



**ESCAPADE TRAILER  
OWNER'S MANUAL**



# Escapade Trailers

## Owner's Manual and Safety and Product Information

### Disclaimer

Escapade reserves the right to make changes in design and specifications, and/or to make additions to or improvements in its product without imposing any obligations upon itself to install them on products previously manufactured.

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## INTRODUCTION / WARNINGS

Each of us at Escapade is dedicated to providing the products and service necessary for your total trailering experience. With this goal in mind, we offer the following suggestions:

- Please take the time to read the manual of product information. It is intended to familiarize you with the operation and maintenance of your new Escapade Trailer.
- California Sidecar / Escapade Trailer, Inc. encourages the safe operation of your motorcycle. Because many accidents involve untrained riders, we urge all riders to take a certified motorcycle course approved by the Motorcycle Safety Foundation (MSF). For information about the Motorcycle Safety Foundation and to find the location of an approved motorcycle course nearest you, you may call the national toll-free number (800) 446 - 9227.
- Follow the suggested safety and maintenance procedures listed in the manual.
- Throughout this Owners Manual you will find certain areas identified with the below listed symbols. It is important that you follow the instruction identified with these symbols:
  - ◆ WARNING      A special procedure that must be followed to avoid serious injury.
  - ◆ CAUTION      A special procedure that must be followed to avoid damage to the motorcycle or trailer.
  - ◆ NOTE          A commonly accepted practice or procedure de-signed to assist the owner.

We wish to “thank you” for purchasing an Escapade Trailer and we wish you a safe and pleasant trailering experience. We are continually striving to improve our product and we welcome your comments and suggestions. If we can be of any assistance, please feel free to contact us.

## LIMITED WARRANTY

A copy of Escapade's present warranty was included with your trailer when it left the factory. This warranty included a product registration form, and contains the following terms and conditions:

- NOTE: ALL WARRANTY REPAIRS MUST BE *PRE-APPROVED* BY CALLING THE MANUFACTURER'S SERVICE DEPARTMENT PRIOR TO ANY WORK BEING PERFORMED OR REIMBURSEMENT WILL BE DENIED.
- Warranty covers the Escapade Trailer for one (1) year except as provided elsewhere.
- The warranty covers all defects in material and workmanship. It does not apply to any product that has been subjected to misuse, incorrect installation or normal wear and usage.
- Defects in the fiberglass, paint, chrome trim, or other appearance parts are covered for a period of six (6) months provided the damage is not caused by road hazards or the environment (i.e. tree sap, rock chips, road salt, etc.)
- Warranty covers the chassis of the **Escapade Trailer** for a period of ten (10) years.
- Warranty extends only to the original owner of the product and is not transferable.
- Repair or replacement of the product shall be at the option of **California Sidecar / Escapade Trailer**.
- Should it become necessary to return the product, either in whole or in part, to the manufacturer's facility, the buyer/owner of the product will be responsible for pre-paid one-way shipping costs. The manufacturer will also pay one-way shipping to return the product to the customer. This warranty is governed by laws, which vary from state to state.
- The individual filing the warranty claim must provide proof of purchase and a Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) before any claim will be processed.

Escapade Trailer, Inc. specifically disallows other representations, warranty or liability related to the conditions of or use of the product and the purchaser shall be solely responsible for determining the adequacy of the product for any and all uses to which the purchaser shall apply the product. The application of the product by a purchaser shall not be subject to any implied warranty of fitness for that purpose. Statements of descriptions are for information only and are not made or given as warranty of the product in any way.

## PAINT

The same warnings and care instructions that apply to new and freshly painted automobiles apply to your new Escapade Trailer. The fresh paint requires **90 DAYS** after painting to cure and dry properly. Therefore, **DO NOT**, under any circumstances, cover your trailer or wax it for 90 days from the date of shipment!!! The paint is suitable for pin-striping or murals when it leaves the factory. Remove the stoneshield whenever possible within the first 90 days.

