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# PRE TRIP INSPECTIONS

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## INTRODUCTION

The pre-trip inspection gets its name from the requirement to inspect the bus on a daily basis before operating it. There are reasons for conducting the inspection prior to moving the bus before each trip:

1. Each day, operators are responsible to ensure the bus is in safe operating condition. By completing the inspection, an operator can bring to their supervisor's attention defects that could prevent a breakdown, possibly even leading to a crash resulting in injuries.

It is important that the same inspection procedure be used each day, and problems recorded.

Making a written record of your bus's condition and submitting it to your supervisor will help to eliminate possible oversight or forgetfulness, resulting in substantial cost savings and reducing the possibility of injuries to you, your bus passengers or other road users.

2. It may be easier to spot some signs of trouble while the bus is still parked before beginning your route. For example, fluids pooling on the ground such as oil, anti-freeze and fuel would more evident if the bus has been stationary for a period of time. Also, be aware of strong odors such as diesel fuel, gasoline and anti-freeze etc. Hot brakes will also produce a strong odor.

The daily pre-trip inspection can be divided into three basic parts:

1. Under the hood – engine compartment check.
2. Engine start-up and the interior inspection
  - Check gauges after starting engine to ensure the RPM's do not exceed 1200 RPM
  - Switches and interior lights check
  - General inspection of the interior

3. The walk-around and exterior inspection
  - General inspection of the exterior
  - All lights and signals check

**All drivers will wear high visibility vests when performing pre and post trip inspections as well as any time they exit the bus for any reason. High visibility vests are available at both bus garages.**

Much of the pre-trip inspection may seem self-evident to you, or you may wonder about the necessity of going through these steps daily. The time spent on pre-trip inspections does pay off.

Remember that operators have both a legal and moral responsibility to complete the inspection. By completing an inspection of the bus, it helps to reduce the chances of a breakdown or collision and minimizes the risks to you, your passengers and other road users.

- All buses require documentation be kept on hand; registration, copy of current C.V.I.P inspection, bus permit, inspection decals (usually kept on entrance door glass)
- All buses require an updated fire extinguisher with the gauge needle in the green zone, a basic current first aid kit, triangle reflective device in case of bus breakdown, a shovel, tire chains and chain tensioners, high visibility vest to be worn any time a driver exits the bus
- Other equipment and supplies should include pen and scratch pad, working flashlight, tire hammer, gloves, broom, paper towel and tissue paper for body fluid clean up, cleaning supplies, folder or clipboard for driver documentation
- Drivers may also want to consider:
  - Outer clothing to stay dry when outside of the bus, helping other drivers, chaining up, etc.
  - Extra gloves, warm clothing for winter conditions, sunglasses

## PRE-TRIP

### Under hood:

- Fluid levels, engine oil, power steering, coolant levels, windshield washer fluid
- Drive belts for tension, cracks, frayed cords
- Ensure hose connections are secure with no leaks, cracks, abrasions, kinks, etc.
- Ensure steering components (steering box, steering linkages, steering column) are secure with no looseness
- Check front tires for wear, cuts, bulges, etc.
- Check front springs, suspension, frame, etc.

### In cab:

- Ensure driver's seat belt is in working order and accessible
- Check mirrors for adjustments, cracks etc., mirrors heat is working, mirrors clean
- Check windshield for cracks and make sure all glass is clean
- Make sure dash and gauges are kept clean and dust free (dust can reduce vision on windshields and gauges when the glare of the sun hits them)
- If the roof hatch is to be used as a vent, the roof hatch must be opened in the prescribed manner for the safety of the passengers. The front of the hatch must be in the down position. The rear will open and lock into position. While the bus is in forward motion, it will not allow any foreign material (objects, insects, etc.) to enter the passenger area, yet will allow ventilation.

### Start engine:

- Check that gauges and all dash lights are working
- Oil pressure gauge must be in the operating range
- Check for sufficient fuel
- Battery volt meter is in the operating range (12-14 volts). Note: some buses may require a snap of the throttle to incite the alternator to start charging
- Listen for unusual engine noises

- Check horn
- Turn on and check all interior lights including step well light
- Turn on all heaters, defrosters, defrost fans and vent fans
- Walk back and activate emergency exit windows, doors and roof escape hatches, all emergency exits will have audible buzzers
- Check seats for damage and security
- Return to driver's seat and turn off equipment
- Activate wipers and washers. Note: If wipers have not been used in a long time, particularly in warm weather, the wiper blades have a tendency to stick to the windshield. It is very helpful to pry the wiper blades away from the windshield first.

### Circle check

- Ensure high visibility vest is being worn
- Turn off engine and position key to the accessory position
- Turn on headlights to low beam, left turn signal, clearance lights and loading lights. Note: It is good practice to carry a rag to wipe off lights, lenses, etc.
- Conduct a circle check by walking counter-clockwise to face traffic
- Check low beam, left front signal, clearance lights, stop arm and stop arm lights
- Check mirrors for security
- Check battery and compartment doors for security
- Check all tires for side wall damage etc., use tire hammer to thump test rear tires
- Check all wheel and lug nuts etc. by hand
- Inspect rear dual tires for rocks that may be jammed between the tires
- Check mud flaps

### Rear of bus

- Check license plate
- Check tail lights, left signal light, license plate light and load lights
- Ensure that the rear of the bus is clear of mud and snow so that reflective materials can work properly
- Check exhaust pipe for security
- Check rear emergency exit door (that it opens and closes from the outside)

- Return to cab
- Turn on right side turn signals and turn headlights to high beam

**Right side of bus**

- Check right turn signals
- Check mirrors for security
- Ensure step light works and hand rail is secure
- Check that fuel cap is securely fastened
- Check all tires for side wall damage
- Use tire hammer to thump test rear tires
- Check all wheel nuts and lugs by hand
- Check rear dual tires for rocks that may be jammed between tires
- Check mud flaps
- Check right rear turn signals and clearance lights
- Inspect for any body damage

Note: Most buses today have rear air suspension (air bags instead of springs). On level ground, the bus should have a level stance. If one side sits lower than the other, this may indicate a problem with the air suspension and should be brought to the mechanic’s attention. Before starting the bus in the morning, it is not uncommon that the rear of the bus is sitting low. After start up, the rear of the bus should rise to its normal height.

