

How to Hitch Up a Trailer

Hitching up a trailer is usually a one-person job, but it can be easier if someone helps you. Follow these basic steps:

- Back your tow vehicle close to the trailer. This is easier and safer than picking up and pulling the trailer to your vehicle.
- Open the coupler locking device.
- Use the Jack to raise the front of the trailer. Place coupler over the hitch ball then lower the trailer until it is on the hitch ball.
- Check the coupling to make sure the ball clamp is below the ball and not on top of it.
- Latch the coupler and make sure it is locked in place with coupler pin.
- Make sure your jack is raised.
- Attach the surge brake breakaway cable or chain to your tow vehicle, allow enough slack for you to make tight turns.
- Attach the safety chains crossing them under the trailer.
- Connect the trailer lighting system of your tow vehicle and check it to see if it works.



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Trailer Loading

Loading a trailer can make all the difference in how it tows. When loading, keep in mind that the tongue weight should be 10% to 15% of the overall trailer weight. One of the main causes of trailer sway is not having a large enough percentage of the cargo weight on the trailer tongue. To help prevent the trailer from swaying back and forth try placing heavier cargo in the front of the trailer, ahead of the trailer's axle.

Driving

A trailer adds weight and length to the tow vehicle. The more weight the more time needed to speed up and slow down. Always allow for extra time when switching lanes, stopping and passing other vehicles. To assist in slowing down, trailer brakes may be a good option. Because the trailer adds length and does not follow the exact path as the vehicle on turns, remember to swing out wider when traveling around bends and corners.

Parking

It makes things easier to have someone stand outside your vehicle and guide you while you park, especially when parking a trailer. When you find the right spot, put your vehicle in park, apply the parking brake, and let go of the brake pedal. Then stick blocks or something behind the tires to prevent them from rolling.

