

# Minibus Driver Guide

Successful driving is making it a habit to think everything out in advance, the intended outcome being a natural driving style that is safe, smooth, progressive and unobtrusive.



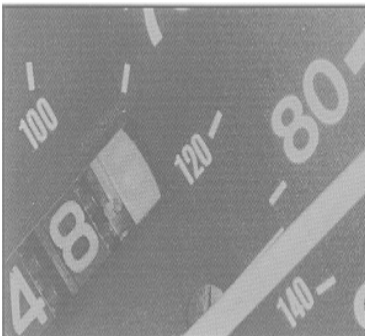
Students Union  
University of Nottingham

# Safer minibus driving

**95% of accidents involve an element of human error. At Nottingham University Students Union we aim to reduce this risk through a minibus driver education and assessment programme.**

**This guide supports the programme and contains information that minibus drivers will need when planning a journey and while on the road.**

**Take the guide with you when driving. It has important information in it.**



## Contents

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| <b>Licensing and Legal issues</b>                        | <b>3</b>   |
| <b>Driver hours and passenger welfare</b>                | <b>4</b>   |
| <b>Loading the minibus</b>                               | <b>4</b>   |
| <b>Vehicle Checks</b>                                    | <b>5</b>   |
| <b>Trailers</b>  | <b>5</b>   |
| <b>Defensive Driving</b>                                 | <b>6</b>   |
| <b>Useful information</b>                                | <b>7</b>   |
| <b>Emergencies, Breakdowns &amp; Reporting incidents</b> | <b>8-9</b> |



# Licensing and Legal issues

## Driving Licence issued before 1/1/97

### "Old drivers"

- Will have D1 (minibus) entitlement, "Not for hire or reward"
- Must be over 21 years
- Must have 3 or more years car driving experience
- Can tow trailers with a minibus

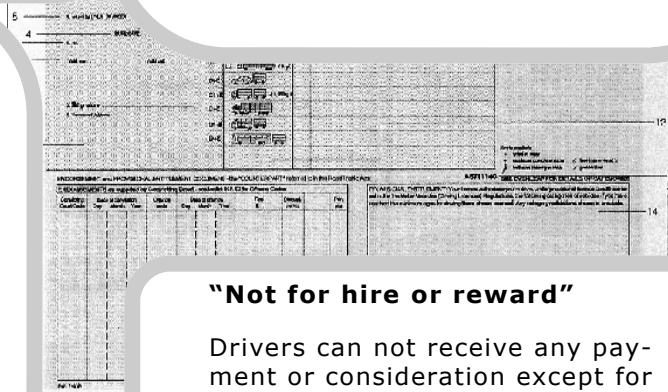
## Driving Licence issued after 1/1/97

### "New drivers"

- Will have B (car) entitlement, but can drive minibuses operated under the Small Bus Permit scheme
- Must be over 21 years
- Must have 3 or more years car driving experience
- Cannot tow trailers with a minibus

## Small Bus (Section 19) Permits

- Allow the Students Union to use volunteer minibus drivers.
- Are applicable to holders of pre and post 1/1/97 licences
- Are displayed in the windscreen of the Union's minibuses
- Must be picked up from SU Reception and displayed in the windscreen of hire minibuses. Return them to the SU Reception



### "Not for hire or reward"

Drivers can not receive any payment or consideration except for out of pocket expenses.

### Insurance

- Only drivers who have passed the Union's driver assessment programme are insured to drive minibuses hired through the Union.
- The insurance is fully comprehensive.
- The excess is max £300

## Use of Mobile Phones

- As from 1 Dec 2003 it has become an offence to use a hand-held mobile whilst driving (this includes waiting at traffic lights and sending/receiving of text messages)
- On the spot fixed penalty of £30 and 3 points with an increased fine of up to £2500 for those driving 9 or more passengers.
- If your phone rings, stop at a safe and legal position and answer your phone then

You are responsible for the safety of your passengers and other road users.



**Kill your speed**

# Driver hours and Passenger Welfare

## Driver hours:

- Journeys over 100 miles or 2 hours in duration require 2 drivers.
- You should not drive for more than 2 hours without changing drivers.
- Drivers can do a maximum of two, 2 hour shifts in a 24 hour period.

