

Trailer Towing Safety

Safe Work Procedures

Please refer to and review the equipment manual prior to performing maintenance or operating for safety features, instructions and manufactures information for the specific machine.

Introduction

Trailers range in size and application, however, they have common safety concerns.

Pre-Use Inspection

Do a walk-around of the trailer to ensure all items are present and in working order.

- Lights
- License Plate
- Wheels and Tires

Do not use the trailer if anything is deficient. Report all problems immediately.

Hooking Up a Trailer

1. Check the vehicle and hitch ratings to make sure the tow vehicle is appropriate for the trailer and the load.
2. Check the ball size and the hitch size. They need to be the same.
3. Use the lifting device (if equipped) to raise the trailer hitch to the proper level.
4. Have somebody help you back in the vehicle (if available).
5. Close the latch and secure the pin.
6. Hook up the chains on opposite sides – they should cross.
7. Attach the electrical plug.
8. Check that trailer brakes (if equipped); and ball and hitch are seated properly by giving a tug test and wheel bearings are sufficiently greased (e.g. Bearing Buddy)
9. Fully raise the lift so it is not damaged during transport.



Loading a Trailer

1. Do not load trailers beyond their rated capacity.
2. Trailers need to be loaded evenly from side to side. Additionally, the front-to-back weighting needs to be close to equal, with an additional 10 to 20 percent of the weight on the front half of the trailer.

Towing a Trailer

Trailers with Brakes

Adjust the brake actuator in the tow vehicle (if equipped) according to the weight of the load and the speed at which you are traveling.

Towing

1. Adjust your turning radius to address the path of the trailer.
2. Depending upon the weight of the trailer, you will need extra room to stop. Allow for extra braking distance.
3. You should never drive at excessive speeds; however, this is particularly important when towing a loaded trailer as you could easily lose control or not be able to stop in time to avoid an accident.

Unhooking a Trailer

Hazard Assessment

1. Block the wheels so the trailer does not move after being detached.
2. Use the lift (if equipped) to lift the trailer off of the ball.



Backing up a Trailer

Backing up a trailer can be difficult for the inexperienced.

Practice if Inexperienced

If inexperienced with backing up trailers, practice without passengers in a controlled environment when not under pressure.

Coworker Assistance

- It is recommended that a co-worker guide the driver when backing-up the trailer. Ensure there is clear verbal communication established.
- Ensure that all unnecessary personnel and equipment are out of the area prior to backing up.

Backing Up Solo

If backing up without a guide, pick points of reference prior to backing up to track progress; if in doubt, get out and reassess the situation before continuing.

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Jack-Knife Awareness

Do not jack-knife trailers when backing up; if trailer begins to jack-knife, pull ahead and attempt to back up further – it will only get worse.

DISCLAIMER: Information contained in this document does not necessarily provide the only correct way to address machine risks. While this SWP will help operators conform to industry best practices and the intent of current Regulations and Guidelines, it may not identify all requirements or actions that will be appropriate and necessary in various situations. It does not reduce or replace users' responsibilities under applicable legislation - individual organizations (companies, employers) are responsible to ensure application of suitable processes and practices. The information provided is subject to review in light of changing government requirements and regulations. Every effort has been made to ensure the reliability of the information herein and to avoid errors and omissions.