



The coach driver's checklist

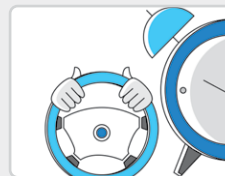
As a coach driver, you need to drive in a highly responsible manner at all times and show your professionalism by anticipating and forgiving the unsafe behaviour of other road users. Your professionalism can help save lives and improve the image of your profession.

Are you prepared?

Your life and the life of others depend on your alertness and reactions in an emergency



Professional driving is very demanding, so you need to stay fit, physically and mentally. **Eating healthily, drinking plenty of water and exercising regularly** will help you to feel better, work more effectively and live longer.



Respect the legal requirements related to driving and rest times. Non-compliance or tampering with the tachograph is illegal and unsafe. Use your rest hours to rest.



Adjust your seat so you are sitting as comfortably as possible, with all controls within easy reach. Ensure your head is positioned to benefit from the head restraint in case of an accident. Make sure you sit well back in the seat to avoid straining your back.



Don't drink alcohol before or during driving or take any kind of drugs or medications which may impair your driving skills. Avoid heavy meals before or during driving, as they may make you feel drowsy.

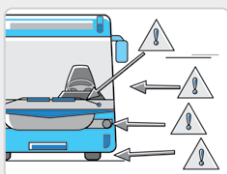


Use your seatbelt and check that your co-driver and/or tour guide are wearing theirs.



Stop driving if you feel drowsy. Get out of your vehicle, stretch your legs, get some fresh air and the necessary rest.

...and is everything else ready?



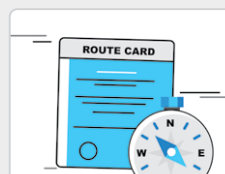
Is everything in good working order? Have you checked the brakes, tyres (pressure and tread depth), coolant and oil? What about the mirrors, windows (can you see clearly?), windscreen wipers, lights, indicators? How about special equipment like extinguishers and snow chains? Is there any visible damage? Is the vehicle clean?



Do you have all the right documents? Have you inserted the tachograph disk/card? Do you have the legally required disks on board? Do your passengers have the appropriate travel documents? How many passengers do you have on board? A passenger list may not be required by law, but could save precious time in the event of an accident.

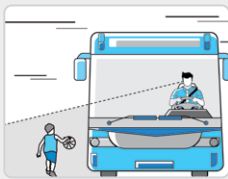


Are your passengers all seated properly, with seat belts fastened? Do they know where emergency equipment and exits are located? Are the exits freely accessible? Is their baggage evenly distributed and properly secured? Make sure there is no luggage obstructing the aisle.

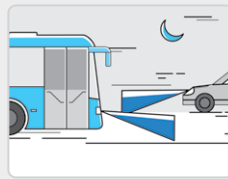


Check your route. Does it include any bridges or tunnels, where your vehicle might have a problem because of dimensions or weight? Try to make the best use of motorways and avoid residential areas wherever possible. Have you planned your trip so you can take the required breaks at the right time? Have you checked the weather forecast?

Take extra care on the road



Remember that you can't see smaller road users in your blind spots (cars, motorcyclists, cyclists, pedestrians). Pay particular attention when turning, reversing and when driving on a different side of the road from the one you are used to.



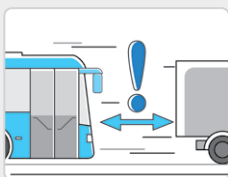
At night, dip your headlights in good time when traffic approaches from the opposite direction. Are your headlights correctly adjusted? Make sure your lights and reflectors are clean so that your vehicle is visible.



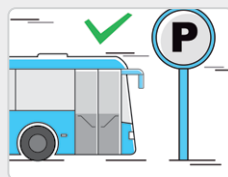
Don't overtake unless you are sure that you have enough room and will not force other vehicles to slow down.



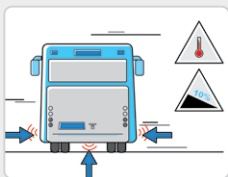
Adapt your driving to weather conditions. When roads are slippery with rain, mud, ice or snow (remember your chains!), reduce your speed – the same goes for driving in fog, rain or in twilight, and in tunnels.



Keep a safe distance from the vehicle in front of you – in any case, at least the minimum legal distance. Don't forget that the faster your drive, the greater the separation you need and that safe distances increase when driving in rain, mud, ice and snow, as well as in tunnels.



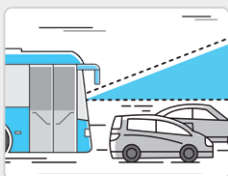
Park only where permitted. Take care not to obstruct traffic or the vision of other road users and avoid residential areas. Make sure the vehicle cannot move when unattended. **Don't leave your engine running unnecessarily.**



Stop if your engine, brakes or retarder become overheated. Don't set off until you are sure that there is no further risk of overheating or failure



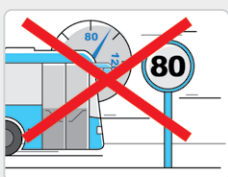
Use secure parking areas wherever possible. Don't park in isolated, unlit places, especially at night. Don't tell strangers about your passengers or itinerary. Do inspect your vehicle for signs of unauthorised entry or tampering before resuming your journey.



Try to anticipate problems. Avoid sudden braking and acceleration, which may be dangerous to other road users, cause discomfort to passengers, waste fuel and generate extra pollution.



It is illegal to use a handheld mobile phone while driving. If you need to talk on the move, get a proper handsfree system installed.



Respect speed limits and other traffic regulations at all times. Don't adopt the bad habits of other road users. Driving safely protects your life, the lives of others and your job.



After the trip, report to your company any issues with your vehicle, the routes you used, or the places you visited, so that any necessary repairs or adjustments can be made before the next trip.



In the event of a breakdown, accident or other major incident, inform your base and/or the local emergency services immediately. Programme emergency numbers into your mobile phone.

This checklist is provided to you by the **IRU Academy**, the training arm of the **International Road Transport Union (IRU)**.

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