



# SCHOOL BUS SAFETY

## → WHAT MOTOR VEHICLE OPERATORS/PARENTS/GUARDIANS NEED TO KNOW TO KEEP KIDS SAFE

### School buses are the safest way to transport children to school

School buses are nearly eight times safer than passenger vehicles, but children must take care when boarding or leaving the bus. While an average of seven school-age passengers are killed in school bus crashes each year, 19 are killed getting on or off the bus.



Most of those killed are children, 5-7 years old. They are hit in the danger zone around the bus, either by a passing vehicle or by the school bus itself. It is illegal for a vehicle to pass a bus with its red light flashing.

### Why young children are most likely to be injured or killed

- They're in a hurry to get on or off the bus.
- They act before they think and have little experience with traffic.
- They assume motorists will see them and will wait for them to cross.
- They don't always stay within the bus driver's sight or,
- They drop something as they get off the bus and run into the path of the bus to pick it up.

### Help your child to get on and off the bus safely

Teach your child to:

- Stay away from the danger zone when getting on the bus and to wait for the driver's signal to board the bus.
- Board the bus one child at a time.
- Look before stepping off the bus when getting off the bus to be sure no cars are passing on the shoulder (side of the road).
- Move away from the bus immediately when getting off the bus.
- Remember the "Ten foot" rule. Stay ten feet (5 giant steps) away from any side of the bus.
- Take 5 "giant steps" out from the front of the bus before crossing the street or until the driver's face can be seen.
- Wait for the driver to signal that it is safe to cross the road.



- Look left-right-left when coming to the edge of the bus to make sure traffic is stopped and keep watching traffic when crossing

## Other measures you can take to keep your child safe

- Supervise children to make sure they get to the bus stop on time, wait far away from the road, and avoid rough play.
- Teach your child to ask the driver for help if he/she drops something near the bus. If a child bends down to pick up something, the driver cannot see him/her and the child may be hit by the bus. Have your child use a backpack or book bag to keep loose items together.
- Make sure clothing and backpacks have no loose drawstrings or long straps, to get caught in the handrail or bus door.
- Encourage safe school bus loading and unloading.
- If you think a bus stop is in a dangerous place, talk with your school office or transportation director about changing the location.

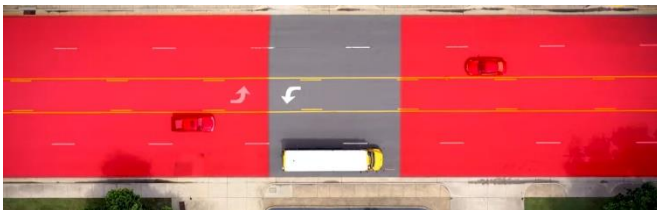
## School bus stop laws

[Learn more](#) about how motorists should respond to a school bus stopped in different scenarios.

- **Two or four lane road without a median:** Traffic in both directions MUST stop.



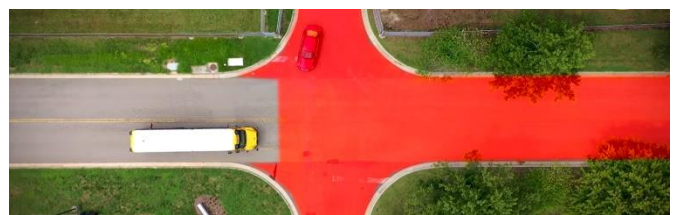
- **Road with a double turn lane:** Traffic in both directions MUST stop



- **Road with a raised median:** Traffic on the opposite side may continue. Traffic on the same side MUST stop.



- **Intersections:** All traffic in all directions MUST stop.



For more information on school bus safety, please visit the [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration](#).

*(Information updated March 2026)*