

Introduction

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

Critical Task Inventory

- Hooking Up a Trailer
- Pre-Use Inspection
- Loading / Unloading a Trailer
- Towing a Trailer
- Backing up a Trailer
- Unhooking a Trailer

Pre-Use Inspection

Hazard Assessment	F	S	P	R
Defective Equipment (S)	2	3	1	6

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

Hazard Assessment	F	S	P	R
Incomplete Connection (S)	1	3	2	6
Damaged Components (S)	1	3	2	6

Vehicle and Hitch Rating

Check the vehicle and hitch ratings to make sure the tow vehicle is appropriate for the trailer and the load.

Ball Size and Set-Up

Check the ball size and the hitch size. They need to be the same.

Lifting / Raising

Use the lifting device (if equipped) to raise the trailer hitch to the proper level.

Attaching

Have somebody help you back in the vehicle (if available).

Securing

Close the latch and secure the pin.

Safety Chains

Hook up the chains on opposite sides – they should cross.

Electrical

Attach the electrical plug.

Raise Lifting Device

Fully raise the lift so it is not damaged during transport.



Frequency of Exposure (F)	Severity of Loss (S)	Probability of Loss (P)	F + S + P = Risk Rating (R)
1 = Up to Weekly 2 = Up to Daily 3 = 1+ Times / Day	1 = Class C – Minor, non-disabling, non-disruptive 2 = Class B – Serious injury or disruptive loss 3 = Class A – Major injury, permanent disability or loss	1 = Limited chance adverse event will occur 2 = Adverse event likely to occur 3 = Adverse event likely to occur soon	7 to 9 = High Risk 5 to 6 = Medium Risk 3 to 4 = Low Risk

Type Of Hazard: H = Health (acute or chronic) S = Safety (people and equipment) Q = Quality P = Production E = Environment

Loading a Trailer

Hazard Assessment	F	S	P	R
Overloading (S)	2	3	2	7
Improper Weighting (S)	2	3	2	7

Load Capacity

Do not load trailers beyond their rated capacity.

Load Distribution

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

Hazard Assessment	F	S	P	R
Loss of Control (S)	2	3	2	7
Insufficient Stopping Distance (S)	3	3	2	8
Insufficient Turning Radius (S)	2	2	2	6

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

- Adjust your turning radius to address the path of the trailer.
- Depending upon the weight of the trailer, you will need extra room to stop. Allow for extra braking distance.
- 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.

Backing up a Trailer

Backing up a trailer can be difficult for the inexperienced.

Hazard Assessment	F	S	P	R
Contact with Ground Personnel (S)	2	3	2	7
Contact with Equipment (S)	2	3	2	7

Practice if Inexperienced

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

Coworker Assistance

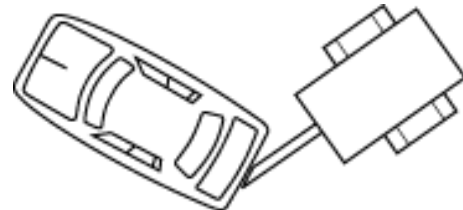
- It is recommended that a co-worker guide the driver when backing-up the trailer. Ensure there is clear verbal communication established.
- Ensure that all unnecessary personnel and equipment are out of the area prior to backing up.

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.

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.



Unhooking a Trailer

Hazard Assessment

Hazard Assessment	F	S	P	R
Trailer Moving Uncontrolled (S)	2	2	2	6
Back Injury (S)	2	2	2	6

Prevent Movement

Block the wheels so the trailer does not move after being detached.

Lifting / Raising

Use the lift (if equipped) to lift the trailer off of the ball.



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