

## Vehicle maintained

# Maintenance on pickups towing trailers

Use this guide to help lead a discussion with employees to build awareness of the additional maintenance pickup trucks may need if they are towing trailers. Empower them with strategies to minimize risks and become safer drivers. Use the form on Page 2 to record meeting details.

When towing trailers with your pickup truck, proper maintenance is essential to ensure safety, performance, and longevity. The mechanical components of your truck experience additional stress when towing, so follow these key points:

## 1 Fluid levels:

- Regularly check and maintain fluid levels in your truck.
- Monitor engine oil, transmission fluid, and coolant (radiator/antifreeze).
- Low fluid levels can lead to overheating or damage.
- Towing generates extra heat, so consider more frequent oil changes.

## 2 Brakes:

- Ensure your brake system is in good condition.
- Check brake pads, rotors, and brake fluid levels.
- Towing increases brake strain, and faulty brakes are dangerous when towing heavy loads.

## 3 Tire pressure:

- Properly inflated tires are crucial for safe towing.
- Refer to your truck's manual for recommended tire pressure, especially when carrying heavy loads.
- Use a gauge (not a tire thumper) to check tire pressure.
- Inspect tire tread wear with a tread depth measuring gauge.

## 4 Suspension:

- The suspension system plays a crucial role in handling added weight.
- Regularly inspect shocks, struts, and other suspension components.
- Verify the condition of the trailer hitching system.

## 5 Cooling and transmission systems:

- Towing generates extra heat, so ensure your cooling system functions optimally.
- Check the radiator, hoses, and thermostat.
- Automatic transmissions can overheat when towing; use the appropriate gear (usually "tow/haul" mode) to prevent excessive strain.

Remember that safe towing involves more than just attaching a trailer. Regularly inspect your pickup truck and promptly address any issues to ensure a smooth and safe towing experience.

For additional information related to driver safety, visit [MyNSightOnline.com/DriveThe5](https://MyNSightOnline.com/DriveThe5)

For additional maintenance tips, visit Advance Auto Parts: 10 Maintenance Tips Before You Tow ([shop.advanceautoparts.com/r/advice/car-truck-mods/10-towing-maintenance-tips](https://shop.advanceautoparts.com/r/advice/car-truck-mods/10-towing-maintenance-tips)).



For assistance with risk management services or safety resources, contact us at [RMSolutions@nationwide.com](mailto:RMSolutions@nationwide.com) or 1-800-260-1356.

# Toolbox Talk

Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

## Vehicle maintained: Maintenance on pickups towing trailers

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### Discussion notes:

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