

Dumb ways to die

In 2012, Metro Trains, the company that runs the underground city service in Melbourne, decided to campaign for train safety to avoid people crossing the rails, jumping from platforms or **lacking** attention when using the trains. The campaign started with a song showing some funny cartoon characters doing these things and other dangerous ones, like taking out a toast from a toaster with a fork, doing electrical work unsafely, and so on. It appeared in newspapers, local radio, and outdoor advertising throughout the Metro Trains network; the video can also be watched on YouTube and on Tumblr.

■ The success of the campaign

Dumb ways to Die's video enjoyed a great success on YouTube, as its 2012 **release** reached more than 123 million views. *Dumb ways to Die* was also the most awarded campaign in the history of the Cannes film festival (it won 28 Lions) and a survey stated that over 127 million people said they would be safer around trains thanks to it.



Later, the song became an online game: the *Dumb Ways to Die* game allows users to try and save the cartoon characters from their "dumb deaths", increasing the difficulty as the user keeps playing. Once their three lives have expired, the game is over and can be played again to try and reach a new high score. This game acquired international fame and came to number one in 22 countries including the UK, the US, Canada, and Australia. Today, sequels 2, 3 and 4 of the game are also available online.

■ Why was *Dumb ways to Die* so successful?

The release of the *Dumb Ways to Die* song was carefully planned to have a great impact, exploiting the potentials that each of the media employed to release the campaign could have:

- the song was **catchy**, with lyrics that add humour without forgetting the message behind it. In addition, the music video is entertaining, as it is made with bright, colourful animation;
- the game is really engaging for the players as they have to tap, swipe, and rub the screen to save characters from an easily preventable death or injury in a short span of time.

boom-gate: barriera automatica
catchy: accattivante
edge: bordo

lacking: mancante
platform: binario
release: edizione
track: rotaia

1



Dumb ways to die
posted by Supersun

Watch the video. What are the “dumb ways to die” presented?
Complete the sentences with a word for each gap.

1. to your hair.
2. Eat medicine that's
3. Get your toast out
4. Do your own
5. a 2-.....-old, unrefrigerated pie.
6. your dryer as a hiding
7. a nest of wasps for no
8. on the **edge** of a station **platform**.
9. the **boom-gates** at a level
10. across the **tracks** platforms.

2



For each situation in the previous activity, explain what you can do to prevent it from happening. Use the given words.

wait until gates are open • unplug toaster and use hands • check expiry date • get near flames • call electrician • use underground tunnel • always put food in fridge • play with household appliances • keep at safe distance from railway tracks • be annoying to animals

- | | |
|---|----------|
| 1. You must not <i>get near flames with your body</i> . | 6. |
| 2. | 7. |
| 3. | 8. |
| 4. | 9. |
| 5. | 10. |

3



Imagine you have just had an accident like the ones sang about in the song, but you were safe. Write a Whatsapp message (50-80 words) to one of your friends describing the accident. Choose among the ones listed above.

➤ *Disturb a nest of wasps for no good reason*

Hi! Yesterday I went to my granny's house in the countryside. My brother and I were playing football in the yard before lunch when he kicked the ball right into a nest of wasps that he hadn't seen! Five wasps started flying

towards us and we were terrified! Fortunately, granny opened the door to call us for lunch and we ran inside the house and closed the door behind us! We didn't go out anymore that afternoon!