets. But considering the money you'll save — you can spring for a ride on the metro.

Home

What can I do with all the used batteries rolling around my flat?

TMT: We had a quick look on Pinterest, but it seems battery crafts are few and far between so home upcycling isn't really an option. But fear not, you don't need to pollute Moscow further by throwing them in the municipal garbage.

The government has cottoned on to the need to address this problem and a new initiative with the snappy name "Batteries, surrender!" was launched this year. Just pop to the collection point in Tsaritsyno between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. and hand over your used batteries, which will be recycled and turned into new batteries in the ecological circle of life.

If the south of the city is a bit of a trek, you'll be delighted to hear that over the last couple of years a number of large retailers have agreed to take your old batteries in store. This includes all Moscow branches of IKEA, and some larger Eldorado, Media Markt and Globus stores.

For the hipster eco-warriors among you, why not head to Flacon Design Factory? This arty spot has a vending machine which accepts batteries as currency. Pop in your AA or AAA batteries and be rewarded with goodies like stress-balls or Flacon discount cards.

It is, however, a bit of a pain to brave Moscow traffic when all you have is a couple of exhausted batteries from your toddler's favorite toy. So why not consider getting into the community spirit? Many flats already have an impromptu collection point — think: empty giant water bottle in the hall — where residents can drop off their batteries. Once it's full some kindly soul can schlep to a drop-off point in a beautiful display of social mindfulness. If you don't have one already, just remember to okay it with the stony-faced security lady who oversees your building. You have been warned.

Tsaritsyno directorate: 148 Kashirskoye Shosse, Bldg. 1, Metro Tsaritsyno, ooptuao.ru

Globus: globus.ru/stores/moscow

IKEA: ikea.com/ru

Eldorado: eldorado.ru

Media Markt: mediamarkt.ru

Flacon: 36 Bolshaya Novodmitrovskaya Ulitsa, Bldg. 2, Metro Dmitrovskaya, flacon.ru

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