



Trip Preparation: Last-Minute Checklist

- Check the tow vehicle. Check and replenish engine fluid levels and wiper fluid. Towing puts extra stress on the radiator, brakes and transmission. Make sure fluid levels are correct.
- Make sure the ball on the tow vehicle is the correct size for the trailer.
- Make sure the rearview mirrors are properly adjusted and you know how to use them.
- Check tire pressure in the tires of the tow vehicle and the trailer. Improper tire pressure is responsible for most towing problems. Check tire condition.
- Make sure that the trailer is level so the horse is not always fighting his balance by traveling uphill or downhill. This movement can also cause the trailer to sway and cause other safety problems.
- Check lug nuts on wheels. Wheel nuts and bolts should be torqued before first road use after each wheel removal. Check and re-torque after the first 10 miles, 25 miles, and again at 50 miles. Check periodically thereafter.
- Check inside the trailer for bee and wasp nests.
- Check over your hitch, coupler, breakaway brake battery and safety chains. Make sure the brakes and all lights are working properly before you load the horses.
- When horses are loaded, make sure all doors are latched properly and horses are tied.
- Drive down the driveway, and before you drive onto the main road, get out and check over everything again. Something you overlooked may make itself apparent by then. (Most accidents happen to people who have been hauling just long enough to get lackadaisical.)
- If you happen to stop somewhere where the rig has been left unattended, check everything all over again. Someone may have been tampering with the trailer or horses.

Equine Trailering Tips courtesy of USRider Equestrian Motor Plan in cooperation with nationally respected equine trailering expert and author Neva Kittrell Scheve and veterinarian and author James M. Hamilton, DVM.



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