

# Smith System of Safe Driving (CDL-Focused, Test-Ready)

**Key 1.**  
**Aim High In Steering.**



**The Smith 5 Keys.**



- A 15 second eye lead time provides advanced warning and gives you an additional margin of safety.
- Good decisions cannot be made without adequate time to evaluate your driving environment.

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**Key 2.**  
**Get The Big Picture.**



**The Smith 5 Keys.**



- Maintain a minimum 4 second following distance.
- Scan at least one of your mirrors every 5 to 8 seconds to obtain a 360° circle of awareness.
- Do not focus attention on insignificant objects.

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**Key 3.**  
**Keep Your Eyes Moving.**



**The Smith 5 Keys.**



- Focusing on any object for too long diminishes your peripheral vision.
- Keep your eyes moving every 2 seconds to avoid staring.
- Avoid distractions in your vehicle and your thinking.

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**Key 4.**  
**Leave Yourself An Out.**



**The Smith 5 Keys.**



- When possible, surround your vehicle with space.
- If you lose part of your space cushion, work to keep at least the front and one side open.
- Avoid tailgaters. When one is present, the collision potential is high.

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**Key 5.**  
**Make Sure They See You.**



**The Smith 5 Keys.**



- Detect the presence of potential danger early.
- Send your warning signals as soon as you think they will be recognized, not too soon or too late.
- Seek eye contact by using the warning devices on your vehicle.

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## Five Keys of Smith System Driving



Aim High  
in Steering



The Big Picture



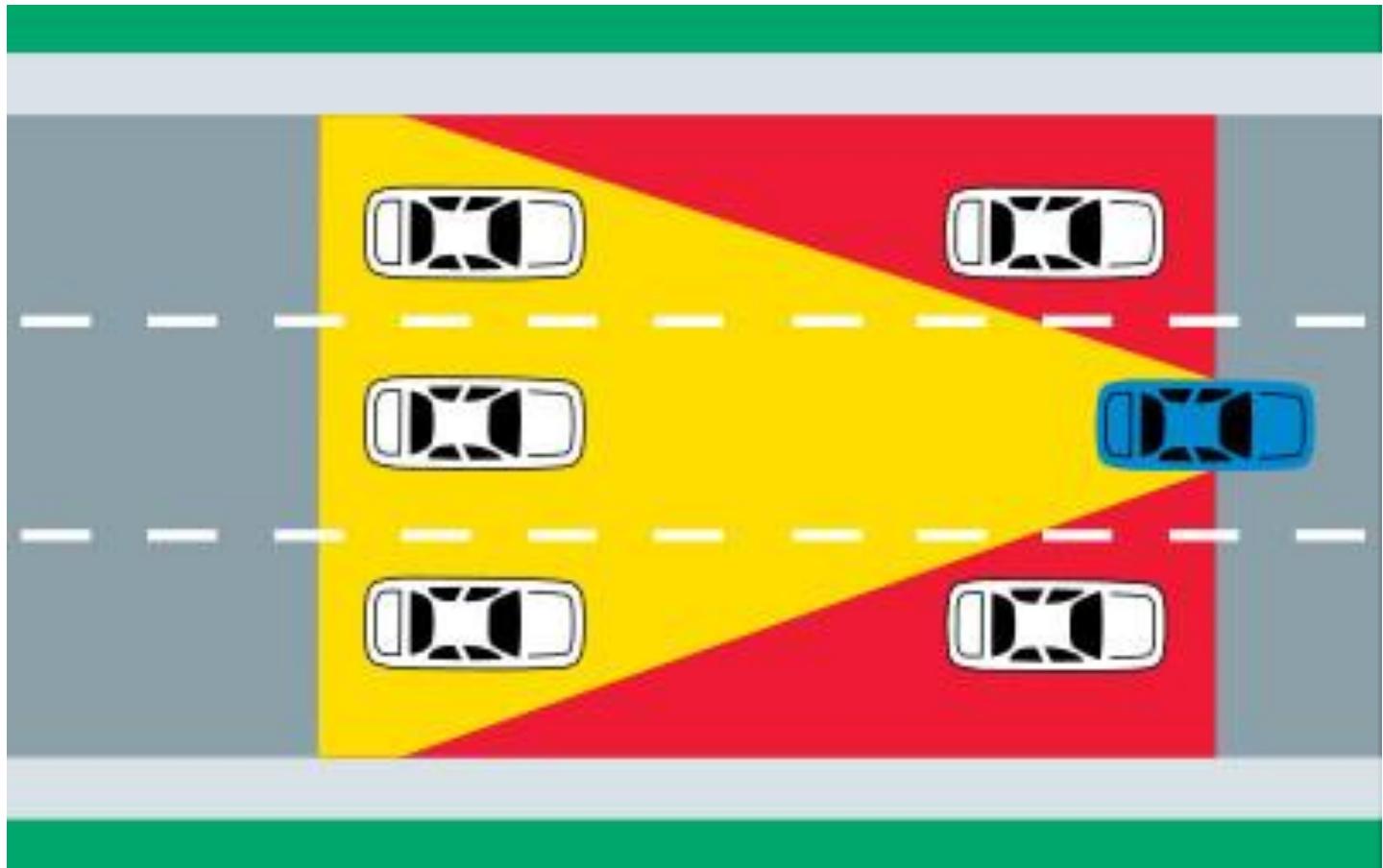
Keep Your  
Eyes Movin'



