



Safe Driving

Before starting any journey ensure that you carry out and document a vehicle walk round check. Ensure that both the vehicle and trailer are safe and roadworthy. Ensure that any defects are rectified and the repair documented.

- **Always** respect EU Drivers' hours rules in particular with regard to breaks, rests and driving time.
- **Always** wear a seat belt if one is fitted.
- **Always** plan your route and allow sufficient time.
- **Always** ensure vehicle and axle weights do not exceed the permissible vehicle and legal limit.
- **Always** ensure that your load is safely secured.

On the road:

- Respect the Highway Code, road markings and signage.
- Be alert to all traffic situations ahead, on both sides and to the rear of the vehicle.
- Never use mobile phones, (unless approved hands-free), whilst driving or the engine is running.
- Be alert for illegal acts and the errors of others, which could cause a danger to you or your load.
- Be willing to yield your right of way to prevent accidents.
- Do not tail-gate (drive too close to the vehicle in front).
- Be particularly cautious approaching intersections and when leaving traffic lights (cyclists!)
- Adjust your driving to the special hazards of: pedestrians, the road, the weather, traffic, and the degree of light.
- Be aware of the added danger brought on by your own emotions such as anger or worry.
- Try to minimise stress by allocating a greater journey time for unforeseen delays.
- Be patient and considerate to all road users.
- Do not drive if you are tired.
- Avoid distractions – loud music / trying to read maps / inserting CDs / tuning radio / eating / drinking.

In bad weather in particular:

- Ensure you can see and be seen - lights are clean and working.
- Windows and mirrors are clean and demisted.
- Ensure tyres are legal – minimum 1mm / $\frac{3}{4}$ of width / full circumference.
- Ensure windscreen wiper blades are not worn and exert enough pressure to ensure a clean sweep.

- Check your planned route is clear from delay.
- Ensure your mobile phone is fully charged.
- Ensure you have sufficient fuel.

Additional items may be required:- road map (you may not be able to rely on a satnav if diversions are in place) – ice scraper – torch – warm clothes/blanket – food and a warm drink in a flask – sunglasses.

Remember when roads are slippery, stopping distances will be reduced. Drive with care, even on roads which have been treated. Get the feel of the road. Adjust your speed accordingly. Rising temperatures can greatly increase the slipperiness of ice and snow and winter road surfaces can increase stopping distances from three to twelve times.

Driving in Fog:

- Be seen – used dipped headlights.
- Less than 100m (328 ft) visibility – use fog lights.
- When visibility improves – switch off fog lights.
- Patchy/drifted fog – do not speed up when visibility seems to improve.
- Keep a safe distance from the vehicle ahead.

Driving in rain:

- Slow down – it can take twice as long to stop.
- If the vehicle loses grip/'aquaplanes' on surface water, take the foot off the accelerator to slow down.
- Do not brake or steer suddenly.

Snow, Ice and Freezing Conditions:

- Before driving remove any snow from roof.
- Watch out for vehicles spreading salt (40mph) and take extra care that it is safe to overtake.
- Flashing beacons can indicate snow clearing.
- Skidding – remove cause – depress clutch – Steer into skid.
- Do not brake – this will lock wheels.
- When vehicle straightens steer along road.

Driving through Floods:

- Drive through floods in first gear.
- Keep revs high and endeavour not to stop.
- Test brakes at first safe opportunity.

Windy Weather:

- High sided vehicles are particularly vulnerable.
- Cross winds – beware cyclists/motorcyclists/ horse rider.



Safe working practice

‘Every employee has a duty of care to take reasonable care for the health and safety of himself and other persons who may be affected by his acts or omissions at work, and to co-operate with their employer so far as is necessary to enable that duty to be performed or complied with.’

Section 7 Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

Work safely

- Ensure that all Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is stored safely, fits well, is in a good state of repair and fit for purpose.
- Always wear well fitting, slip-resistant safety footwear when working on the vehicle, in industrial areas or offloading and loading vehicles.
- Keep the soles of footwear clean to reduce the risk of slipping.
- Do not use any equipment or carry out any task unless you have been trained and authorized to do so and have the correct PPE.
- Ensure that any equipment to be used is in a good state of repair and fit for purpose before each use – NEVER use defective equipment.
- Know and respect weight limits – vehicles / fork trucks / tail lifts.
- Stop, Think, and Assess any manual handling task.
- Can you carry out the task safely for yourself and others?
- Always respect the Highway Code, road and site speed limits and signage.
- Employees have a duty of care to adhere to any safe working practices and to report any incident or ‘near miss’ which impacts on health and safety.

Getting on and off the vehicle

- Do not jump down – this is bad for the knees and you are more likely to trip or fall.
- When exiting or climbing into the cab establish three points of contact.
- When exiting the cab - face the vehicle and use handrails, not the steering wheel.
- Always use steps and handrails if provided – if not sit down and lower yourself down.
- Never climb down with anything in your hands – put paperwork on the seat.
- Check round steps for trip or slip hazards - uneven surfaces/ potholes /debris/grease.
- Before mounting the catwalk ensure that it is secure – be constantly aware of the gap between the trailer and the vehicle.
- Ensure correct PPE – slip resistant safety shoes, with sufficient grip, in a good state of repair and laces fastened.

Keep the vehicle safe

- Carry out and record pre-use vehicle safety checks.
- Ensure steps/hand-holds are in good condition.
- Report broken boards and any other objects that could cause you to fall.
- Keep the load area tidy – pick up lose ropes/straps and other material, which could cause you to trip.
- Check that all securing equipment is safely stored away – report any missing, damaged equipment.
- Clean up spills and dirt such as diesel or mud on the catwalk or access steps.
- In winter look for obvious signs of ice around the vehicle.

Keep the vehicle secure

- Never leave a vehicle unattended with the keys in the cab – not even for a second i.e. when fuelling or asking for instructions.
- If asked to re-deliver at a delivery address, always check with the your transport office/client and do not move until the instruction is confirmed – however plausible the reason may be!
- Always park overnight at ‘approved’ locations. Do not park outside delivery addresses or industrial estates. Always ensure that there are other drivers and vehicles in the near vicinity and ensure there is good lighting.
- Always drive with the doors locked to avoid attempts by thieves to enter your vehicle when you are stationary.
- Beware of bogus distractions. Some may be genuine, but there are many reports of drivers being stopped by ‘other drivers’ for assistance with alleged punctures or accidents. Once stopped the vehicle and the load are at a heightened risk.
- No careless talk. If your load is valuable, keep it to yourself and deliver the load safely.
- If offenders are disturbed whilst stealing from the load, do not leave the cab. Ensure that the doors are locked, start the engine, switch on the lights and if necessary sound the vehicle’s horn to attract attention.
- Always be alert. Most thieves are opportunists.