

# **Minibus Aide Memoire For Schools**



# Introduction

This minibus aide memoire has been produced to give useful information, including section 19 permits, best practice whilst driving, first aid guidance, and to help ensure that vehicle checks and procedures are carried out correctly.

Good daily walkaround checks are one of the main foundations of successful planned preventative maintenance, and this Aid Memoire should be used as a guide to ensure that checks are carried out correctly.

A large, light blue watermark logo for Woking Community Transport (WCT) is centered on the page. It features the letters 'WCT' in a bold, sans-serif font, with 'WOKING COMMUNITY TRANSPORT' written in a smaller, curved font around the bottom of a yellow circular background.

## Further information can be found at:

- The Community Transport Association (CTA)
- The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA)
- The Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (VOSA)

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# DRIVERS' CHECKSHEET/DEFECT REPORT

Driver's Name:	Date:
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Fleet/serial No.	Odometer reading:
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<b>Daily or shift check (tick or cross)</b>			
Fuel/oil/leaks	Wipers	Fuel level	
Battery	Washers	Steering	
Tyres and wheel fixing	Horn	Heating/ventilation	
Brakes	Mirrors and glass	Body interior	
Doors and exits	Reflectors	Excessive engine exhaust smoke	
Lights and indicators	Body exterior	Seats and seatbelts	
Fire extinguisher	First-Aid kit and spillage kit	Emergency exit equipment	
	Cleanliness of vehicle	Passenger lift	

REPORT DEFECTS HERE	RECTIFIED
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Write NIL here if no defects found	Driver's signature
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Defects rectified by.....

Signature.....Date.....



# Drivers Walkaround Checks

## BATTERY

Check that:

- Battery is held securely in place by the correct means, not by its cables; and
- Battery is not leaking and caps are fitted.

## LIGHTS AND INDICATORS

Check that:

- all lights and indicators work correctly in all modes of operation (including “hazard”);
- all lenses are present, not dirty and are of the correct colour;
- stop lamps come on when the service brake is applied and go out when released;
- marker lights warning lamps work correctly (e.g. the abs warning lamp, full headlamp warning lamp, parking brake warning lamp, etc).

## REFLECTORS

Check that the reflectors are not:

- obscured;
- missing;
- broken; or
- of the wrong colour.

## BODY EXTERIOR

Check that:

- body panels, access doors don't have jagged edges or are insecure; and
- no other damage to the vehicle.

## **TYRE AND WHEEL FIXING**

Check as much of each tyre or wheel as you can see.

There must be:

- minimum tread depth of 1mm;
- sufficient inflation of each tyre;
- no deep cuts in the sidewall;
- no cord visible anywhere on the tyre; and
- no missing or insecure wheel-nuts.

## **FUEL, OIL LEAKS**

With engine on, check:

- underneath vehicle for any leaks of fuel or oil;
- that fuel filler cap is properly secured; and
- that there is no other leaking which would cause danger to other road users.
- when checking for leaks under the vehicle, look at the chassis to ensure that there is nothing insecure or heavily worn, corroded or cracked.
- Fill tank if below half.

If leaks are detected that aren't fuel or oil, trace the cause (i.e. power steering fluid, water, washer).

## **BODY INTERIOR**

Check that:

- no exits are obstructed;
- nothing that a passenger may walk on in normal use will collapse or is defective or insecure;
- retractable steps work correctly;
- seats are all secure, undamaged;
- luggage pens, grab rails, guard rails and barriers are all in place and are secure;
- interior lights are all present and working;
- wheelchair lifts/ramps are working correctly; and
- ancillary equipment is not in a condition likely to endanger passengers.

## **FIRE EXTINGUISHER**

Check that:

- the fire extinguisher is of the correct type (must contain water or foam), and;
- the fire extinguisher is easily accessible; and
- the fire extinguisher is in good condition and is not discharged.

## **EMERGENCY EXIT HAMMER**

Check that

- the hammer is present and readily accessible.

## **FIRST AID KIT**

Check that:

- the first aid kit is present;
- the first aid kit is in good condition; and
- the first aid kit is easily accessible

## **DOORS AND EXITS**

Check that:

- doors/emergency exits are fully operational, secure when shut and can be opened to their fullest extent; and
- emergency exit markings are present and clearly visible – lights are operational

## **HORN, AUDIBLE DEVICES**

Check that:

- horn control is easily accessible from driver's seat; and
- horn unit works when control is operated.
- Select reverse gear and check reversing warning noise

## **MIRRORS AND GLASS:**

Check that all mirrors that should be there

- are there;
- are aligned properly; and
- are securely mounted

Check that your view of the road (especially in the driver's side swept area) isn't obscured by:

- damaged glass;
- discoloured glass; or
- obstructions (stickers, etc).

