

CDL Pre-Trip Inspection Checklist

Engine Compartment (Engine Off)

- Leaks and Hoses:
 - Look for puddles on the ground.
 - Look for dripping fluids on the underside of the engine and transmission.
 - Check hoses for leaks.
- Oil Level:
 - Point out where dipstick is located.
 - Make sure oil level is adequate.
- Coolant Level:
 - Check the coolant level.
- Power Steering Fluid:
 - Indicate where dipstick is located.
 - Check that the power steering fluid is adequate.
- Engine Compartment Belts:
 - Check the power steering, water pump, alternator, and air compressor belts for snugness, cracks, or fraying.
 - If any of the components listed above are not belt drive, you must tell the examiner which components are not belt driven and make sure components are operating properly, are not damaged or leaking and are mounted securely.

Cab Check (Engine On)

- Clutch/Gearshift:
 - Depress the clutch.
 - Place the gearshift lever in neutral.
 - Start engine and release clutch slowly.
- Oil Pressure Gauge:
 - Make sure the gauge is functioning.
 - Check that the pressure gauge shows increasing or normal oil pressure, or that the warning light goes off.
- Temperature Gauge:
 - Check that the gauge is working properly.
 - The temperature should gradually climb to a normal operating range, or the temperature light should be off.
- Ammeter/Voltmeter:
 - Make sure the gauges show the alternator and/or generator is charging or that the warning light is off.

- Air Gauge:
 - Make sure the gauge is functioning properly.
 - Build air pressure to governor cut-out, roughly 120-140 psi.
- Mirrors and Windshield:
 - Mirrors should be clean and adjusted properly.
 - Windshield should be free of cracks and unnecessary decals.
- Safety Belt:
 - Check that the safety belt is securely mounted, adjusts and latches properly and is not ripped or frayed.
- Emergency Equipment:
 - Check for spare electrical fuses, unless circuit breaker equipped vehicle.
 - If vehicle is not equipped with electrical fuses, must mention this to the examiner.
 - Check for three reflective triangles.
 - Check for properly rated and charged fire extinguisher. A:B:C for wood, paper, and cloth; B:C10 for electrical and liquids. Know how to use before driving.
- Steering Play:
 - Non-power steering: check for excessive play (should not exceed 10 degrees).
 - Power steering: check for excessive play with the engine running (should not exceed 10 degrees).
- Wipers/Washers:
 - Check that the wiper arms and blades are secure, not damaged and operate smoothly.
 - If equipped, windshield wipers must operate properly.
- Lights/Reflectors/Reflector Tape Condition:
 - Make sure the turn signals, four-way emergency flashers, high beam indicator lights, and ABS indicator work on the dashboard.
 - Check that external lights and reflectors are clean and functional, including clearance lights, headlights (high and low beam), taillights, backing lights, turn signals, four-way flashers, brake lights, red and amber reflectors, reflector tape condition
 - Checks of brake, turn signal and four-way flasher functions must be done separately.
- Horn:
 - Check that horn works properly.
- Heater/Defroster:
 - Test that the heater and defroster work.

- Pedals:
 - Check for obstructions under or around the floor pedals.
 - Check for good pedal pad or grooved surface.
 - Check for proper pedal working order: Clutch is allowed 1 to 1-1/2 of freeplay and should return to normal position after pressed to ground; brake pedal should be firm and hard when pressed on, not go all the way to the floor and return; accelerator should be able to be pressed to the floor and return to original position.

Brake Check

- Parking Brake Check:
 - Pulling unit: With the parking brake engaged (trailer brakes released on combination vehicles), check that the parking brake will hold vehicle by gently trying to pull forward with parking brake on.
 - Trailer: With the parking brake released and the trailer parking brake engaged, check that the trailer parking brake will hold vehicle by gently trying to pull forward with the trailer parking brake on.
- Hydraulic Brake Check:
 - Pump the brake pedal three times and hold it down for 5 seconds. The brake pedal should not move during the 5 seconds.
 - If equipped with a hydraulic brake reserve (back-up) system, with the key off, depress the brake pedal and listen for the sound of the reserve system electric motor.
 - Check that the warning buzzer or light is off.
- Air Brake Check:
 - System Leak Check: Shut off the engine, chock your wheels, release the tractor protection valve and parking brake (push in), fully apply the foot brake and hold it for 1 minute. Check the air gauge to see if the air pressure drops more than 3 psi in 1 minute (single vehicle) or 4 psi in 1 minute (combination vehicles). After checking the brake with brake applies, release the foot brake and watch the gauges with brake unapplied for one minute. Check to see if the air pressure drops more than 2 pounds in one minute (single vehicles) or 3 pounds in one minute (combination vehicles).
 - Emergency System Check/Fan Down: Turn electrical power on and begin fanning off the air pressure by rapidly applying and releasing the foot brake. Low air warning devices (buzzer, light, other) should activate before air pressure drops