## Driver performance

- Be physically & mentally ready to drive.
- Be courteous, calm & patient.
- Be aware of the effects of alcohol, medication & illness.

## Passenger welfare

- Plan your journey with suitable breaks.
- Use coach parks rather than car parks if possible.
- Avoid winding country roads where possible.
- Driver must ensure under 14s wear seatbelts.
- 2 adults must be present when transporting children.



# Loading the minibus

All vehicles have a Maximum Allowable Mass (MAM). This is the most a loaded vehicle is legally allowed to weigh. The Union's minibuses have a MAM of 3500 kg. The effect of this on your trip is shown below.

| Weight   | Distribution  |
|--|---|
| MAM is 3500 kg & the empty minibus weighs 2280 kg with fuel.                       | Weight must be evenly distributed (axle weights of a vehicle)                                   |
| This leaves about 1200 kg for passengers & luggage.                                | Luggage must NOT block gangways or exits. Secure any luggage in the minibus.                    |
| An average adult weighs 70-80 kg. 15 x 80 is 1200 kg.                              | If you have a minibus with a roof-rack, this can take about 60 kg of securely fastened luggage. |
| This leaves nothing for luggage! Consider the logistics of your journey carefully. | Check the roof-rack before use and at rest stops.   |

# Vehicle checks & trailers

## Outside of minibus

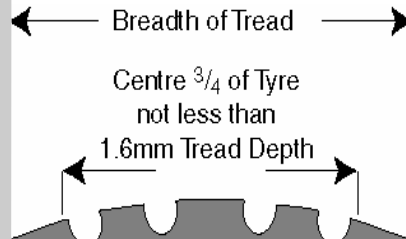
- ◇ Tyre pressure and tread depth (1.6mm)
- ◇ Bodywork condition
- ◇ Spare wheel
- ◇ Clean windows
- ◇ Check under bus for pools of oil...

## Under the bonnet

- ◇ Oil level
- ◇ Coolant (Water & anti-freeze) level
- ◇ Windscreen washer level
- ◇ Fan belt tension (12mm play)
- ◇ Clutch fluid level
- ◇ Brake fluid level

## Lights

- ◇ Indicators
- ◇ Headlights
- ◇ Rear lights
- ◇ Brake lights
- ◇ Reversing lights
- ◇ Fog lights



## Inside the minibus

- ◇ Rubbish / cleanliness / damage
- ◇ First Aid kit & contents
- ◇ Fire extinguisher
- ◇ Fuel level & type
- ◇ Warning triangle

## After driving

- ◇ Turn off all lights (interior too!)
- ◇ Close all windows
- ◇ Clean up any mess or rubbish
- ◇ Lock all doors

## Trailers

### General Points

The trailer must display the same number plate as the minibus. Check tyres, lights etc. as you would the minibus. The trailer must not impede exit from the rear of the bus.

### Towing

Please ask at SU Reception for details on towing as you need to have D1 on your driving licence

New drivers should be given the chance to tow under the direction of a more experienced "tower" in a relatively safe environment, such as an empty car park. On motorways you cannot use the outside lane and there is a 60mph speed limit.

Towing will affect your acceleration, speed, braking and turning.

### The Load

The trailer will have a weight limit - do not exceed it or the towing limit of the vehicle. Should be evenly distributed with most of the weight just forward of the axle.

Must be securely attached to the trailer. Check this at rest stops.

Must not stick out past the lights

# Defensive Driving

|   |   |
|---|---|
| A | Attitude<br>Good drivers maintain a good attitude on the road   |
| C | Concentration<br>Stay focused on the drive. Ignore distractions |
| O | Observation<br>Actively seek information on hazards             |
| S | Space<br>Maintain the space around your vehicle                 |
| T | Time<br>Give yourself time to react to hazards                  |

***A defensive driver plans for a situation that could develop***



| <b>Identifying hazards is a key skill in defensive driving</b> |   |
|--|---|
| The driver   | Fatigue, driving too close, braking harshly, over-confidence, too much speed, lack of concentration, unfamiliar vehicle, over steering... |
| The vehicle  | Worn tyres, dirty windscreen, overloaded...   |
| The environment  | Type of road (motorway, rural, urban), road surface, weather, climate...  |
| Other road users   | Pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders, cars   |

## System driving

*Adopting this approach reduced the Police accident rate by 89%*



**Information** needs to be continuously taken in and assessed

**Position** for course, safety and observation. Positioning provides some indication of your intended course, it will also give you with more time to react if you keep a cushion of space from other road users. Look well ahead and have an escape route as an alternative plan if things go wrong.

