

Driving Safely Around School Buses

It's true, traveling at rush hour can be stressful. Commuters are focused on getting to work, parents included. And sometimes, getting caught behind a school bus that's making frequent stops can feel like a bit of an inconvenience, especially when you're in a hurry! Even though times like these can be tough to manage, drivers share the road with school buses and need to remember they help keep kids safe. Take a look at these important tips and consider just how much school bus passengers are relying on drivers everywhere to help them safely commute to and from school every day.

School Bus Safety Rules and You

When it comes to driving near school buses, you can be a super protector! Let sharing the road with school buses be an opportunity to put on that yellow cape and mask and ensure that kids get on and off the bus safely. The school bus safety laws and best practices below will help you keep kids safe on their journey to and from school:

Never pass a school bus that's loading or unloading passengers. Doing so is illegal in all 50 states. Frequently, kids have to cross the street in front of the bus. That's where they're most vulnerable since passing vehicles may not know a child is darting out ahead of the bus. And as pedestrians, they have the right of way. So give 'em a break!

Respect the flashing lights. Know when to stop. When you see blinking yellow or red lights on a school bus, with the stop arm is extended, all traffic is required to stop. This is when students will likely be out on the street. So even after the lights are off, and the stop arm is retracted, keep an eagle eye out for kids. They may not be immediately visible, regardless of what side of the road they're on.

Kids are unpredictable. Remember, kids don't always do what they're supposed to do. It's important to keep your guard up when they're anywhere near your car, and it's never been truer than when they're getting on or off the bus. They ignore hazards. They take risks. Sometimes they just make mistakes. Anticipating that kids may not do the right thing can help protect them from dangerous situations. And you'll feel better giving them a little more time getting on and off the bus knowing you did your super protector best to keep them safe.

Patience is a virtue. Obviously this adage is not a law, but they are words to live by! Remember that school buses tend to move at a slower pace and are required to make quite a few stops — especially at all railroad crossings and yield signs. If you find yourself following a bus on your morning commute, practice patience and try not to stress out. You'll get to your destination soon enough.

Adopt a safety mind-set. Be especially alert and safety-conscious whenever you're driving near school buses. Always keep a safe distance and be on the lookout for children, no matter where the bus is or what signal the driver gives you.

We all can play an active role in supporting kids and keeping them safe. Thanks for being a safety-savvy super protector.