below 60 psi. Continue to fan off the air pressure. Normally within the range of 20-40 psi on tractor-trailer combination vehicle, the tractor protection valve and parking brake valve should close (pop out). On other combination vehicle types and single vehicle types, the parking brake valve should close (pop out).

- Service Brake Check: Pull forward at 5 mph, apply the service brake and stop. Check to see that the vehicle does not pull to either side and that it stops when brake is applied.

External Components

- Steering Box/Hoses:
 - Check that the steering box is mounted and secure.
 - Look for steering fluid leaks.
- Steering Linkage:
 - Check that the connecting links, arms, and rods from the steering box to the wheel are not worn or cracked.
 - Make sure the joints and sockets are not worn or loose and that there are no missing nuts, bolts or cotter keys.

Suspension

- Springs/Air/Torque:
 - Look for missing, shifted, broken or cracked leaf springs.
 - Look for broken or bent coil springs.
 - Check air ride suspension for damage and leaks.
- Mounts:
 - Check for cracked or broken spring hangers, missing or damaged bushings, and broken or missing axle mounting bolts, u-bolts or other parts. (Mounts should be checked at each point where they are secure to the vehicle fram and axle)
- Shock Absorbers:
 - Check that shocks are secure and without leaks.
 - Be prepared to perform the same suspension components inspection on every axle.

Brakes

- Slack Adjustors and Push Rods:
 - Check for broken or missing parts.

- For manual adjusters, the brake push rod should not move more than an inch (with the brakes released).
- Brake Chambers:
 - Should not be leaking, cracked, or dented and mounted securely.
- Brake Hoses:
 - Check for cracked, leaking, or worn hoses, lines and couplings.
- Drum Brake:
 - Check for cracks, dents, or holes. Also check for loose or missing bolts.
 - Check for contaminants such as debris or oil/grease.
 - Brake linings or pads (where visible) should not be worn or excessively thin.
 - NOTE: Be prepared to perform the same brake components inspection on every axle.

Wheels

- Rims:
 - Look for damaged or bent rims. Rims cannot have welding repairs.
- Tires:
 - Tread Depth: Check for minimum tread depth (4/32 on steering axle tires and 2/32 on all other tires).
 - Tire Condition: Check that the tread is evenly worn and look for cuts or other damage to tread or sidewalls. Also, make sure that valve caps and stems are not missing, broken or damaged.
 - Tire Inflation: Check for proper inflation by using a tire gauge or mallet.
 - There are no mismatch tires.
- Hub Oil Seals/Axle Seals:
 - Make sure grease and axle seals aren't leaking.
- Lug Nuts:
 - Check that all lug nuts are present, free of cracks and distortions and show no signs of looseness such as rust trails or shiny threads.
 - Make sure all bolt holes are not cracked or distorted.
 - NOTE: Be prepared to perform same wheel inspection on every axle.

Side of Vehicle

- Doors and Mirrors:
 - Check that doors are not damaged and can be opened properly.
 - Make sure mirror and mirror brackets are secure.

- Fuel Tank:
 - Check that tanks are secure, caps are tight, and there are no visible leaks.
- Battery/Box:
 - Check that the battery is secure and connections are tight.
 - Make sure the battery is free of corrosion.
 - Check that battery box and cover or door is secure.
- Drive Shaft:
 - Check that the drive shaft is not bent or cracked.
 - Make sure the couplings are secure and free of foreign objects.
- Exhaust System:
 - Check system for damage and signs of leaks such as rust or carbon soot.
 - Check that the system is connected and mounted properly.
- Frame:
 - Check for cracks, broken welds, holes, or other damage to the longitudinal frame members, cross members, box, and floor.

