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# IMPORTANT TOWING INFORMATION

**1-877-HITCH-IT(448-2448)**

## YOUR TOWING EQUIPMENT

### Trailer Hitches, Receivers, and Ball Mounts

Select these products by their gross trailer weight and tongue weight ratings. Select hitches and receivers by specific vehicles.

### Hitch Balls

Select by gross trailer weight rating, mounting platform thickness and hole size, and coupler socket size. Platform must be at least 3/8" thick. Hole must not exceed threaded shank diameter by more than 1/16". Use lock washer. Tighten per instructions. When tightened, shank must protrude beyond bottom of nut. Gross trailer weight rating and ball diameter are marked on **DRAW-TITE** balls. **Hitch Balls and all friction points should be greased on a regular basis.**

### Trailer Couplers

The coupler socket should be smooth, clean, and lightly lubricated. Tighten or adjust per coupler manufacturer's instructions.

### Safety Chains

Connect safety chains properly **EVERY TIME YOU TOW**. Cross chains under coupler. Attach securely to the hitch or tow vehicle so they can't bounce loose. Leave only enough slack to permit full turning. Too much slack may prevent chains from maintaining control if other connections separate. Don't let chains drag on the road.

### Trailer Lights, Turn Signals, Electric Brakes and Break Away Switch Connections

Make these safety-critical connections **EVERY TIME YOU TOW**, no matter how short the trip. Check operation, including electric brake manual control, before getting on the road.

### Sway Controls

Sway controls can lessen the effects of sudden maneuvers, wind gusts and buffeting caused by other vehicles. We recommend them for trailers with large surface areas, such as travel trailers. Adjustable friction models can help control trailers with low tongue weight percentage.

### Other Useful Equipment

**AIR SPRINGS, AIR SHOCKS, or HELPER SPRINGS** are useful for some hitch applications. A **TRANSMISSION COOLER** may be necessary for heavy towing. Many states require **TOWING MIRRORS** on both sides.

### Tire Inflation

Check often. Follow tow vehicle and trailer manufacturers' recommendations. Improper tire inflation can cause trailer sway.

### Check Your Equipment/Replace Worn Parts

Check ball, coupler, chains, retaining pins and clips, and all other connections **EVERY TIME YOU**

- [Gooseneck Hitches](#)
- [Hitches](#)
- [Hitch Covers](#)
- [Jacks](#)
- [Lighting - Automobile](#)
- [Lighting - Safety \(Code 3\)](#)
- [Lighting - Trailer](#)
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- [Trans-Coolers](#)
- [6 & 7 Way Wiring Guide](#)
- [Warranty on Draw-Tite Products](#)

**TOW.** Re-check at fuel and rest stops.

## SAFE TOWING TIPS

### No Passengers In Trailers!

Never allow people in trailers while towing, under any circumstances.

### Trailer Loading

Proper loading helps prevent sway. Place heavy objects on the floor ahead of the axle. Balance the load side-to-side. Secure it to prevent shifting. Tongue weight should be 10-15 percent of gross weight for most trailers. Too low a percentage of tongue weight can cause sway. **NEVER** load the trailer rear-heavy. **LOAD THE TRAILER HEAVIER IN FRONT.**

### Driving

The additional weight of a trailer affects acceleration, braking and handling. Allow extra time for passing, stopping, and changing lanes. Severe bumps can damage your towing vehicle, hitch and trailer. Drive slowly on rough roads. **STOP AND MAKE A THOROUGH INSPECTION IF ANY PART OF YOUR TOWING SYSTEM STRIKES THE ROAD. CORRECT ANY PROBLEMS BEFORE RESUMING TRAVEL.**

### Check For Excessive Sway and Eliminate It

Excessive sway can lead to loss of control. Sway motion should settle out quickly. Sway tends to increase on a downgrade. Starting slowing, increase speed in gradual steps. If sway occurs, adjust your trailer load and equipment. Repeat until the trailer is stable at highway speed. Do this whenever your trailer loading changes.

### If Your Trailer Suddenly Starts To Sway

Turbulence from another vehicle, a wind gust, or a downgrade can cause sudden sway. So can a shift of the trailer's load or a trailer tire blowout. **IF THE TRAILER SWAYS, IT IS THE DRIVER'S RESPONSIBILITY TO ASSESS THE SITUATION AND TAKE APPROPRIATE ACTION.** Below are suggestions that may apply, depending on conditions:

#### DO

- Reduce your speed gradually.
- Hold the steering wheel as steady as possible.
- If your trailer has electric brakes, apply the trailer brakes alone, without using the tow vehicle's brakes.

#### DON'T

- Don't hit your brake pedal hard unless absolutely necessary. A "jackknife" can result.
- Don't try to steer out of the sway condition. Sudden or violent steering can make it worse.
- Don't speed up. Sway increases as you go faster.
- Don't continue towing a trailer that tends to sway. You may lose control during an emergency maneuver or if the conditions listed above occur.



Please e-mail any questions or comments to [hitch@westelcom.com](mailto:hitch@westelcom.com)  
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