

A Data-Driven Fleet Comparison

Victor Lincoln | June 2025



**Why Passenger Vans
Are More Efficient
Than Mini Buses**

Overview



Purpose:

Compare key operational metrics



Vehicles:

15-passenger van vs.
25-passenger mini bus



Metrics:

Maintenance cost,
insurance, safety,
fuel efficiency

Purchase & Depreciation Cost

Passenger Van:

\$45,000 |
Depreciation
(5 yrs): \$25,000

Mini Bus:

\$75,000 |
Depreciation
(5 yrs): \$40,000

Insight:

Vans cost ~40%
less upfront and
depreciate more
slowly per seat.

Maintenance Costs

Annual Maintenance: \$1,500 (Van) vs. \$3,500 (Mini Bus)

Parts/Labor: Easy (Van) vs. Specialized (Mini Bus)

Insight: Vans are simpler to service and more affordable to maintain.

Insurance Costs



Passenger Van:

\$1,200 – \$2,000/year



Mini Bus:

\$2,500 – \$4,500/year



Insight:

Vans fall under lighter commercial classifications
= lower premiums.

Fuel Efficiency

Passenger Van:

15–17 MPG |
\$3,100–\$3,500/year

Mini Bus:

7–9 MPG |
\$5,800–\$7,500/year

Insight:

Vans are up to 2x
more fuel-efficient.

Safety & Maneuverability

Passenger Vans: Better agility, visibility, and modern safety tech

Mini Buses: Larger blind spots, higher rollover risk

Conclusion: Vans offer improved urban mobility and safety

Seating vs. Operational Cost

15-passenger van = ~\$0.75 per seat-mile



25-passenger mini bus = ~\$1.20 per seat-mile



Insight: Vans are more efficient for smaller group transport.



Summary of Key Advantages



- Lower total cost of ownership



- Better fuel economy



- Lower insurance and repair costs



- Improved safety and maneuverability



- Ideal for schools, churches, small-group transit

Recommendation

For transport needs
under 20
passengers per trip:

Passenger vans are
the smarter, more
efficient choice—

Economically and
operationally.

