



Tips and Advice on Finding Information about and using Bus Services

Research has shown that plenty of people either don't know or have forgotten how to use buses and how to get information about bus services.

If you've not used a bus for while here's a reminder what to do. If you still have doubts or concerns try speaking to your organisation's Travel Plan Coordinator.

1. Find out which bus you need to catch

You might need to find out which bus takes you where you want to go, where the bus stops are at either end of the journey and whether or not you'll need to change buses on the way.

Check for route variations, for example, service '19', '19A' and '19B'. If you choose an express service (often denoted with an X, for example 'X19') make sure that it will stop where you want to board and/or alight.

Traveline Scotland (www.travelinesctland.org.uk) provides comprehensive bus, train and other travel information for the whole of Scotland and beyond. It can provide a map showing the nearest bus stops to your start and end points as well as things like where to go if you have to change buses on the way. Traveline also gives departure and arrival times for the specific boarding and alighting points.

Alternatively, visit your Regional Transport Partnership page on www.travelknowhowscotland.co.uk and where you will find specific information on services relating to your particular region of Scotland.

Bus timetable leaflets are often available at your local library or information centre.

Your organisation's Travel Plan Coordinator might also have a supply of bus timetables

2. Information about Fares and Ticket Types

Getting information about individual bus fares can be difficult. Nowadays bus timetable information can easily be found on the web, however getting fares is a different matter.

The surest way to get the most accurate information is to speak to the Travel Plan Coordinator or contact your local bus operator direct.

Bear in the mind that:-

- A single ticket allows you to travel to your destination only (one journey).



- A return ticket allows you to travel to your destination and then back again. It's usually cheaper to purchase one return ticket rather than two singles.
- Some bus companies don't give change so have a selection of coins and small change available.
- If you travel by bus regularly there may be saver tickets which could save you money. Most bus operators have a range of discounted tickets which are valid for specific geographical areas and for different periods of time. Some local authorities and other transport agencies also provide a range of tickets and combined bus and rail journey tickets are now also available.

Under UK tax rules companies can provide interest free loans up to £5000. Some companies provide loans of this type for employees to buy annual season tickets.

Some companies might also have stocks of saver tickets available to encourage use of the bus on business trips.

3. How do you get the Bus?

Be at the bus stop at least five minutes before it's due and make sure that you're standing on the right side of the road for the direction you want to go in. If there are several bus stops near one another make sure you're standing at the right one by checking the bus stop plate or other information at the stop. If no specific bus routes are listed it usually means your bus will most likely stop there.

Buses display the destination and service number at the front of the bus. Again, watch out for route variations.

When you see your bus approaching you should let the driver know you want to get on. The bus may not stop if you don't provide a clear signal. In some rural areas and in a few urban areas [predominantly housing and industrial estates] where there are no formal bus stops most buses will stop anywhere on the route where it is safe to do so. Just signal to the driver. This is known as "hail and ride".

Many newer buses are able to "kneel" at the kerb so that wheelchairs or buggies can be wheeled straight on. For the vast majority of buses you get on at the front and pay the driver. Then you can find a seat and enjoy the journey. When the bus is full it is good manners to give up your seat for someone who is less able to stand than yourself.

4. What to do when you want to get off

The driver will only let you off at a designated bus stop (unless your bus is hail and ride). Before the stop approaches let the driver know you want to get off. On most buses you



can do this by pressing the stop button by the seats. However if there is no stop button you can call always call out to the driver.

If you do not know where you should get off ask the driver for help as you board the bus. The driver should be able to let you know when you're approaching your stop. Take care when leaving the bus and remember to take all your belongings with you.