# ICE 1 interior

First Class on the ICE 1 is in a 1x2 configuration across, with some seats facing each other at a table. Some seats face the opposite direction of travel and cannot be reversed. The seats are very ok, comparable to domestic First Class or Premium Economy. To be honest, second class is the same.

There are three compartments per carriage and one open room per carriage, with one large bathroom each carriage. There are four carriages dedicated to First Class, of which, three have the arrangement I was just talking about (cars 11, 12 and 14, 12 is the quiet car). There is another carriage dedicated to First Class, with open seating, but there is a Second Class compartment (car 9).

Seat reservations are available and are included in all First Class fares. You can pick any available seat that you’d like.

Keep in mind that even though a select number of seats are facing each other having a table, there is a drop – down table at every seat with a seat in front of it (which it probably will, seats face the middle of the carriage). But for the purposes of this review, I’ll say table when there are two or more seats facing each other with a table between them.

In second class, seats are arranged 2x2 with some facing each other at a table. Some seats face the opposite direction of travel and cannot be reversed.

On all ICE trains, there is a food counter. On ICE 1 and ICE 2 trains, there is a restaurant on board with seating areas. Pick any open seat, there are no reservations. Keep in mind that in First Class, you can have your order (food, drink, beer) delivered to your seat.

So, I measured the First Class seat on the ICE 1 and the Second Class seat on the ICE 2. Unfortunately, I could not get pictures as it was a full train on the ICE 2 second class, being around Hannover Messe, but all the measurements are to the accuracy of my measuring tape.

Here’s the table view. All numbers are rounded up.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Amenities | First Class | Second Class |
| Configuration | 1x2 or 2x1 (3 – Abreast) | 2x2 (4 – Abreast) |
| Pitch | 39” | 37” |
| Width | 19.5” | 18” |
| Recline | 5” | 1” |
| Armrest Width | 2.5” | 1.5” |
| Material | Leather in Plastic Shell | Fabric in Plastic Shell |
| Footrest | Yes | Yes |

On ICE 2 and newer trains, there are displays scattered in the cabin with trip details.

So here are my suggestions for anyone who would like to book a seat in **First Class**.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Seats recommended, in descending order | Seats not recommended, in descending order. |
| Travelling solo | * Solo seats * Seat pair | * Compartment (unless it’s empty) |
| Group of 2 (couple, parent and child, etc.) | * A seat facing another seat (two at table, not to be confused with number 2 to the right) * A seat pair (two seats together) | * Compartment (unless it’s empty) * Two seats facing another two seats (four at a table, not to be confused with number 1 to the left). |
| Group of 3 (Both parents and Child, friends, etc.) | * Same row of seats * Two seats facing another two seats (four at a table) and hope the extra stays open | * Compartment (unless it’s empty) * One seat facing another seat (two at a table) |
| Group of 4 (friends, partners, family (ies), etc.) | * Two seats facing another two seats (four at a table) * Two seats behind another two seats | * One seat facing another seat (two at a table) as they are quite a few seats from each other in the carriage |
| Group of 5 or 6 (friends, partners, family (ies), etc.) | Compartment (good for group of 5, best for group of 6, but no one’s going to take the only open seat remaining unless it’s an extreme circumstance) | A seat facing another seat (unless you have 6 people and you can get them on the same line) |

Here are my suggestions for anyone travelling in **Second Class**:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Seats recommended, in descending order | Seats not recommended, in descending order. |
| Travelling solo | Seat pair (well, it’s the only seat you can take) | Compartment (unless it’s empty, not likely to happen) |
| Group of 2 (couple, parent and child, etc.) | A seat pair (two seats together, the only seat you can take) | Compartment (unless it’s empty) |
| Group of 3 (Both parents and Child, friends, etc.) | Two seats facing another two seats (four at a table) or the same row of seats and hope the extra seat stays open, but not likely. It’s your only choice in second class. | * Compartment (unless it’s empty) * You could have 3 seats in the same row and hope the extra stays open, but not likely. |
| Group of 4 (friends, partners, family (ies), etc.) | * Two seats facing another two seats (four at a table) * Two seats behind another two seats | * Compartment (because the two extra seats are likely to be occupied) |
| Group of 5 or 6 (friends, partners, family (ies), etc.) | Compartment (good for group of 5, best for group of 6, but no one’s going to take the only open seat remaining unless every other seat is taken) | Depends on your situation. |

# Boarding

When I arrived at the station, I expected to see a line at a gate area. I expected some ticket – checking procedures and I was prepared for chaos. None of which I encountered.

