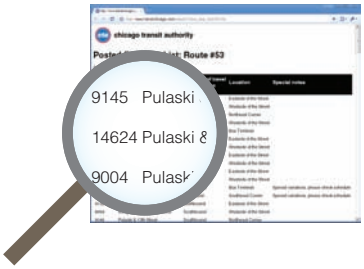
bus tracker by text

a quick how-to guide

The basics

1. Find your stop ID.

There are multiple places online where you can find the ID for your stop. About 40 stops will also have special signs as part of a pilot program to put instructions at bus stops. (See below for details on how.)



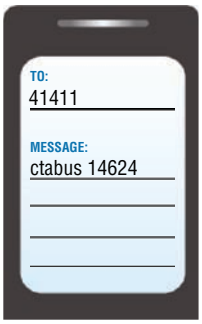
2. Text ctabus [stopID] to 41411.

Type ctabus and your stop ID (separated by a space) and send! If multiple routes serve your stop, you can narrow your search by specifying your route, also.

Example:
ctabus 14624

Example:
ctabus 14624 rt53

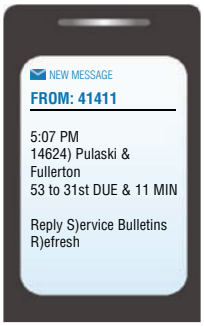
(See reverse for additional commands.)



3. Receive estimated arrivals.

You'll see arrivals in short form to fit in just one or two messages on your phone.

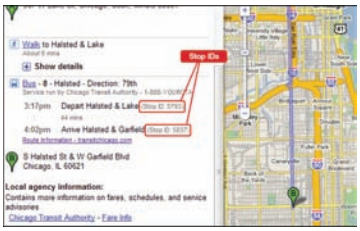
For example, if you see "53 to 31st DUE & 11 MIN" that means one #53 Pulaski bus to 31st is due to arrive now, and another is estimated in 11 minutes.



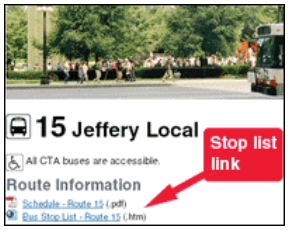
Finding your stop ID

CTA offers a number of ways to look up your stop IDs...

when you get arrivals on ctabustracker.com



in directions from Google Transit™



in bus stop lists on transitchicago.com

on selected bus stop signs in pilot program

Visit **ctabustracker.com for complete instructions.** While this service from CTA is free, standard carrier charges for each message sent and received apply—check with your wireless carrier first.

bus tracker by text: advanced options

Basic request for estimated arrival times

Send ctabus [stopID] to **41411** for estimated arrival times, where "[stopID]" is the desired stop ID#.

Additional commands

After receving a response, you'll be presented with more options, such as the ability to refresh your results for an update, or see more arrival predictions in the event not all routes serving your stop could fit in one message.

Here's a quick list of common commands you might be presented with:

N)ext - Reply with "n" this to see the next set of arrivals for your stop (when not all shown).
F)irst - Reply with "f" to go back to the first set of results, if you're viewing a subsequent set.
R)efresh - Reply with "r" to get an update of the same results, to see the latest predictions.
S)ervice Bulletins - Reply with "s" to see alerts that apply to routes or the stop requested.
M)ore - Reply with "m" for more information when receiving general info such as bulletins.

You can also reply with "h" for help.

Looking up stops via text message

If you're on the go and don't have access to the Internet to look up a stop, you can also page through a list of stops. Simply send ctabus rt[#] and follow instructions in subsequent messages to page through a list of stops, each with an additional text sent and received.

If you don't know the number of the route you're looking for, you can also simply text ctabus rt to receive sets of route numbers and names, for reference.

Narrowing your results

At stops where there are multiple routes, there may be more information available than could fit in a single text message. As noted above, you can reply with "n" to see the next set of estimated arrivals. Alternately, you could narrow your search down to just the route you're interested in.

This can help reduce the number of messages you'd need to send or receive in order to find the information you're looking for (which is especially helpful if your wireless carrier allows you a limited number of texts per month or charges you on a per-message basis).

To narrow your request, add a route number to your request. For example, ctabus 1124 rt145 would show only results for the #145 Wilson/Michigan Express estimated for stop 1124 (Michigan & Ontario, northbound).

Visit **ctabustracker.com** for complete instructions. While this service from CTA is free, standard carrier charges for each message sent and received apply—check with your wireless carrier first.