Leave Yourself  
an Out



Make Sure  
They See You



The **Smith System** is a **5-rule defensive driving method** used in CDL training, carrier orientation, and safety exams. Examiners love it because it's simple, repeatable, and proven.

## The 5 Keys (Say them exactly like this)

### 1 Aim High in Steering

- Look **12–15 seconds** ahead ( $\frac{1}{4}$  mile at highway speed)
- Anticipate traffic lights, brake lights, curves, and hazards
- Prevents last-second braking and swerving

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### 2 Get the Big Picture

- Scan **front, sides, and rear**
- Use mirrors every **5–8 seconds**
- Identify escape paths, traffic flow, and problem areas early

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### 3 Keep Your Eyes Moving

- Don't fixate—scan continuously
- Check mirrors, gauges, intersections, and shoulders
- Avoid "tunnel vision," especially at night or in bad weather

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### 4 Leave Yourself an Out

- Maintain **proper following distance** (minimum 7–8 seconds in a CMV)
- Keep an **escape route** (shoulder, open lane, space cushion)
- Avoid being boxed in by traffic

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### 5 Make Sure They See You

- Communicate early: **signals, brake lights, headlights**
- Use horn when needed (short tap)
- Eye contact with pedestrians and drivers when possible

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## How to say it on a CDL test or interview

"I aim high in steering, get the big picture, keep my eyes moving, leave myself an out, and make sure they see me."

Say it **calm and confident**—that's exactly what examiners want.

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## Real-world CDL examples

- **City driving:** Aim high for light changes, leave escape space at intersections
- **Highway:** Big picture + mirrors to manage blind spots and lane changes
- **Night driving:** Eyes moving + big picture to catch animals, stalled vehicles
- **Bad weather:** Extra following distance = your “out”

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## Common mistakes

- Staring at the vehicle ahead
- Tailgating
- Late signals
- Forgetting mirror checks

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## Memory trick

“Aim – Picture – Move – Out – Seen”

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If you want, I can:

- Tie the Smith System into **hazard perception answers**
- Help you phrase it **exactly** for a road test
- Combine it with **night & extreme driving conditions**

Just say the word 

# **BEHIND-THE-WHEEL RANGE AND INSPECTION REQUIREMENTS**

 **CDL Class A — Pre-Trip & Post-Trip Inspections (Test + Real-World)**

# Driver's Vehicle Inspection Report

Check ANY Defective Item and Give Details under "Remarks."

