

☰ Tool Box Talk | Trailer Safety

1. WHY PROPER TRAILER LOADING & SECURING MATTERS

Incorrect trailer loading is one of the **leading causes of accidents** involving trailers.

Risks of Improper Loading

- ◆ **Trailer Swaying** – Uneven weight distribution causes instability.
- ◆ **Loss of Cargo** – Unsecured items may shift or fall.
- ◆ **Reduced Braking Power** – Excess weight affects stopping distance.
- ◆ **Increased Tire Wear** – Overloaded trailers cause premature damage.

2. STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE: HOW TO PROPERLY LOAD A TRAILER

Loading a trailer **correctly and evenly** prevents swaying and tipping.

Distribute Weight Evenly

- ◆ Load **60% of the weight in the front half** of the trailer.
- ◆ Keep heavier items **low and centered** to prevent tipping.
- ◆ **Avoid placing all the weight at the back**—this causes swaying.

Balance Left & Right Weight

- ◆ Distribute weight **evenly across both sides**.
- ◆ If one side is heavier, adjust cargo placement.

Secure the Load to Prevent Shifting

- ◆ Use **ratchet straps, chains, and tie-down points**.
- ◆ Ensure straps are **tight and locked** to prevent cargo movement.

Checking Trailer Weight Capacity & Towing Limits

- ◆ Overloading a trailer **increases wear, reduces fuel efficiency, and can cause accidents.**

How to Check Trailer Weight Ratings

- ◆ **Check the Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR)** – Found on the trailer's VIN plate.
- ◆ **Know the Payload Capacity** – The weight the trailer can safely carry.
- ◆ **Match Your Tow Vehicle's Towing Capacity** – Never exceed manufacturer limits.

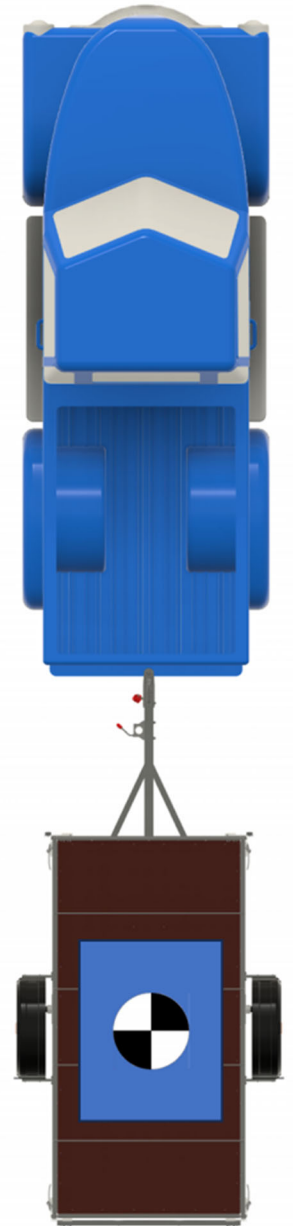
3. TRAILER SAFETY CHECKLIST BEFORE HITTING THE ROAD

Before you start towing, perform a safety check to avoid issues on the road.

- ◆ Trailer Pre-Trip Inspection Checklist
- ◆ Check Tire Pressure – Ensure proper inflation.
- ◆ Inspect Lights & Brakes – Confirm all connections work.
- ◆ Ensure Hitch & Safety Chains are Secure – Double-check connections.
- ◆ Test Trailer Stability – Give the cargo a shake test.

Pay Attention To Trailer Sway

- ◆ Steep downhill grades, crosswinds, high speeds, and large trucks can all cause trailer sway.
- ◆ Trailer sway causes your trailer to swing back and forth like a pendulum behind you, causing instability and can lead to trouble.
- ◆ If you start having trailer sway, simply decrease your acceleration (downshift) and apply your trailer brakes (if applicable) to get everything back in alignment.





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