




# Drive the 5

## Vehicle maintained

The following pages contain Action Card handouts drivers can keep in their vehicles for reference after corresponding toolbox talks. Please note the following for successful printing:

- Handouts are set as 4-up, with 4 cards per page
- Each page has visible crop marks, so a commercial printer can trim to a final size of 4.25" x 5.5"
- 4-color digital printing is recommended
- Print on durable card stock such as 60-80 lb. laser cover paper (matte)
- If printing on 8.5" x 11" sheets, make sure you are printing at 100%, center content and print double sided—do not scale to fit page
- Use the index below to determine the pages you would like to print—make sure you select BOTH pages for each subject

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

NationwideAgribusiness.com

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## Prioritize brake safety

**Brakes play** a crucial role in accident prevention. Don't neglect them!



### 1 Inspect brake pads:

- For drum brakes, ensure they have at least **1/4 inch** of pad material.
- For disc brakes, verify they have at least **1/8 inch** of pad material.
- Look out for cracks in drums and rotors.

### 2 Check for air leaks:

- During airbrake checks, listen carefully for any leaks.
- Investigate any audible air leaks within the system.
- Confirm that the low air pressure signal activates as expected.
- Always verify if the low air pressure signal activates at the specified P.S.I.

### 3 Assess brake tubing:

- Inspect brake tubing for signs of damage:
  - No broken, cracked, or crimped airlines.
  - No improper repairs or wear.
  - Ensure reinforcement ply and plastic tubing retain their original color—white showing through on plastic is a violation.

### 4 Inspect brake chambers:

- Look for non-manufactured holes.
- Ensure brake components are securely in place and fully operational.

### 5 Adjust brakes properly:

- Verify adjustment based on air chamber size.

For further guidance, refer to Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration 49 CFR Part 382 ([ecfr.gov/current/title-49/part-382](https://ecfr.gov/current/title-49/part-382)).

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## Prioritize light safety

Don't overlook vehicle maintenance—  
it's crucial for accident prevention!



- 1 Check light functionality:**
  - Before hitting the road, always verify that all lights are working.
  - Even during daylight driving, inspect headlights—they might be needed unexpectedly.
- 2 Keep lights clean:**
  - Regularly wipe off dirt and clear snow or ice from lights.
  - Note that LED lights don't generate heat to melt snow or ice.
- 3 Inspect trailer lights:**
  - Ensure the power connection between the power unit and trailer is intact.
  - Confirm that trailer lights are functioning correctly.
- 4 Verify signal lights:**
  - Test turn signals, stop lamps, and hazard lights.
  - Make sure they operate as expected.
- 5 Conspicuity tape:**
  - Check conspicuity tape is in the required locations.
  - Clean tape will enhance visibility and safety on the road.

For further guidance, refer to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration 49 CFR Part 393 Subpart B ([ecfr.gov/current/title-49/part-393/subpart-B](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-49/part-393/subpart-B)).

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## Load distribution and securement



### 1 Know the weight and length:

- Know the weight and dimensions of the cargo you're transporting.

### 2 Use sufficient securement devices:

- For items up to ten feet, have at least two securement devices.
- Add another device for each additional segment of 10 feet.
- If securing vehicles or wheeled equipment, use 4 direct tiedowns at axles from securement point to equipment with a tensioning device.
- Ensure the devices can secure at least 50% of the load's weight.

### 3 Check securement devices:

- Be aware of the working load limit of your securement devices.
- Inspect them to ensure they're in good working condition.
- Avoid using unapproved or defective securement devices.

### 4 Inspect securement points:

- Examine the securement points on the trailer or truck bed.
- Ensure no defects and that they are working properly.

### 5 Load distribution:

- Follow the 60-40 rule when loading a trailer:
  - Place 60% of the weight in front of the axle.
  - Distribute 40% behind the axle.

For further guidance, refer to Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration 49 CFR Part 393 (ecfr.gov/current/title-49/part-393).