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

TRUCK/TRACTOR NO. \_\_\_\_\_

<input type="checkbox"/> Air Compressor	<input type="checkbox"/> Horn	<input type="checkbox"/> Springs
<input type="checkbox"/> Air Lines	<input type="checkbox"/> Lights	<input type="checkbox"/> Starter
<input type="checkbox"/> Battery	<input type="checkbox"/> Head - Stop	<input type="checkbox"/> Steering
<input type="checkbox"/> Brake Accessories	<input type="checkbox"/> Tail - Dash	<input type="checkbox"/> Tachograph
<input type="checkbox"/> Brakes	<input type="checkbox"/> Turn Indicators	<input type="checkbox"/> Tires
<input type="checkbox"/> Carburetor	<input type="checkbox"/> Mirrors	<input type="checkbox"/> Transmission
<input type="checkbox"/> Clutch	<input type="checkbox"/> Muffler	<input type="checkbox"/> Wheels
<input type="checkbox"/> Defroster	<input type="checkbox"/> Oil Pressure	<input type="checkbox"/> Windows
<input type="checkbox"/> Drive Line	<input type="checkbox"/> On-Board Recorder	<input type="checkbox"/> Windshield Wipers
<input type="checkbox"/> Engine	<input type="checkbox"/> Radiator	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
<input type="checkbox"/> Fifth Wheel	<input type="checkbox"/> Rear End	
<input type="checkbox"/> Front Axle	<input type="checkbox"/> Reflectors	
<input type="checkbox"/> Fuel Tanks	<input type="checkbox"/> Safety Equipment	
<input type="checkbox"/> Heater	<input type="checkbox"/> Fire Extinguisher	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Flags - Flares - Fuses	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Spare Bulbs & Fuses	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Spare Seal Beam	

TRAILER(S) NO (S). \_\_\_\_\_

<input type="checkbox"/> Brake Connections	<input type="checkbox"/> Hitch	<input type="checkbox"/> Tarpaulin
<input type="checkbox"/> Brakes	<input type="checkbox"/> Landing Gear	<input type="checkbox"/> Tires
<input type="checkbox"/> Coupling Chains	<input type="checkbox"/> Lights - All	<input type="checkbox"/> Wheels
<input type="checkbox"/> Coupling (King) Pin	<input type="checkbox"/> Roof	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
<input type="checkbox"/> Doors	<input type="checkbox"/> Springs	

Remarks: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Condition of the above vehicle is satisfactory

Driver's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Above Defects Corrected

Above Defects Need NOT Be Corrected For Safe Operation Of Vehicle

Mechanic's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Driver's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## PRE-TRIP INSPECTION (Before you drive)

**Purpose:** Catch safety issues **before** they become violations or breakdowns.

**On the CDL test:** You must **name the part, say it's not damaged/loose/leaking, and explain why it matters.**

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## POST-TRIP INSPECTION (After you park)

**Purpose:** Document issues so they get fixed **before the next trip.**

### What to do

- Walk the vehicle **again** (same areas as pre-trip)
- Look for **new damage**, leaks, tire wear, brake smells, loose items
- **Write defects** on your DVIR or ELD
- If no defects → certify “**No defects noted**”

### What must be reported

- Anything that affects **safe operation**
- Lights, brakes, tires, steering, suspension, coupling issues
- Damage from curbs, docks, or road debris

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## Easy memory flow (test-friendly)

“Front → Engine → Cab → Axles → Coupling → Trailer → Lights.”

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## Common CDL Test Mistakes

- Forgetting to say “**secure, not cracked, bent, or leaking**”
- Skipping **air brake** test steps
- Missing **slack adjusters** or **hub seals**
- Rushing—slow and confident scores better

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If you want, I can:

- Drill you with a **verbatim CDL test script**
- Do a **mock examiner** run-through
- Shorten this into a **2-minute memory version** for test day

Just say the word 

# PRE AND POST TRIP INSPECTION TRAINING

We cover all aspects of the state inspection from front bumper to the rear, plus in cab and a proper Leak Check

## BEHIND THE WHEEL RANGE TRAINING

### • Front line stop.

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#### Front Line Stop

##### CDL Class A — Precision, Judgment, Control

The **front line stop** looks simple, but it tests **depth perception, brake control, and judgment**. Examiners use it to see if you can stop **accurately without creeping or slamming**, under standards enforced by the **Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration**.

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#### Goal

Stop the truck so the **front bumper is just short of the stop line** (or cone line), **without crossing it**.

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#### Golden Rules

- Slow early
- Eyes up, not down
- One smooth stop
- No rolling or creeping

You don't "aim" for the line—you **control the stop**.

