

Trailer Safety - On the Road

Pulling a trailer requires your full attention

- Set up your navigation before leaving
- Set your phone to "Do Not Disturb"



It's Not Worth It

Intersections

- Turn at intersections with green arrows
- Scan for "hidden" vehicles
- Ensure adequate gaps in traffic
- Oncoming traffic may not be able to see your trailer until it is too late

Slower Acceleration + Longer Length = More Time to Cross

Rear loading leads to trailer sway

If your trailer starts to sway, steer straight and take your foot off the gas until the trailer comes under control

Do not pass while towing

Following Distance

Over 40 mph = Min. Five Seconds¹

Increase distance further when driving:

- Larger trucks/trailer/cargo combinations
- During inclement weather
- Down hills or sloped roadways

1.5 Seconds

Maximum time eyes away from forward roadway to check mirrors, etc.

Drive Defensively

Focus - Scan - Anticipate - React

Before Backing: **Get Out And Look**

Do You Know Your Trailer Speed Restrictions?

- Many states restrict speed when pulling trailers
- Many trailer manufacturers recommend maximum speed for their trailers
- Reduce speed further when turning or going into sharp turns and ramps



When the vehicle ahead passes an object, begin counting

One one-thousand...

Two one-thousand...

Three one-thousand...

Four one-thousand...

Five one-thousand

If you pass the object before five, slow and count again

¹ www.fmcsa.dot.gov/safety/driver-safety/cmv-driving-tips-following-too-closely

Know Before You Tow

Answer these four questions →

Regulations

Adding a trailer may put the GCWR over 10,000, requiring compliance with state or federal motor carrier regulations; with larger combinations requiring a CDL.¹

Many states have their own trailer requirements which include dimension restrictions, brakes, lights and signals, mirrors and speed limits.

Trailer Ratings

- Load capacity is determined by the trailer manufacturer and is not the same as GVWR.
- The Gross Axle Weight Rating (GAWR) is often listed on the trailer and is given for each axle. The GAWR may or may not be the same as the total load capacity.
- A Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR) is the trailer capacity plus the weight of the trailer.
- Trailer ratings should all be listed on the trailer plate/label.

Tires

- Use only size/type specified by trailer manufacturer
- Inflate to trailer manufacturer's recommendation
- Do not exceed tire manufacturer's speed and load ratings (on sidewall)
- Inspect daily



Common Hitching Mistakes

- Coupler not fully seated causing latch to uncouple
- Keeper pin falls out or breaks. Keeper should be designed for purpose and secured from falling out
- Safety chains not crossed as required
- Safety chains not sized for GVWR of trailer or welded (should be bolted)
- Break-away cable not secured
- Chains, lighting cables, and breakaway cables having inadequate ground clearance or break when too tight during turns
- Not testing lights after being connected

1. Can Your Trailer Handle the Load?

XYZ Manufacturing
Maximum weight of cargo should not exceed 8,000 lbs.



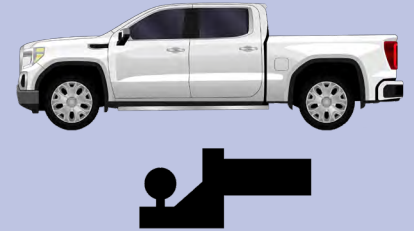
Trailer load capacity must be greater than load weight

2. Can the Towing Vehicle Handle the Load?

Towing capacity of vehicle, hitch and coupler must all be higher than GTW²

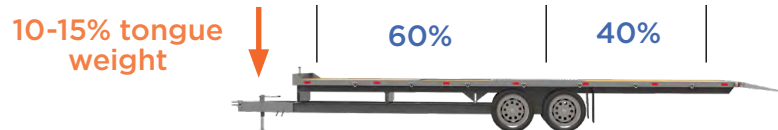
Trailer Weight = 2,500
+ Load Weight = 6,375

Gross Trailer Weight (GTW) = 8,875



3. Is the Load Distributed Properly?

- Refer to trailer manual, each trailer is different
- General guidance³
 - 60% of load weight (front of trailer axles)
 - 40% of load weight (rear of trailer axles)
 - Tongue load should be 10-15% of GTW, 25% for 5th wheels



Caution: Rear loading leads to trailer sway

4. Is the Load Secured Properly?

- Refer to FMCSR (§393.100 - §393.136)
- Securement is based on weight of load and length of load
- Specialty cargo, such as wheeled or tracked equipment, has addition requirements

¹ Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations, Part 390

² Vehicle towing capacities can typically be found in the vehicle's owner manual. Hitch and coupler capacities are found on component labels or stamped into the device.

³ Always follow the manufacturer's recommendation. If manufacturer guidance is not provided, utilize these best practices recommended by the National Association of Trailer Manufacturers