## COIL SPRING SHOCKS

Your Escapade Trailer is fitted with a pair of 5-way adjustable coil spring shocks that provide more than 3” of wheel movement to smooth out the roughest roads. These shocks are designed as a set, and when adjusted correctly provide optimum springing and damping for any load.

The coil spring shocks are adjustable for load by setting the shock spring preload. This adjustment is made by elevating the trailer, removing the trailer wheel and turning the shock preload body with the included spanner wrench. Repeat for the other side. See the chart below for recommended settings.

**NOTE:** See page 7 for lug nut torque values.

Preload Setting	Cargo Weight
1	empty trailer to 70lb
2 (default setting)	71-140lb
3	141-210lb
4	211-280lb
5	281-350lb

## LOADING / TONGUE WEIGHT

In addition to the required pre-ride checks of both your motorcycle and trailer, you should give utmost attention to proper trailer loading to ensure proper trailer balance and optimum trailer performance on the highways. The Escapade's engineered low center of gravity and independent wheel suspension help to maintain stability while traveling. Heaviest items should be placed on the floor of the trailer and over the axle centerline with remaining loads positioned front and rear to properly balance the trailer while attaining the correct "tongue weight".

Accordingly, an ideal "tongue weight" (as implied by the standards of the Trailer Industry) is defined as 10% to 15% (not to exceed 50lb) of the gross trailer weight. Excessive "tongue weight" will cause hitch fatigue or failure, excessive tire wear, and increased wear on the towing vehicle's components while insufficient "tongue weight" will lead to erratic trailer handling while underway.

**WARNING:** Determining the correct and safe tongue weight is your responsibility!!! Never exceed the manufacturer's gross vehicle weight rating as stated in the Motorcycle Owners Manual. Exceeding this limit could lead to death or serious personal injury. If the trailer fails to handle in a safe manner always STOP and correct the cause of the improper handling.

"Tongue Weight" may be routinely calculated by using a fish scale or bathroom scale. When calculating "tongue weight", the trailer must be in a loaded and horizontal position. The Escapade Trailer is engineered with built-in floor dividers to prevent items from shifting during travel. Nevertheless, the trailer load should be checked at planned stops as items can shift en route and have an effect on "tongue weight".

Additionally, adding to or removing items from the trailer load will effect "tongue weight" and may require recalculating the load to determine the correct "tongue weight".



## COUPLER LATCHING AND MAINTENANCE

The coupler on the Escapade Trailer tongue is designed for use with a 1 $\frac{1}{8}$ " ball only.

**CAUTION:** Use of any other ball diameter will create an extremely dangerous condition, which could result in the separation of the coupler and ball or ball failure.

Be sure the coupler is secured to the hitch ball by checking to see that the ball clamp is properly nested under the ball and not sitting on top of the ball. Once in place, push the lock lever down until it "locks" the ball clamp around the ball. Place a coupler lock or 5/16" bolt into the coupler latch to secure it.

**NOTE:** Recheck the tightness again after towing about 50 miles.

After the coupler is secure over the ball, attach safety chains and connect electrical wiring connectors.

### Periodic Maintenance:

The ball socket and clamp face should be smeared with a light coat of chassis grease to avoid abrasion, rust and noise.

**NOTE:** When parking or storing your trailer, keep the coupler off the ground so dirt will not build up in the ball socket.

Before using your trailer each time, check the hitch, ball, and coupler for signs of wear or damage.

**CAUTION:** Should the coupler housing become dented or deformed, the complete coupler should be replaced.

## SAFETY CHAIN CONNECTIONS

- Safety chains should be so connected that the slack for each length of chain between trailer and towing vehicle is the same and should have no more slack when in use than is necessary to permit proper turning of the towing vehicle.
- Utilizing two chains, the attachment should be on opposite sides of the trailer tongue or trailer frame and when passing forward to the towing vehicle, the chains must be crossed under the tongue and oriented in such a manner as to prevent the trailer tongue from dropping to the ground in the event of hitch failure.