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#### Setup (Before You Move)

1. Line up straight with the lane

2. Know where your **front bumper** actually is (mental reference)
3. Cover the brake early

**Tip:** Your bumper is farther forward than you think.

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## Step-by-Step Technique

### **1** Controlled Approach

- Idle or very light throttle
- No coasting fast
- Smooth, predictable speed

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### **2** Early Brake Application

- Start braking **sooner than feels necessary**
- Light, steady pressure
- Increase pressure gradually

**Avoid:** stabbing the brakes late.

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### **3** Visual Reference

- Look **ahead**, not straight down
- Use peripheral vision to judge distance
- Trust your setup—not panic instincts

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### **4** Final Stop

- One clean stop
- Front bumper **just before** the line
- Set brakes fully

 No rolling past

 No rocking forward after stopping

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## What Examiners Are Watching

- Smooth brake control
- No sudden stops
- No creeping after stop
- Proper mirror use (awareness)
- Confidence (no hesitation/panic)

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## Common CDL Front-Line Stop Mistakes

- Braking too late
- Stopping short, then creeping
- Looking straight down
- Overthinking bumper position
- Rushing because it's "easy"

Many drivers lose points **after** a good stop by creeping forward.

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## Practice Drills

### ⌚ Drill 1 — Slow Is Right

Practice approaching at **walking speed**.  
Accuracy beats speed every time.

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### ⌚ Drill 2 — One Stop Rule

Commit to **one full stop**.  
If you miss—accept it. Don't creep.

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### ⌚ Drill 3 — Bumper Awareness

Practice stopping near fixed objects (safely) to learn true bumper distance.

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## 🎯 CDL Examiner Gold Phrases

Say naturally:

- "I'm controlling speed for a precise stop."
- "I'm stopping short of the line."

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- “I’m applying brakes smoothly.”

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## One-Line Memory Hooks

- Brake early, stop once
- Eyes up, confidence in
- No creep
- Smooth beats perfect

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## 🏁 Final Reality Check

The front line stop is not about inches—it’s about **control**.

Examiners forgive being slightly short far more than **rolling over the line**.

# ● Straight line Backing.

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## Straight-Line Backing

**CDL Class A — The Foundation of All Backing** Straight backing is the foundation for all other backing maneuvers. Make sure you can straight back before moving on to the other maneuvers.

Straight-line backing looks simple—but examiners use it to judge **mirror discipline, steering control, patience, and fundamentals**. It's governed by standards under the **Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration**.

If you can't back straight, everything else gets harder.

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## Goal

Back the tractor-trailer **straight between boundaries** (cones/lines) using **minimal steering, constant mirror checks, and full control**.

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## Golden Rules (Non-Negotiable)

- **GOAL** if alignment looks off
- **Idle speed only**
- **Tiny steering inputs**
- **Correct early, not late**

Straight backing is about **preventing drift**, not fixing big mistakes.

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## Proper Setup (80% of Success)

1. Pull forward until **tractor and trailer are perfectly straight**
2. Center trailer between boundaries
3. Straighten steering wheel
4. Stop, breathe, then begin

### **Examiner reality:**

If you start crooked, you'll chase it the whole way.

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## Backing Technique (Step-by-Step)

## 1 Start Slow

- Release brakes gently
- Let trailer roll before steering

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## 2 Mirror Rhythm

- Left mirror → Right mirror → Left mirror
- Repeat every **2–3 seconds**
- Watch **trailer edges**, not the tractor

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## 3 Micro-Corrections Only

- Trailer drifts right → **tiny left input**
- Trailer drifts left → **tiny right input**
- Immediately straighten wheel after correction

**Think:**

*Turn → straighten → wait.*

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## 4 Let the Trailer Respond

- Trailer reacts slower than steering
- Don't stack corrections
- Over-steering = snake effect

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## 5 Finish Centered

- Stay between boundaries
- Stop smoothly at the end
- Set brakes properly

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## Mirror Discipline (What Examiners Watch)

- Both mirrors used
- No mirror fixation
- Head movement visible
- Corrections based on **trailer**, not hood

✖ Looking forward while backing = points off

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## Common CDL Straight-Back Errors

- Over-steering
- Late corrections
- Staring at one mirror
- Rushing because it's "easy"
- Skipping GOAL when unsure

Straight-line backing fails more tests than alley dock—because drivers **get careless**.

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## Practice Drills

### Drill 1 — Hands at Bottom

Hold steering wheel at the **bottom**:

- Move hand left → trailer goes left
- Move hand right → trailer goes right

This simplifies steering logic.

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### Drill 2 — Correction Reset

After every steering input:

- Straighten wheel
- Pause
- Observe trailer

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### Drill 3 — GOAL Confidence

If alignment feels wrong:

- Stop
- GOAL
- Re-square
- Continue

GOAL **never** hurts your score.