Check that the side windows are not damaged or discoloured in a way that obscures you view to a mirror.

## **BRAKES**

Check that:

- the service brake pedal doesn't have excessive side play or missing, loose or incomplete anti-slip provision; and
- the parking brake works as intended.

## **WINDSCREEN WIPERS AND WASHERS**

Check that:

- wipers move continually when switched on;
- wiper blades are not so deteriorated that they don't clear the screen effectively when used with washers; and
- washers point at the screen and are operational.
- more than half of the ventilation system is operational (when not a forced-air system); and
- de-mister equipment works effectively.

## **STEERING**

- Check steering for excessive play.

## **EXCESSIVE ENGINE EXHAUST SMOKE**

Check that:

- the exhaust doesn't emit excessive amounts of smoke.

## **HEATING/VENTILATION**

Check that:

- any forced-air ventilation systems are effective;
- any ventilators, windows and roof hatches are secure;

## **RADIO CHECK**

Check that:

- The two-way radio is turned on; and
- That it is working correctly (carryout radio communication check with base).

## **SEATS AND SEATBELTS**

- Check that seatbelts operate correctly, and are free from damage.
- Check seats are secure in tracking.

## **VEHICLE CLEANLINESS**

Vehicles should be cleaned regularly (where possible) outside, inside and underneath. This will make it easier to spot defects at scheduled safety inspections and during the daily walkaround checks

## Section 19 permit

### Managing and operating a minibus

It is recommended that prime responsibility for the management, operation and maintenance of a minibus is allocated to a named individual in school.

If you own or use a minibus and your passengers contribute to the cost of their journey in any way, you need a Small Bus Permit, commonly known as a Section 19 permit. In practice, most not for profit minibus owners or users will need a permit.

A permit allows you to carry groups of passengers, such as members of a club or scout group and their helpers or a school transporting children and teachers. It also allows groups such as Age Concern to carry older people - people their group is set up to help.

Permits are issued to organisations that are non-profit-making and concerned with either education, religion, social welfare, recreation or other activities for the benefit of the community.

When operating under a Section 19 permit:

- You may charge your passengers or accept donations
- You may pay your drivers or use volunteers
- You must maintain your minibus in a safe and roadworthy condition - and keep records of checks and servicing.

But you must not:

- Make a profit - but can include depreciation and drivers' wages in working out your costs
- Run bus services for the general public - or advertise trips or excursions to the public. If you want to do this you need a different type of permit, a Section 22 or Community Bus Permit, not covered in this aid memoire.



## **Why do we need a permit?**

Minibus Permits, otherwise known as Section 19 permits or Small Bus.

Permits, enable many schools and other 'not for profit' voluntary and community organisations to operate minibuses legally. By 'minibus' we mean a vehicle with between 9 and 16 passenger seats, in addition to the driver. Your organisation will need a permit if passengers are contributing to the costs of running your minibus in any way. The legal term for this is operating for 'hire and reward'. A permit allows your organisation to operate for hire and reward without the need to go through the process of obtaining a PSV Operator's Licence, as required by commercial bus companies. In practice, most voluntary and community organisations and schools require a permit in order to stay within the law.

### **Hire and reward**

'Hire and reward' is very widely defined and covers much more than simply charging passengers to cover your fuel costs. All of the following would be included within hire and reward:

- When passengers directly pay a charge per person for a journey
- When passengers pay a total charge, e.g. for a holiday or day out which includes a proportion towards the cost of transport
- When the whole cost or any part of the cost of the minibus is taken from funds which include membership subscriptions from passengers
- When an organisation hires a minibus and shares the cost or part of the cost among the passengers
- When passengers make voluntary contributions or donations towards the cost of their trip or the cost of running the minibus
- When passengers do not pay directly to use the vehicle but buy fuel for it.

Hire and reward would include, for example, a group of children or their parents paying £10 each towards the cost of an afternoon's canoeing.

## **Maintaining your minibus in a safe condition**

By applying for a Section 19 permit you are, in effect, agreeing that you will maintain your minibus in a safe condition. Running a minibus is an important and responsible role - the lives of up to 16 passengers depend on it.