Use of **speed**. Advanced motoring involves driving fast where traffic conditions; visibility and the law permit . It also means driving at speeds below the legal limit where shorter stopping distances are perceived to be necessary.

The brakes are for slowing and the **gears** are for going. By not making unnecessary changes through the intermediate gears when slowing you will have more time to concentrate your visual search skills. The most appropriate point to **accelerate** depends on the hazard(s). Remember that a moving car has most stability when it's being driven under constant acceleration in a straight line.



# Breakdown Procedure

## Safety

### Most roads

Get your vehicle off the road if possible

Put on your hazard warning lights

If your vehicle is causing an obstruction put a warning triangle on the road at least 45 metres (147 feet) behind your vehicle Always take great care when placing them, but never use them on motorways

Keep your sidelights on if it is dark or visibility is poor

Do not let anybody else stand between your vehicle and oncoming traffic

### Additionally, on motorways

Pull on to the hard shoulder and stop as far to the left as possible, with your wheels turned to the left

Try to stop near an emergency telephone

Leave the vehicle by the left-hand door and ensure your passengers do the same.

Do not attempt even simple repairs

Ensure that passengers keep away from the carriage-way and hard shoulder

## What the breakdown company need to know

Your name:

Your phone number:

Vehicle registration:

Vehicle type:

Location of vehicle or prominent landmarks:

Number of passengers:

Symptoms of breakdown:

### Students Union breakdown/accident/windscreen number:

- **Union minibus (breakdown/mechanical failure):** 0800 989989, quote reg number
- **External minibuses and if you have an accident in the Union Minibus:** Minibus Plus under Ensign 0800 3891708. You may need to quote Union reg number to gain access to policy AE07 OFJ or our policy number is 7024072M, for external minibus hire you will have to explain it is a temporary vehicle under that policy. Our insurance company is Endsleigh Ins Brokers. For the windscreen, there is a £75 excess to be paid at the time of fixing, please keep receipt for reimbursement

### Reporting incidents

Report all incidents involving any vehicles on club trips to SU Reception at the earliest opportunity. If you are involved in an accident which causes damage or injury to any other person, vehicle or animal or property, you **MUST** stop give your own and the vehicle owner's name and address plus the registration number of the vehicle, to anyone having reasonable grounds for requiring them. If you do not give your name and address at the time of the accident, report the accident to the police as soon as reasonably practicable, and in any case within 24 hours. Do **NOT** admit liability.

# Accident Procedure – see also Breakdown procedure for details

**Stop & assess the situation for hazards**



| Actions                    |                             |                                 |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Passengers                 | Casualties                  | Vehicles                        |
| Get out of the vehicle     | Treat them if you can       | Only move them if safety allows |
| Get to safety off the road | Call emergency services 999 | Call emergency services 999     |
| Reassure one another       | Accompany them to hospital  | Call breakdown firm             |

## What the emergency services need to know

Your name & number:

Location:

Number of people/casualties involved & nature of any injuries:

Any hazards present:

***Co-operate with the emergency services but do NOT admit any fault or liability.***

You need to get information from other people involved and also give them your details.



## Information from witness or 3rd parties

Name: Phone:

Address:

Insurance details:

Vehicle registration:

Vehicle type:

## Pass these details to 3rd parties

Your name:

Vehicle registration:

Vehicle type:

Endsleigh Business Insurance, Hadley House, Cheltenham, GL50 3AW

University of Nottingham Student's Union  
0115 8468800

Report to the Student's Union  
0115 8468800 / 9513013 (24 hours)