**NOTE:** Safety chain should not be attached to trailer or towing vehicle members using fasteners common with the ball, nor attached directly to and part of the ball, nor should any operation be performed on the chain that might reduce its strength, subsequent to manufacture.

## TRAILER LID OPERATION

**NOTE:** The trailer lid lock incorporates a “double cam catch” and must click TWICE to be in the fully locked position.

**NOTE:** If your ESCAPADE trailer is equipped with the optional spoiler, DO NOT “push down” or “pull up” on the spoiler to raise or lower the lid as it could damage the spoiler or lid.

Periodically use a teflon lubricant on the tumbler lock assembly.

If your trailer is equipped with an optional luggage rack, the lid may support additional weight. Call our factory for assistance.

**NOTE:** Use care in loading items on to the lid as hard edges could damage the paint. Additionally, if metal tipped bungee cords are used to secure the load, they will scratch and damage the chrome luggage rack. Neither of these conditions would be covered under the terms of our warranty.

## TIRES AND WHEELS

The proper tire inflation pressure for your trailer tire is 18-25 lbs. (124-172 kPa) depending upon the load. The pressure should be checked and adjusted at least once a month. Check more often if subject to a wide range of outdoor temperatures as tire pressures vary with temperature changes. The inflation pressures specified are “cold inflation pressures” defined as the tire pressure after the trailer has not been pulled for at least three (3) hours.

Tire pressure may increase from 2 to 6 PSI during operation. This is a normal condition and tire pressure should not be reduced to compensate for this.

### SPECIFICATIONS

**Wheel / Rim:** 12 X 4 JA (4 bolt, 4” bolt diameter, 2½” rear space)

**Tire:** 4.80 X 12 (B) (4 ply rated; cold pressure rated to 465 lbs. of load at 25 PSI).

**NOTE:** These are standard utility trailer size tires and wheels. Using oversize tires or increasing tire pressures to a level higher than recommended will not increase the Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR).

### HUBS

For maximum performance from your tires and to avoid damage to your trailer, observe the following precautions:

- Any replacement hub must accept the correct bearing and matching cup (see table, pg. 12).
- Torque all lug nuts holding the wheel to 60 ft. lbs.

### TRAILING ARMS

No maintenance is required for the trailing arm bearings for the life of the trailer. However, if the trailing arm is removed for any reason the following steps must be followed.

1. Torque the hex nut to 14 ft. lbs while moving swing-arm up and down.. **DO NOT BACK OFF FOR ADJUSTMENT.** Insufficient torque to the lock nut may cause excessive lateral movement of the trailing arm.
2. Replace cotter pin with new. Do not reuse old cotter pin.

## WHEEL BEARINGS

**WARNING:** Wheel bearings and cups will “seat” in the wheel hub the first time the trailer is towed. It is VERY IMPORTANT to check the trailer wheels for any “Play” after approximately 200 miles of initial use. To accomplish this, simply elevate the trailer so the wheel is off the ground. Then move the wheel from side to side by grasping the tire / wheel at the 3 o'clock and 9 o'clock positions with your right and left hands respectively, and alternately “pushing and pulling” in and out on the wheel. If the wheel feels too loose (e.g. lateral play is greater than 0.001in to 0.010in) you will need to remove the wheel, hub cap and dust cover. Remove the cotter pin and tighten the castle nut 1 or 2 notches. Then, insert a **NEW** cotter pin, install the dust cap, hub cap, and wheel. Repeat the process for the other wheel. FAILURE TO CHECK THE HUBS FOR EXCESSIVE PLAY COULD RESULT IN DAMAGING THE WHEEL HUBS AND/OR WHEEL BEARINGS. Additionally, due to lack of use as well as climate conditions, WHEEL BEARINGS SHOULD BE CLEANED AND REPACKED (PER THE FOLLOWING PROCEDURE) AT THE BEGINNING OF EVERY RIDING SEASON AND AFTER EVERY 7500 MILES OF USE.