Rear of Vehicle

- Splash Guard:
 - If equipped, make sure splash guards are not damaged and mounted properly.
- Doors/Ties/Lifts:
 - Make sure the doors and hinges are not damaged and all work properly.
 - Ties, straps, and binders must all be secure.
 - If equipped with a cargo lift, check for leaking and damaged parts.

Tractor/Coupling

- Air/Electric Lines:
 - Listen for air leaks. Check that air hoses and electrical lines are not cut, chafed, spliced or worn.
 - Make sure air and electrical lines are not tangled, pinched, or dragging against tractor parts.
- Catwalk:
 - Check that the catwalk is solid, free of objects, and securely bolted to tractor frame.
- Mounting Bolts:
 - Check for loose or missing mounting brackets, clamps, bolts, or nuts. Both the fifth wheel and slide mounting must be solidly attached.

- On other types of coupling systems (i.e. ball hitch, pintle hook, etc.), inspect all coupling components and mounting brackets for missing or broken parts.
- Hitch Release Lever:
 - Check to see that the hitch release lever is in place and is secure.
- Locking Jaws:
 - Look into fifth wheel gap and check that locking jaws are fully closed around the kingpin.
 - On other types of coupling systems (i.e. ball hitch, pintle hook, etc.), inspect the locking mechanisms for missing or broken parts and make sure it is locked securely. If present, safety cables or chains must be secure and free of kinks and excessive slack.
- Fifth Wheel Skid Plate:
 - Check for proper lubrication and that the fifth wheel skid plate is securely mounted to the platform and that all bolts and pins are secure and not missing.
- Platform (Fifth Wheel):
 - Check for cracks or breaks in the platform structure which supports the fifth wheel skid plate.
- Release Arm (Fifth Wheel):
 - If equipped, make sure the release arm is in the engaged position and the safety latch is in place.
- Kingpin/Apron/Gap:
 - Make sure the kingpin is not bent.
 - Make sure the visible part of the apron is not bent, cracked, or broken.
 - Check that the trailer is laying flat on the fifth wheel skid plate (no gap).
- Locking Pins (Fifth Wheel):
 - If equipped, look for loose or missing pins in the slide mechanism of the fifth wheel.
 - Make sure locking pins are fully engaged.
 - Check that the fifth wheel is positioned properly so the tractor frame will clear the landing gear and the tractor will not strike the trailer during turns.
- Sliding Pintle:
 - Check that the sliding pintle is secure with no loose or missing nuts or bolts and cotter pin is in place.
- Tongue or Draw-Bar:
 - Check that the tongue/draw-bar is not bent or twisted and checks for broken welds and stress cracks.
 - Check that the tongue/draw-bar is not worn excessively.
- Tongue Storage Area:
 - Check that the storage area is solid and secured to the tongue.

- Check that the cargo in the storage area (i.e. chains, binders, etc.) are secure.

Trailer

Trailer Front –

- Air/Electrical Connections:
 - Check that trailer air connectors are sealed and in good condition.
 - Make sure glad hands are locked in place, free of damage and oil/grease that can cause air leaks.
 - Make sure the trailer electrical plug is firmly seated and locked in place.
- Header Board:
 - If equipped, check the header board to see that it is secure, free of damage and strong enough to contain cargo.
 - If equipped, the canvas or tarp carrier must be mounted and fastened securely.
 - On enclosed trailers, check the front area for signs of damage such as cracks, bulges or holes.

Side of Trailer –

- Landing Gear:
 - Check that the landing gear is fully raised, has no missing parts, crank handle is secure and the support frame is not damaged.
 - If power operated, check for air or hydraulic leaks.
- Doors/Ties/Lifts:
 - If equipped, check that the doors are not damaged. Check that doors open, close and latch properly from the outside.
 - Check that ties, straps, chains and binders are secure.
- Frame:
 - Look for cracks, broken welds, holes or other damage to the frame, cross members, box and floor.
- Tandem Release Arm/Locking Pins:
 - If equipped, make sure the locking pins are locked in place and release arm is secured.