Under a permit, your minibus is subject to the same rules on vehicle safety and maintenance as commercial bus and coach companies. This also means that VOSA, the government agency responsible for vehicle safety and MoT tests, can ask to see your maintenance records and can inspect your minibus at the roadside. If serious vehicle defects are found, they can stop the minibus being used to carry passengers until the defects are rectified.

To comply with VOSA's recommendations on vehicle maintenance you must make sure that:

- There is a defect reporting system and that defects are promptly repaired.
- Daily checks are carried out - these will usually be done by the driver doing 'walk around checks' before he/she takes the vehicle out.
- Regular safety checks are carried out - in addition to the servicing specified by the manufacturer. These safety checks, usually done at 10 week intervals, need to be carried out by a garage or a competent person such as a mechanic.
- You keep records of all safety inspections, regular servicing etc. including the use of the minibus



## Driver Licensing

In most circumstances, staff must have a 'D1' entitlement on their driving licence to drive a minibus. Those who passed their driving tests before 1997 will have received this entitlement automatically. However, drivers who passed their tests in or after 1997 have only received category B entitlement (cars and vehicles for up to eight passengers). Similarly, drivers who passed their car driving test outside the UK will not have D1 on their licence. Drivers without D1 can either:

- Pass a D1 (minibus) driving test which is recommended best practice for driving a minibus, or
- D1 'exemption'.
  - The driver must have held a full driving licence (category B) for at least two years
  - They must be at least 21 years old
  - They cannot be compelled to drive a minibus (must be a volunteer). Driving must not be listed in their job description
  - Must not receive extra pay for driving a minibus
  - Can only drive a minibus up to 3.5 tonnes MAM (GVW) for a standard minibus or 4.25 tonnes if it is fitted with a passenger lift or ramp
  - Cannot drive the minibus abroad
  - Cannot tow a trailer behind a minibus

**Failure to hold the correct licence when driving a minibus can invalidate minibus insurance, and lead to the driver receiving a police conviction.**

# Driving

Remember a minibus is much larger than a car and you are responsible for the safety of up to 16 passengers.

## Control of the vehicle

**In normal circumstances;** The safest way to brake is to do so early and lightly. Brake more firmly as you begin to stop. Ease the pressure off just before the vehicle comes to rest to avoid a jerky stop.

**In an emergency;** Brake immediately. Try to avoid braking so harshly that you lock your wheels. Locked wheels can lead to loss of control.

**Skids;** Skidding is usually caused by the driver braking, accelerating or steering too harshly or driving too fast for the road conditions. If skidding occurs, remove the cause by releasing the brake pedal fully or easing off the accelerator. Turn the steering wheel in the direction of the skid. For example, if the rear of the vehicle skids to the right, steer immediately to the right to recover.

## Signals

Signals warn and inform other road users, including pedestrians, of your intended actions. You should always

- give clear signals in plenty of time, having checked it is not misleading to signal at that time
- use them to advise other road users before changing course or direction, stopping or moving off
- cancel them after use
- make sure your signals will not confuse others. If, for instance, you want to stop after a side road, do not signal until you are passing the road. If you signal earlier it may give the impression that you intend to turn into the road. Your brake lights will warn traffic behind you that you are slowing down

- use an arm signal to emphasise or reinforce your signal if necessary. Remember that signalling does not give you priority.

You should also

- watch out for signals given by other road users and proceed only when you are satisfied that it is safe
- be aware that an indicator on another vehicle may not have been cancelled.

## **The Driver and the Environment**

You **MUST NOT** leave a parked vehicle unattended with the engine running or leave a vehicle engine running unnecessarily while that vehicle is stationary on a public road. Generally, if the vehicle is stationary and is likely to remain so for more than a couple of minutes, you should apply the parking brake and switch off the engine to reduce emissions and noise pollution.

Law under the Road Vehicles (Construction & Use) Regulations 1986

### **Vehicle security**

When you leave your vehicle you should

- remove the ignition key and engage the steering lock
- lock the vehicle, even if you only leave it for a few minutes
- close the windows completely

# Speed Limits

Type of vehicle	Built-up areas*	Single carriageways	Dual carriageways	Motorways
<b>Buses, coaches and minibuses</b> (not exceeding 12 metres in overall length) <b>MPH(km/h)</b>	<b>30(48)</b>	<b>50 (80)</b>	<b>60 (96)</b>	<b>70 (112)</b>

The speed limit is the absolute maximum and does not mean it is safe to drive at that speed irrespective of conditions. Driving at speeds too fast for the road and traffic conditions is dangerous.