## WHEEL BEARING MAINTENANCE

### Wheel Bearing Removal:

**NOTE:** Before starting the discussion of wheel bearing maintenance, please familiarize yourself with the standard roller bearing nomenclature used in the Owner's Manual.

1. Remove lug nuts and wheel assembly. Remove the dust cap, cotter pin, adjusting nut (castle nut) and washer from the wheel spindle.
2. Pull the wheel hub towards you to loosen the outer bearing cone. Don't Let the cone fall to the ground. As the hub is removed, the inner bearing and grease seal will come with it. Observe which direction the inner seal is facing. Pry out the inner seal and discard.
3. Remove all old lubricant from the hub assembly and wheel spindle with kerosene or mineral spirits.

**CAUTION:** do not use gasoline to clean and remove the old lubricant). Inspect the spindle for scoring, bending, thread or other damage. A light grease coating on the spindle will make bearing installation easier and prevent rust from forming.

4. Inspect bearing cups in the hub for pitting, metal flaking, scoring, rust or other obvious damage. Remove any damaged cups. Replace cups and cones in matched sets only; not one at a time.
5. If replacing cup use cup driver or mild steel bar to press or drive the new cup into the hub assembly until solidly seated against the hub shoulder. Be careful not to damage cup surface. **NEVER** use a bearing cone to drive a cup.
6. Using a long bristled brush and kerosene or mineral spirits, wash all old lubricant from bearing cones. Allow to air dry. Once cleaned, inspect cones for wear, metal flaking, rust, cage damage or other visual damage. Replace all damaged cones with matching cups.
7. Repack cones immediately after inspection or fresh from carton. To hand pack cones, force wheel bearing grease under the cage between the rollers from the large end of the rollers until it shows at the small end. Fill the hub with grease to the inside diameter of the cup.
8. Install the repacked inner cone in hub (the cone which slides on the wheel spindle first), then install the new grease seal. Make sure the new seal faces in the same direction as the original; the lip should face the grease. Press fitting tools should have an outside diameter approximately .010" smaller than the hub bore size and for best results, the center of the tool should be open so that pressure is applied only at the outer edge.
9. Position the seal properly on the hub and using a proper driving force, such as an arbor press or soft wood tapped with a hammer, apply force evenly around the outer edge. Once installed, check for alignment and any inadvertent installation damage.
10. Lubricate the grease seal before attempting to install and slide wheel assembly back on spindle, being careful not to damage the seal against the spindle threads. Insert grease-packed outer cone, washer and adjusting nut.
11. Tighten the adjusting nut (castle nut) by  $\frac{1}{6}$  to  $\frac{1}{4}$  turn or to the nearest locking hole, or sufficiently to allow the wheel to rotate freely within limits of .001" to .010" end play. Lock nut in this position using a NEW cotter pin.

**WARNING: FAILURE TO BACK OFF ADJUSTING NUT WILL CAUSE THE BEARING TO RUN "HOT" AND BE DAMAGED. THE WHEEL COULD THEN LOCK OR COME OFF DURING OPERATION!!!!!!**

## VEHICLE IDENTIFICATION NUMBER

The Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) is a registration number required by the US Department of Transportation for passenger cars, multi-purpose passenger vehicles, trucks, buses, trailers, and motorcycles. The VIN requirements are established by the National Highway Traffic Administration

(NHTSA) and can be found in the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) Number 115 (Basic Requirements) and in Part 565 (Content Requirements) (49 CFR Part 571.115 and Part 565).