Boarding is very simple. You can enter a station, walk to the platform, and board a train. On the platforms, there are posters telling you where to go so you don’t have to rush to get on the right car. You could also find it on bahn.com, but I keep forgetting how to do it.

Announcements are done in German and English for long distance trains. They weren’t done for regional trains and S-Bahn.

Finally, be careful of the gap between the train and the platform, though there is a step that is extended when the door opens **on your command.** By that, I mean that you (or someone else) will need to press the green button to open the door. Probably to save energy. There are no barriers between the platform and the track, so be careful.

You can pick any open seat on the train. They have LED screens overhead on the ICE 1 and 2 trains, but they’re on the aisle seat on future ICE trains (and maybe ICE-Ts?). If someone booked the seat, the origin of travel as well as the destination will display on the LED screen. So if you sit in one of those seats, you could be asked to move. There are also many other signs, such as *BAHNCOMFORT,* which means that the seats are reserved for those with the BahnCard (if I remember correctly).

Finally, there are trains where seat reservations will not display, so be prepared to show your ticket. They’ll probably make an announcement though. Last time I was at Hannover HBF, there was an ICE-T that arrived and will go to Berlin Ostbahnhof via Berlin HBF. There were multiple announcements about seat reservations not being displayed on that train.

**Onboard the train, tickets will be checked.** On my train, my ticket was scanned and stamped after we left the station. They’re really good about finding people they haven’t checked. The only time it wasn’t checked was when I took the train from Wolfsburg to Hannover HBF. That was on an ICE 2 train, and the ride was only 30 minutes. I’m guessing it’s because of the short distance. The attendants will help you if you accidentally boarded the wrong train, someone a few rows boarded the wrong trip and the attendant suggested they get off at Berlin – Spandau and take a different train.

## Berlin HBF

For the underground stations, you’ll need to take two sets of escalators to floor -2. There’s also some platforms at level 2 for trains and S – Bahn.

## Wolfsburg HBF

Wolfsburg is simple, just go downstairs to the hallway and walk to the south. Taxis and buses are there.

## Frankfurt Flughafen Fernbahnhof

Upstairs is The Squaire, which will connect you to the airport.

## Hannover Messe/Laatzen

There’s been little coverage about this station, but it’s simple. Upstairs is the waiting area, but there are three sets of platforms. One terminates, the other two go in opposite directions, so if you know where your train is going to, you could accurately guess which two platforms it could stop at. Keep in mind that all long – distance trains (like the ICE and IC, but not counting Flixtrain’s Locomore) don’t stop here unless there’s a major trade show at the fairgrounds.

# Baggage placing

There are racks on certain ICE trains. None of them are on ICE 1s in First Class. So, your rollaboard could be placed on the overhead bins, or you could keep it to your side. I did see someone putting their bag underneath the table at one of those seats facing each other, so you could do that, but the bags could limit leg space.

# Food and Beverage

Everything is for purchase, but you are more than welcome to bring your own. You could eat in the restaurant near the middle of the train, meaning a walk to the middle of the car. On ICE 1 trains, if you’re in car 1, you’ll have to walk all the way to car 8, so that’s more than 7 cars! Oh well, they’ll deliver it to you in First Class (cars 10, 11, 12, 14). On ICE 2 trains, the restaurant is in car 25/35, depending on which section you’re on. So that’s a shorter walk than ICE 1.

# Exiting

Exiting the train is like boarding in reverse order, just get off and leave the station. No need to scan tickets or talk to anyone.