- Return to cab and start bus to proceed with air brake pre-trip inspection

**Air brake procedure**

- Start engine – build air to cut out 105 to 125 PSI
- Release parking brake
- Pump brakes down to 80 PSI, pause and check to see if air begins to build
- Pump brakes further down to below 50 PSI to activate low air warning device, lights, buzzer wig wag if equipped
- Rebuild air pressure, check that air pressure builds from 50 to 90 PSI within 3 minutes at fast idle
- Check that the pressure is at least 100 PSI

- Release parking brake, make full brake application and hold it for 1 minute
- Check to ensure that after the initial pressure drop, air loss is not more than 3 PSI per minute
- Listen for audible leak
- Build air to cut out (105 to 125 PSI)
- Make 3 full brake applications (to adjust auto slack)
- Set parking brake, put into gear and **gently** tug against parking brakes. The brake should prevent bus from moving
- Release parking brake, move bus ahead, and apply brake to check brake response

If any defects are found, they are to be recorded on the daily pre trip report (see next page), as well as recorded on the defect report located in the bus garage.

If you are unsure of any defects or their severity, contact a mechanic or dispatcher for clarification.

**Post trip**

- After returning from your AM or PM trip, inspect inside of bus by walking to rear of bus checking for students that did not get off and student property that was left behind. If a student failed to get off the bus at their school or scheduled stop (fell asleep, etc.), immediately notify the dispatcher and wait for direction so that the student can reach their destination safely.
- Check for and report any damaged seats, graffiti, etc.
- Activate all lights and circle check outside going counter clockwise checking lights, mirrors, tires, listening for air leaks, etc.
- Report any defects on the defects report in the bus garage so the mechanic can make repairs before the next trip. All buses have to be swept daily and garbage cans emptied using recycle practices.



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Bus # \_\_\_\_\_ Odometer Reading \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

In **pre-trip** inspection, I have detected no defect or deficiency in this motor vehicle, which would be likely to effect the safety of its operation or result in its mechanical break-down. Pre-Trip: \_\_\_\_\_ am/pm Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

In **post-trip** inspection, I have detected no defect or deficiency in this motor vehicle, which would be likely to effect the safety of its operation or result in its mechanical break-down. Post-Trip: \_\_\_\_\_ am/pm Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**INSPECT ALL THE ITEMS LISTED BELOW – CHECK ONLY THE DEFECTIVE ITEMS AND DESCRIBE IN THE “REMARK” SECTION**

**OUT OF TOWN DRIVERS**

- Leaks (Oil/Fuel/Coolant)
- Oil (Engine/Transmission)
- Power Steering
- Coolant
- Belts/Hoses
- Air Tank (Drain)
- Battery Compartment

**DRIVER'S AREA**

- Fire Extinguisher
- First Aid Kit
- Flares/Chains/Shovel
- Radio System
- Registration Paper/Decals
- Seat/Seatbelt
- Roof/Exits/Door

Interior Lights

**INTERIOR CHECK**

- Passenger Seats
- Floors
- Stepwell
- Entry Door
- Emergency Buzzer/Windows
- No Students Left Behind

**OPERATION ITEMS**

- Oil Pressure
- Engine Temperature
- Fuel Gauge
- Air Brake Pre Trip
- Service Brake Response
- Park Brake
- Windshield

Wipers/Washer

Heater/Defrosters

- Horn
- Steering
- Transmission

**WHEEL CHAIR LIFT**

- W/C Lift Operation
- Tie Downs
- W/C Lift Hydraulic Systems

**EXTERIOR**

- Tires/Wheels/Lug Nuts
- Lights/Headlights/High/Low
- Brake Light
- Alternating (Red) Lights
- Alternating (Amber) Lights
- Turn Signals

Stop Arm Lights

Clearance Lights

- Back-Up Lights/Alarm
- Tail Lights/Licence Plate Light
- Hazard Lights
- Licence Plates/Decals
- Crossing Arms
- Exhaust Systems
- Chains/Shovel
- Mirrors
- Compartment Doors

**PRE ON-ROAD CHECK**

- Park Brake-Tug Test-Forward
- Service Brake - Low Speed
- Steering Play/Response

**IN THE PRE-TRIP REPORT:**

**(CHECK THE APPROPRIATE STATEMENTS)**

- I have completed a vehicle damage inspection
- I have in my possession a valid driver's licence for the operation of vehicle above
- I have detected defects as described in the DRIVER'S REMARKS area.

**IN THE POST-TRIP REPORT:**

**(CHECK THE APPROPRIATE STATEMENTS)**

- I have completed a vehicle damage inspection
- I have in my possession a valid driver's licence for the operation of vehicle above
- I have detected defects as described in the DRIVER'S REMARKS area.

**DRIVER'S REMARKS**

**MECHANIC'S COMMENTS**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**THIS SECTION FOR MECHANICS ONLY**

THE ABOVE DEFECTS  
**HAVE BEEN CORRECTED**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mechanic's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

THE ABOVE DEFECTS **NEED NOT BE CORRECTED** for safe operation of the bus

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mechanic's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

PROGRAMS/STYC/PW/INTS/INC