The VIN sticker was applied to the underside of your Escapade Trailer on the steel frame when it left the factory. It complies with all the NHTSA requirements in existence at the time of manufacture. It contains the month and year of manufacture as well as the complete VIN code which will appear on any document issued by any state Motor Vehicle Bureau. The year of manufacture is also represented in the VIN by a coded 10<sup>th</sup> digit.

**CAUTION: DO NOT TAMPER WITH THE VIN LABEL.** VIN labels are made of a tamper proof, self-destructing VOID patterned adhesive. Any attempt to remove the label will render it useless and VIN LABELS cannot BE REPLACED or reissued as they are imprinted sequentially with the serial number and appropriate DOT / NHTSA codings.



## MANUFACTURERS CERTIFICATE OF ORIGIN

The Manufacturer's Certificate of Origin (MCO or MSO) is the document evidencing ownership and is in a format that is approved by the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA) and is valid in all 50 states. These MCO's incorporate security features such as steel engraved borders and chemically sensitive paper to protect against fraud and alteration. This certificate has your trailer VIN imprinted on it and also contains its own certificate serial number, which is imprinted with fluorescent ink as additional insurance against fraud or alteration.

This MCO is the document you will take to your state's Department of Motor Vehicles to get license plates and a state issued Certificate of Title of ownership.

## TRAILER SPECIFICATIONS

- Chassis & Coupler:** 2" square steel tubing; 1 7/8" ball coupler
- Suspension:** Independent trailing arms, coil over shock absorbers
- Wheels:** 12" x 4", 4 x 4.0 lug pattern
- Tire Size:** 4.80 X 12, load range B, tubeless
- Body Construction:** Structural Fiberglass composite
- Electrical System:** 6-prong plug suitable for all motorcycles and automobiles
- Lights:** **Excel:** Two Red lenses with brake, tail and turn operation. (Euro light with amber turn available)  
License plate light and sidemarker running lights  
**Other Trailers:** License plate light; two taillights with red lenses and two turn signals with amber lenses or clear lenses with amber bulbs. Optional: Sidemarker running lights.

## DIMENSIONS

	LE / Elite	Excel
Body Length	67 in	70 in
Body Width	40 in	43 in
Body Height	22 in	22 in
Overall Length	94 in	94 in
Trailer Volume	25 cu ft	28 cu ft
Empty Weight	246 lbs	253 lbs
Load Capacity	350 lbs	350 lbs

## PARTS LISTING

Whenever possible, California Sidecar / Escapade Trailers uses standard automotive parts in building the Escapade Trailer. We do this to make repair and maintenance as easy and as inexpensive as possible. The parts listed below can be purchased in any quality auto parts store.

<b>PART DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>Escapade PN</b>	<b>Standard PN</b>
Swing Arm / Hub Bearing	TRL-57459	L44649
Swing Arm / Hub Race	TRL-41813	L44610
Swing Arm / Hub Seal	TRL-85064	13557 SB
Cotter Pin	FST-74039	1/8 x 1-1/2



## WIRING

The Escapade Trailer has been designed for adaptability to a large variety of automobiles and motorcycles without the need of a lighting converter. This has been accomplished by use of a six-wire lighting harness and six-prong connector plug. Any tow vehicle with separate turn signal circuits (generally amber) will not require a converter. If the tow vehicle does not have separate turn signal circuits please contact the Escapade Service Department for wiring options. A six-prong trunk harness is supplied with each Escapade Trailer.

***Vehicle Connection Instructions***—Connect the wires of the six-prong trunk harness for the type of vehicle as indicated below:

*For motorcycles and automobiles with separate turn signal circuits:*

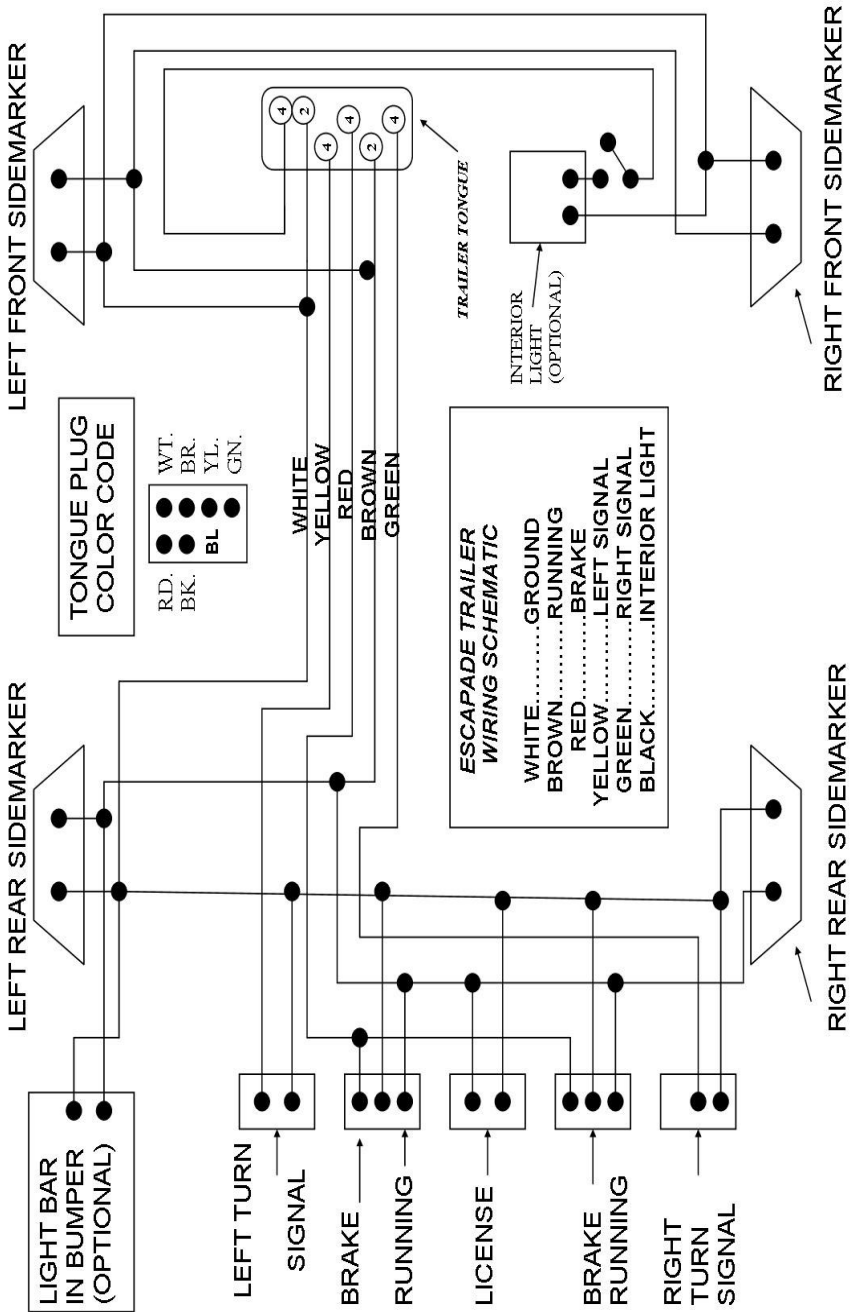
WIRE COLOR	FUNCTION
WHITE	Ground
BROWN	Running Lights
YELLOW	Left-hand Turn Signal
GREEN	Right-hand Turn Signal
RED	Brake Light
BLACK	Dome Light: 12V continuous (Accessory)

If there is an aftermarket fuse box installed on the motorcycle the BLACK wire can be attached directly to the constant power terminal. It is not necessary to remove the fuse in the black wire.

***For automobiles with brake and turn signals in the same circuit:***  
**Please call our Service Department for additional assistance.**

(See next page for schematic)

# Escapade Trailer Wiring Schematic



# NOTES

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