You should always reduce your speed when:

- the road layout or condition presents hazards, such as bends
- sharing the road with pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders, particularly children, and motorcyclists
- weather conditions make it safer to do so
- driving at night as it is more difficult to see other road users.

**Adapt your driving** to the appropriate type and condition of road you are on. In particular:

- do not treat speed limits as a target. It is often not appropriate or safe to drive at the maximum speed limit
- take the road and traffic conditions into account. Be prepared for unexpected or difficult situations, for example, the road being blocked beyond a blind bend. Be prepared to adjust your speed as a precaution
- where there are junctions, be prepared for road users emerging

- in side roads and country lanes look out for unmarked junctions where nobody has priority
- be prepared to stop at traffic control systems, road works, pedestrian crossings or traffic lights as necessary
- children, are looking the other way, they may step out into the road without seeing you.

**Be considerate.** Be careful of and considerate towards all types of road users, especially those requiring extra care. You should

- try to be understanding if other road users cause problems; they may be inexperienced or not know the area well
- be patient; remember that anyone can make a mistake
- not allow yourself to become agitated or involved if someone is behaving badly on the road. This will only make the situation worse. Pull over, calm down and, when you feel relaxed, continue your journey
- slow down and hold back if a road user pulls out into your path at a junction. Allow them to get clear. Do not over-react by driving too close behind to intimidate them
- do not throw anything out of a vehicle, for example, cigarette ends, cans, paper or carrier bags. This can endanger other road users, particularly motorcyclists and cyclists.

### **First Aid on the Road**

- Any first aid given at the scene of an incident should be looked on only as a temporary measure until the emergency services arrive.

### **Deal with danger**

- Further collisions and fire are the main dangers following a crash. Approach any vehicle involved with care. Switch off all engines and, if possible, warn other traffic. Stop anyone from smoking.



## Get help

- Try to get the assistance of bystanders. Get someone to call the appropriate emergency services on 999 or 112 as soon as possible. They will need to know the exact location of the incident and the number of vehicles involved. Try to give information about the condition of any casualties, e.g. if anyone is having difficulty breathing, is bleeding heavily or does not respond when spoken to.

## Help those involved

- **DO NOT** move casualties still in vehicles unless there is the threat of further danger. **DO NOT** remove a motorcyclist's helmet unless it is essential. Remember the casualty may be suffering from shock. **DO NOT** give them anything to eat or drink. **DO** try to make them warm and as comfortable as you can. Protect them from rain or snow, but avoid unnecessary movement. **DO** give reassurance confidently and try not to leave them alone or let them wander into the path of other traffic.

## Provide emergency care

- Remember the letters D R A B C:  
**D Danger** Check that you are not in danger.

**R Response** Try to get a response by asking questions and gently shaking their shoulders.

**A Airway** If the person is not talking and the airway may be blocked, then place one hand under the chin and lift the chin up and forward. If they are still having difficulty with breathing then gently tilt the head back.

**B Breathing** Normal breathing should be established. Once the airway is open check breathing for up to 10 seconds.

**C Compressions** If they have no signs of life and there is no pulse, then chest compressions should be administered. Place two hands in the centre of the chest and press down hard and fast – 5–6 cm at a rate of 100/minute. You may only

need one hand for a child and shouldn't press down as far. For infants, use two fingers in the middle of the chest when delivering compressions and don't press down too far.

### **Bleeding**

- First, check for anything that may be in the wound, such as glass. Taking care not to press on the object, build up padding on either side of the object. If there's nothing embedded, apply firm pressure over the wound to stem the flow of blood. As soon as practical, fasten a pad to the wound with a bandage or length of cloth. Use the cleanest material available. If a limb is bleeding but not broken, raise it above the level of the heart to reduce the flow of blood. Any restriction of blood circulation for more than a short time could cause long-term injuries.

### **Burns**

- Check the casualty for shock, and if possible, try to cool the burn for at least 10 minutes with plenty of clean, cold water or other non-toxic liquid. Don't try to remove anything that's sticking to the burn.

### **Be prepared**

- Always carry a first aid kit – you might never need it, but it could save a life. Learn first aid – you can get first aid training from a qualified

Sources:

**VOSA – Guide to maintaining Roadworthiness  
The Highway Code  
Community Transport Association (CTA)**