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## Swiss World Records

*The next time someone asks you what Switzerland could possibly be good at, show off with one of these Swiss world records!*

### The world's longest stairway is in Switzerland

With all those mountains, does it surprise you that the world's longest stairway is located in Switzerland?

Mt. Niesen in the Bernese Alps is often called Switzerland's pyramid. Its triangular shape is so iconic, more than 200 athletes have made it a point to climb its stairs once a year.

The best way to the top is the 'stairway to heaven'. Only 11,674 steps and 1,723 metres separate the bottom from the top. The Guinness Book of World Records lists the Niesen as having the world's longest stairway.

The cruelest thing about this Swiss world record? The Niesen stairway is really intended for maintenance workers. The steps are built right beside the funicular tracks, essentially making the climb by foot pointless.



Climbers during the annual Niesen Stairway Run



© niesenlauf.ch

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Image copyright unknown source.

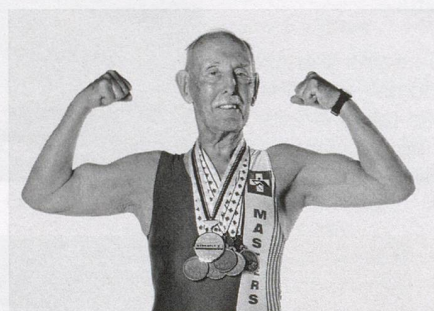
### The largest collection of 'Do Not Disturb' signs is owned by a Swiss

It is no cliché that the Swiss value their privacy. One Bernese accountant values it so much, in fact, that he has collected a staggering 11,111 'Do Not Disturb' signs. It all started in 1985, when Jean-François Vernetti noticed a spelling mistake on a door hanger at a hotel in England.

Thirty years later, this Swiss collector has amassed signs from hotels in 189 countries. On his getaways, Vernetti will often book hotels for just a single night in order to get his hands on a new sign. And with all that loot, . . . staying incognito must be ever more challenging

Image copyright unknown, source. Jean-François Vernetti showcasing part of his collection of 'Do Not Disturb' signs

### The world's fittest senior citizen lives near Zurich



Source: screengrab. youtube.com

Switzerland is far out in front when it comes to the life expectancy of its residents, with an average lifespan of 81 years for men. Meet Dr. Charles Eugster, a retired British dentist and Swiss resident who has long beaten the longevity statistics.

At the ripe old age of 96, Eugster is the world's fittest senior citizen. In 2015, he smashed the 200 metre indoor world record for his age group. Compared to the world's fastest man, Usain Bolt, the

sprint took him only about three times longer: 55.48 seconds (Eugster) vs. 19.55 seconds (Bolt).

To keep in shape, Eugster works out daily. At TEDxZurich, the senior explained that he only started at the age of 80. His regular sports include wakeboarding, rowing, boxing and, of course, running.

### The world's smallest whisky bar



© Smallest Whisky Bar on Earth

The world's smallest whisky bar is located in Santa Maria Val Müstair, pop. 339. This commune is also the easternmost municipality in Switzerland, where the majority of people speak Romansch.

You might well ask what inspired Gunter Sommer to squeeze 200 kinds of whisky into a space of 8.53 square metres. Whatever it was, the owner of Smallest Whisky Bar on Earth recently came under pressure as a British town tried to claim the Guinness Book of World Records title of 'smallest permanently licensed bar'. However, since its bar inside a phone booth did not have a permanent license or regular opening hours, the title remained in Switzerland.

Aficionados will find 200 kinds of whisky at the Smallest Whisky Bar on Earth.

Bonus: The Devil's Place whisky bar in nearby St. Moritz has been recognised by the Guinness Book of World Records for having the largest selection of whisky in the world, with 2,500 different kinds.



© Smallest Whisky Bar on Earth



## Swiss World Records

### Metro Alpin is the world's highest underground railway system



The Metro Alpin funicular waits to take passengers to the top of the Allalinhorn.

Superficially, Switzerland operates just a single underground railway system, in Lausanne. But when you dig deeper, you will find that it also operates the world's highest.

The Metro Alpin is a fully underground funicular in the ski resort of Saas-Fee. Why underground? At a dizzying altitude of 2,980 metres, the Allalinhorn is simply too beautiful to be criss-crossed by funicular tracks. The end station of the Metro Alpin is Mittelallalin at an elevation of 3,456 metres. It can be reached in half an hour from Saas Fee.

