

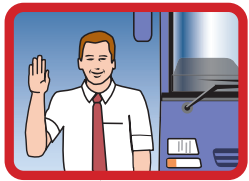
The Coach Driver's Checklist

Professionally driven coaches are involved in fewer road accidents per km travelled than other vehicles. However, when they are involved in a crash, regardless of who is to blame, the results are often more serious on account of their greater weight and larger dimensions. The number of passengers carried may also increase the severity of an accident.

As a coach driver, you need to drive in a highly responsible manner at all times and show your professionalism by anticipating and forgiving stupid or unsafe behaviour by other road users, no matter how annoying. Your behaviour can help save lives, improve the image of your profession and help your industry in opposing increasingly restrictive regulations.

ARE YOU PREPARED?

Your life and the life of other road users depend on your alertness and reactions in an emergency!



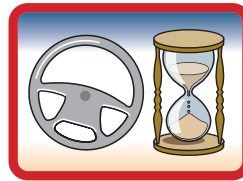
Professional driving is very demanding, so you need to stay fit, physically and mentally. **Eating and drinking healthily and taking regular exercise** will help you to feel better, drive better and live longer!



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.



Use your seat-belt if you have one and don't forget your co-driver and /or tour guide. Going through the wind-screen is not good for you!



Respect the legal requirements related to driving and rest times. Non-compliance or tampering with the tachograph is illegal and implies a lack of respect for human lives – yours and other peoples'. Use your rest hours... to rest!

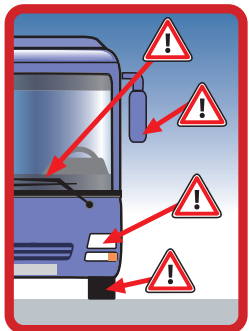


Don't drink alcohol before and during driving or take any kind of drugs or medication which may impair your driving skills. Avoid heavy meals before and during driving, as these may make you feel drowsy.



Don't continue driving if you feel drowsy – STOP! Get out of your vehicle, stretch your legs, get some fresh air and the necessary rest.

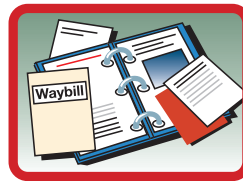
...AND IS EVERYTHING ELSE READY?



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 and is the vehicle clean?



Are your passengers all seated properly, with seatbelts 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.



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 aboard? A passenger list may not be required by law, but could save precious time should an accident happen.

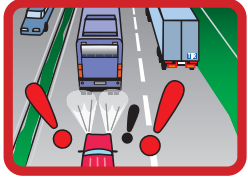


Check your route. Does it include any bridges, tunnels, etc. where your vehicle might have a problem because of dimensions or weight? Try to make best use of motorways and avoid residential areas wherever possible. Have you planned your trip so you can take the required breaks at the right time? Have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

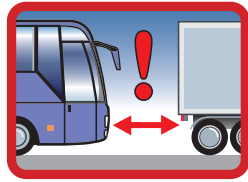
TAKE EXTRA CARE ON THE ROAD



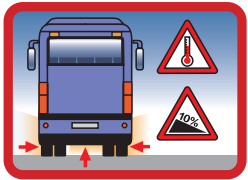
Remember your blind angle prevents you from seeing smaller road users (cars, motorcyclists, cyclists, pedestrians) close to your vehicle. Pay particular attention when turning, reversing and when driving on a different side of the road from the one you are used to.



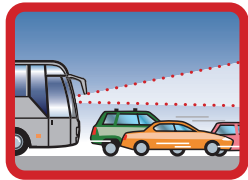
Don't overtake unless you are sure that you have enough room and will not force other vehicles to slow down.



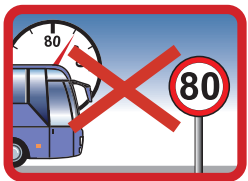
Do keep a safe distance from the vehicle in front of you – in any case, at least the minimum legal distance. Don't forget that, the faster you drive, the greater the separation you need and that safe distances increase with rain, mud, ice and snow, as well as in tunnels.



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



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.



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!



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.



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.



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.



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.**



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.



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



After the trip, report to your company any problems 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.

Show you are a professional – and you will be respected!

The IRU and its Member Associations represent your business. It is their task to obtain the best possible regulatory framework for the road transport industry.

As a professional driver, you are performing a role that is essential for the economy and society. Be proud of your job, be proud of your driving!