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## CDL Examiner Gold Phrases

Say them naturally:

- “I’m maintaining straight alignment.”
- “I’m checking both mirrors.”
- “I’m making small steering corrections.”
- “I’m getting out to look.”

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## One-Line Memory Hooks

- **Straight before backing**
- **Tiny turns win**
- **Mirrors don’t lie**
- **Slow fixes fast**

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## Final Reality Check

Every advanced backing maneuver—offset, alley dock, parallel—**starts here**.

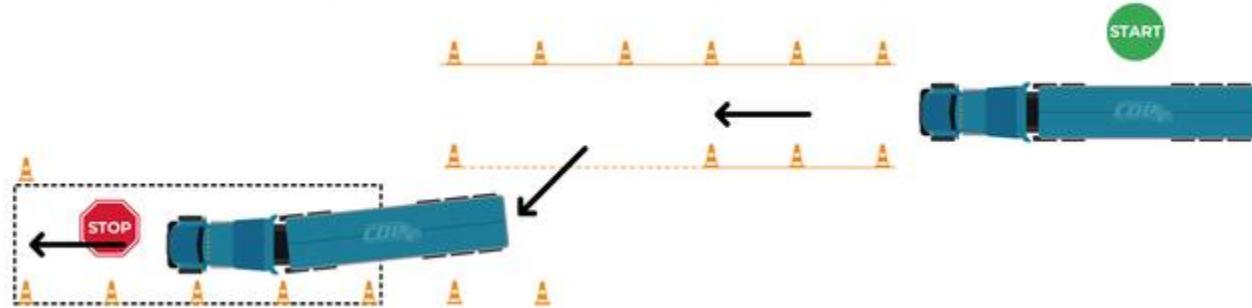
Master straight-line backing and everything else becomes **manageable**.



# Forward Offset (CDL Class A) — Plain-English Breakdown

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## FORWARD OFFSET TRACKING



### What it is:

The **forward offset** is a CDL skills test maneuver where you **pull forward into one lane**, then **offset (shift) the truck into the adjacent lane** and stop **centered in the box**—without hitting cones or crossing boundaries.

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## 🎯 What the examiner is checking

- Steering control & setup
- Mirror usage (constant scanning)
- Trailer tracking and patience
- Final position (square + centered)

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## ⚙️ Step-by-Step (works for left *or* right offset)

1. **Set up straight**
  - Start centered in your lane.
  - Roll forward slowly; eyes on both mirrors.
2. **Initiate the offset**
  - Turn **toward the open lane** (the direction you're moving).
  - Think **small, smooth input**—no cranking.
3. **Chase the trailer**
  - As soon as the **trailer axles** enter the target lane, begin **counter-steering** to straighten.
  - Watch the **trailer tandems**, not just the tractor.
4. **Square it up**
  - Straighten the wheel.
  - Make micro-adjustments to center the truck.
5. **Stop clean**
  - Front bumper inside the box.
  - Trailer centered, no cones touched.

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## Mirror & vision tips

- **Primary focus:** driver-side mirror (trailer tires).
- **Secondary:** passenger mirror for clearance.
- Quick windshield glance to confirm straightness—then back to mirrors.

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## CDL test rules (typical)

- **GOALS:** Allowed (usually 2). Use them early if unsure.
- **Pull-ups:** Allowed (usually 1–2). Take one rather than hit a cone.
- **Boundaries:** Crossing lines or touching cones = points or failure (varies by state).

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## Memory trick

“Turn toward space, chase the trailer, straighten early.”

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## Common mistakes to avoid

- Over-steering (jackknifes the setup)
- Waiting too long to counter-steer
- Staring at the tractor instead of the trailer axles
- Rushing—slow wins this maneuver

If you want, I can tailor this to **left vs right offset**, **short vs long wheelbase**, or walk you through a **cone-by-cone reference point** you can memorize for test day.



# Reverse Offset (CDL Class A) — Step-by-Step, Test-Ready

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## What it is:

The **reverse offset** is a CDL backing maneuver where you **start in one lane**, then **back the truck into the adjacent lane** (left or right) and stop **centered and straight in the box**—without touching cones or crossing lines.

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## What the examiner wants to see

- Controlled backing speed
- Proper steering (no over-correction)
- Constant mirror use
- Trailer centered and tractor straight at the finish

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## Step-by-Step (works for LEFT or RIGHT reverse offset)

### 1 Set up

- Start **straight and centered** in your lane.
- Tractor and trailer should already be **aligned**.
- Check mirrors before moving.

