



Childcare Bus Buyers Guide

The Bus Center Buyer's Guide Series

The Bus Center Guide to Buying a Childcare Bus

Nine Tips That Will Make Your Bus Purchase Easier

So, you've been asked to help find and purchase a new bus for your childcare facility – BUT, you've never bought a bus before in your life!

No problem! This handy guide was written just for folks like you. Our goal is simple - to help make sure you get the right bus for your facility's needs – and at a price your childcare can afford.

First of all, please remember that buying a bus is a lot different than buying a car. There are some important features and options you might not even know to consider. The nine tips in this guide will help you through the bus buying process and hopefully help make this a stress-free, painless and rewarding process.

Use the form on the last page of this guide to make notes on each of these nine tips.

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How will we use this bus?

The first question you need to ask yourself is “what specific uses will your childcare facility have for this bus?”

Will you be using your bus to take children on field trips? Will it be used for long trips? Will you use it to pick up and drop off children? Will there be handicapped children? Maybe your bus will be needed for all of the above.

These factors are important to think about because they will determine seating capacity and storage needs. Keep these specific uses your facility may require from your new bus and share them with your Bus Center sales rep. These notes will help us find the right bus for all your needs.

#2

Will we need a CDL or non-CDL bus?

The next question is “will you need a CDL?” A CDL is a Commercial Driver’s License. You typically don’t need a CDL for buses that seat fewer than 15 people and weigh less than 26,000 pounds, but check your state’s laws to be sure.

You can find that information at http://www.cdlresources.org/state_law.html - or simply ask your Bus Center sales rep about the laws in your state.

If you do need a larger bus, remember that a CDL will be required for anyone driving the bus. Getting a commercial driver’s license is not a difficult or expensive process and your Bus Center sales rep can advise you in setting up your CDL exam.

#3

Should we buy a new or pre-owned bus?

Another consideration is whether your childcare facility requires a new or pre-owned bus. Each New bus has a factory warranty on the Chassis, Powertrain, Body Structure, A/C, and Components. If anything were to happen to your new vehicle, our warranty, parts and service departments would be able to help you get back on the road as quickly as possible. Pre-owned buses are typically sold “as is”, and many are purchased outside of the factory warranties.

Our pre-owned inventory is constantly changing, so if your childcare prefers a pre-owned vehicle for budget reasons, keep a check on our online inventory. Or give your Bus Center sales rep a call to see what is in our stock.

#4

What special features do we want/need?

Buses have options and special features just like cars, but which added features make the most sense for your childcare's particular needs?

Some popular features that can be ordered include activity bus seats, standard school bus seats, optional overhead and rear luggage compartments. Other options include non-slip flooring, driver's storage, back up camera, and rear air conditioning systems.

Your Bus Center sales rep can help you sort through the dozens of options and upgrades that are available and determine which options would be best for your childcare.

#5

Do we need a handicap accessible bus?

Does your childcare bus need to be wheelchair accessible? It is important to consider whether or not you need a wheelchair accessible option before you purchase your bus, because they are extremely difficult to add after a bus has been built.

Most wheelchair accessible buses require a rear wheelchair lift and wheelchair tie downs. Wheelchair lifts will usually last the life of the bus. The Bus Center offers either Braun or Ricon wheelchair lifts. There are also options for lower entry buses, although this can be an expensive option for a mini-bus.

If you need some advice on wheelchair access or special needs options, just ask your Bus Center sales rep.

#6

How soon do we need this new bus?

If you need a bus right away, you may be worried about how long it will take for your bus to be delivered.

The Bus Center keeps a large inventory of small, medium and large buses ready for immediate delivery. Over the years, we've learned the most popular features for childcare buses, and we order our stock buses accordingly. We may already have exactly what you need in stock.

Some options may require additional time for installation. If we have to order a custom bus from the factory, it could take between 60-90 days for delivery.

#7

What about after the sale? (PARTS/SERVICE/WARRANTY)

Just like your personal car, your childcare bus comes with a warranty – and, it will need regular service and maintenance. Down the road, replacement parts and repairs may one day be needed. A typical warranty for a childcare bus is five years or 60,000 miles, but this can depend upon the make and model you choose.

As full-time Warranty Administrators, our goal is to provide you with the best post-sales service. We take the initiative to educate you about the bus you purchase and what features the Warranty Agreement offers. We offer educational classes that explain the latest procedures, technology and training techniques available.

And The Bus Center offers an award-winning parts and service department that can provide whatever is needed to keep your bus safe and running at optimum performance. We even offer on-site emergency assistance if needed. We know how important your bus is to your childcare, and we will not let you down.

#8

Can we use our current bus as a trade?

Does your childcare already have an older bus that you no longer need? The Bus Center can give you an appraisal of its fair market value and apply it against the cost of your new bus.

The Bus Center accepts most buses for trade. Your Bus Center rep will assess your vehicle and give your childcare a fair price towards your new bus.

#9

Should we pay cash, finance or lease our new purchase?

You have several options to pay for your new bus – just as you do when buying a car. You can pay for your bus in one payment at the time of purchase. You can also finance your bus. If you are approved, you could receive 100% financing for term lengths up to 7 years, or you can make a down payment to lower the monthly payments.,

You also have the option to lease your bus for your childcare facility. With lease terms ranging from 2-5 years, the monthly payments are affordable, and when the lease term is up, it is easy to upgrade to a brand new bus with all new factory warranties.

ENJOY YOUR NEW BUS!

Purchasing your first bus doesn't have to be a hassle. Knowing the facts about buses can help make your buying experience a pleasant one. Now that you know more about the process, contact The Bus Center's sales department, and share the notes you've made about the kind of bus you need. You'll have a quote and all your payment options in no time!

BUS BUYING NOTES

Childcare Name _____

Name _____

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#6 – How soon do we need this new bus?

#7 – What about after the sale? (Parts/Service/Warranty)

#8 – Can we use our current bus as a trade?

#9 – Should we pay cash for, finance or lease our new purchase?