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## Maintenance on pickups towing trailers



**Proper maintenance is essential** to ensure safe towing — remember these 5 key maintenance tips:

### 1 Fluid levels:

- Regularly check engine oil, transmission fluid, and coolant.
- Low fluid levels can cause damage; consider more frequent oil changes.

### 2 Brakes:

- Ensure good brake condition.
- Check pads, rotors, and fluid.
- Faulty brakes are dangerous when towing heavy loads.

### 3 The pressure:

- Properly inflate tires.
- Refer to your manual for recommended pressure.
- Use a gauge, not a tire thumper.

### 4 Suspension:

- Inspect shocks, struts, and hitching system.

### 5 Cooling and transmission:

- Optimize cooling system.
- Use “tow/haul” mode to prevent transmission overheating.

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](http://shop.advanceautoparts.com/r/advice/car-truck-mods/10-towing-maintenance-tips)).

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## Maintenance on pickups towing trailers



**Proper maintenance is essential** to ensure safe towing — remember these 5 key maintenance tips:

### 1 Fluid levels:

- Regularly check engine oil, transmission fluid, and coolant.
- Low fluid levels can cause damage; consider more frequent oil changes.

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# Tire safety

Prioritize vehicle maintenance for accident prevention.



## 1 Tire tread depth:

- Ensure tires exceed FMCSA minimum requirements.
- Steer tires: minimum **4/32 inches**.
- Drive/trailer tires: minimum **2/32 inches**.
- Use a tread depth indicator to measure within major grooves.

## 2 Proper tire inflation

- Check tire air pressure as specified on the tire or in the vehicle's door frame.
- Listen for any audible air leaks during inflation.

## 3 Sidewall inspection:

- Examine sidewalls for damage
  - Look for signs of bulging, dry rot, cuts, or exposed ply.
  - Pay special attention to the area between dual tires.
  - Remove any foreign material stuck to the sidewalls.

## 4 Weight load and speed considerations:

- Ensure each tire's weight load doesn't exceed the maximum capacity marked on the sidewall.
- Determine the tire's speed rating and do not exceed.

## 5 Avoid contact with vehicle parts:

- Prevent tires from touching any part of the vehicle.
- Steer tires: turn wheels to maximum in both directions to check clearance.
- Verify the suspension system prevents frame-tire contact.

For further guidance, refer to Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration 49 CFR Part 393 Subpart G ([ecfr.gov/current/title-49/part-393/subpart-G](https://ecfr.gov/current/title-49/part-393/subpart-G)).

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## Trailer maintenance and inspection



Taking care of your trailer isn't just about safety—it's also about keeping things running smoothly. Regular maintenance helps prevent accidents and costly breakdowns.

- 1 Pre- and post-trip inspections:**
  - Regularly inspect your trailer to catch issues before they worsen.
  - Ensure every part of the trailer can support heavy loads.
- 2 Tire inflation:**
  - Maintain proper air pressure to maximize tire life.
  - Pay special attention to inside dual trailer tires.
  - Regularly check tires for cuts, punctures, or valve core stem issues.
- 3 Safety features:**
  - Inspect air lines, wiring for lights, and anti-lock braking system.
  - Inspections and maintenance ensure safe operation during emergencies.
- 4 Coupling devices:**
  - Adjust fifth wheel if needed and lubricate properly.
  - Inspect pintle hooks and eyes for excessive wear—do not grease.
  - Confirm the trailer receiver and hitch ball are compatible sizes and securely pinned.
- 5 Lights and conspicuity tape:**
  - Test all trailer lights before use and keep conspicuity tape clean.
  - Look for signs of condensation within light assemblies to prevent electrical issues.

For further guidance, refer to the National Trailer Manufacturers-Trailer Maintenance ([trailersafetyweek.com/trailer-maintenance](http://trailersafetyweek.com/trailer-maintenance)).

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