RAILROAD WOL2

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ON THE COVER: Taking a ride on the Reading (main illustration); details (clockwise): St. Louis today; high speed rail in Japan; Canadian passenger trains in the VIA Rail Canada era. Main cover illustration, Bill Metzger



RIDERS' GUIDES

Visual aids for getting from point A to point B and beyond



RAIL TRANSIT IS AN ESSENTIAL ELEMENT of North America's largest cities. Rail lines have defined how and where cities grow, shape their development, and provide an important alternative to the expensive and often frustrating nature of car-centric travel. While fundamental to residents, a good rail system can also be a real asset to visitors, enhancing the ability to explore the length and breadth of a metro area. Here are six Riders' Guide maps to help you get around.

WEST VIRGINIA, 1949 AND 2019

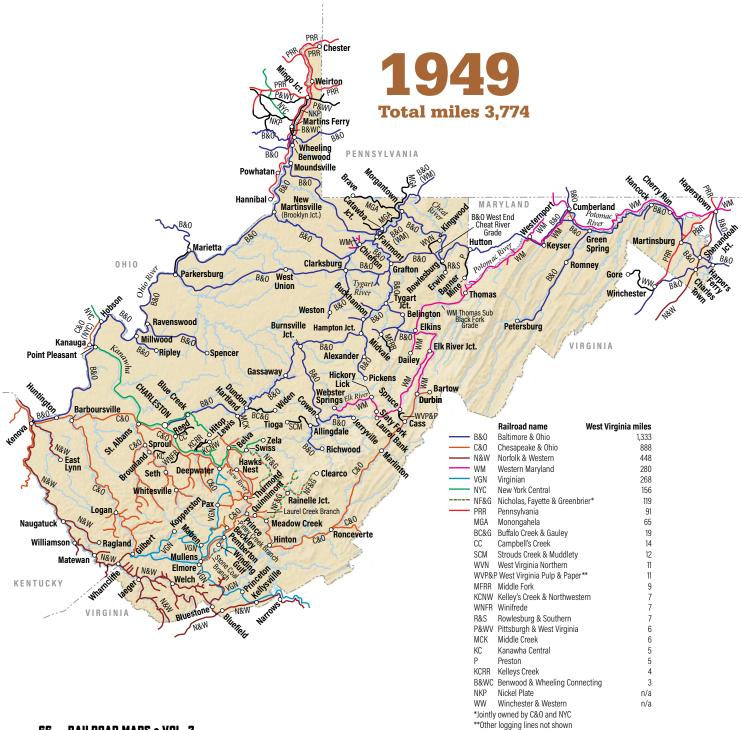
A look at 70 years of change for railroads in the Mountain State

MOUNTAINS AND COAL define West Virginia's railroads. Granted, the Baltimore & Ohio may have only intended to pass through when it first crossed the territory (completing its line from Baltimore to the Ohio River at Wheeling in January 1853, a decade before West Virginia actually became a state), but even before B&O got to Wheeling the railroad was sending trainloads of coal back east to the coast.

By 1949, the B&O had a whole network of coal branches in the northern part of the state, and could boast of operating 35% of

West Virginia's rail mileage, more than any other carrier. Similarly, Chesapeake & Ohio blanketed the lower central part of the state, operating a quarter of West Virginia's rail network, while Norfolk & Western (and to a lesser extent, Virginian) covered the bottom. Each of the big three railroads served different coalproducing regions, with few incursions into another's territory.

Thanks to the state's abundance of railroads, West Virginia coal dominated the U.S. market. In the mid-1940s the state



LAST MILES FOR THE CIRCUS TRAINS

The abbreviated routes of the two Ringling Bros. trains during 2017, their final season