And right there lies another world record: Metro Alpin is not only the highest funicular in the world, it also leads to the highest revolving restaurant in the world. The threesixty restaurant provides 360 degree vistas of the Mischabel summits and the iconic Eiger, Mönch and Jungfrau.

### Ueli Steck climbed the north face of the Eiger in record time



Source: screengrab youtube.com

Did you know that 9.99 out of 10 readers will never climb the north face of the Eiger? Do not despair, because Ueli Steck is more than making up for the rest of us.

The 39-year-old Swiss climber has ascended almost every mountain, including all the Alpine peaks above 4,000 metres. Back in 2007, Steck

made worldwide headlines with his speed climbing record of the Eiger north face: 3 hours and 54 minutes. Just for fun, Steck has broken his first record twice already. On 16 November 2015, he speed-climbed the Heckmaier route

in just 2 hours and 22 minutes. In other words, in the time it takes to watch the original Hunger Games film, Steck went down in history with a solo speed climbing record on one of Switzerland's most challenging rock faces.

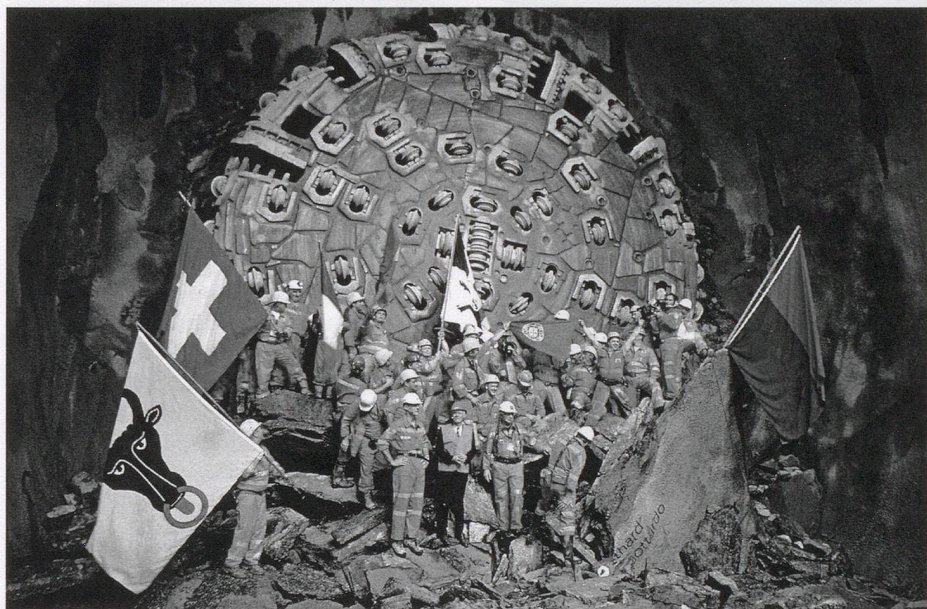
### The Swiss pulled off the biggest alphorn concert in history abroad

In 2015, in conjunction with the EXPO 2015 world fair in Milan, the Swiss Yodeling Association wanted to make a big bang and celebrate the long-lasting peace between Switzerland and Italy. Sparing no effort, the senior members convinced 420 Swiss alphorn players to hop on a train to Milan – and bring their alphorns along. Once set up on the square in front of the cathedral, the sound of these 420 wind instruments blew the audience away. Most importantly, the concert earned the Swiss a place in the Guinness Book of World Records. Staying incognito must be ever more challenging.



Photo source www.houseofswitzerland.org

### Switzerland boasts the world's longest rail tunnel



gottardo.2016.ch

When the new Gotthard rail tunnel opened on 1 June 2016, Switzerland was all over the news. At 57 km in length, the tunnel is the longest of its kind in the world.

The Gotthard project took 17 years, up to 700 employees worked on the project at the same time and 28.2 million tonnes of rock were displaced from the initial blast to completion.

<http://www.houseofswitzerland.org/swissstories/society/8-swiss-world-records-bragging-rights>

Wikipedia tells us that it is also the first flat route through the Alps of any other major mountain range, with a maximum height of 549 metres above sea level. It is the deepest railway tunnel in the world, with a maximum depth of approximately 2,300 metres comparable to that of the deepest mines on Earth. Without ventilation, the temperature inside the mountain reaches 46°C (115°F) The total projected cost of the project was 9.8 billion Swiss francs, but the final cost exceeded 12 billion.