### 2 Initial turn (this is the key)

- Turn the steering wheel **AWAY** from the target lane
  - Offset **left** → steer **right**
  - Offset **right** → steer **left**
- Go **slow**—idle speed only.

### 3 Chase the trailer

- Watch the **trailer tandems** in the mirror on the side you're backing into.
- When the trailer **enters the target lane**, start **counter-steering** (turn toward the trailer) to follow it.

### 4 Straighten early

- As soon as the trailer is mostly in the box:
  - Begin straightening the wheel.
  - Small inputs only.
- Goal: tractor and trailer end up **in one straight line**.

### 5 Final position

- Trailer centered between cones.

- Tractor straight.
- Rear of trailer fully inside the box.
- Stop smoothly.

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## Mirror & eye control

- **Primary mirror:** side you're backing toward (watch trailer tires).
- **Secondary mirror:** opposite side for cone clearance.
- Minimal windshield glances—mirrors do the work.

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## Easy memory trick

“Away to start — toward to follow — straighten early.”

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## CDL test reminders (typical)

- **GOALS:** Usually allowed (2). Use them smartly.
- **Pull-ups:** Often 1–2 allowed. Take one if needed.
- **Cone contact or boundary crossing:** Automatic points or failure.

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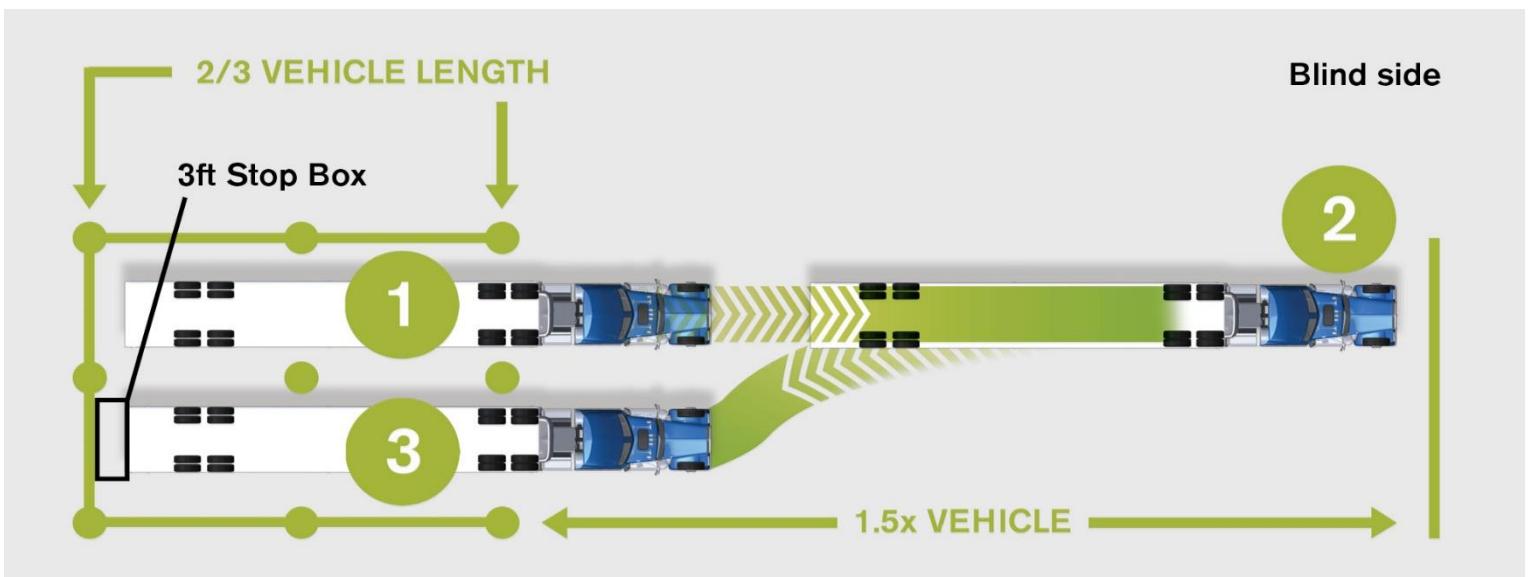
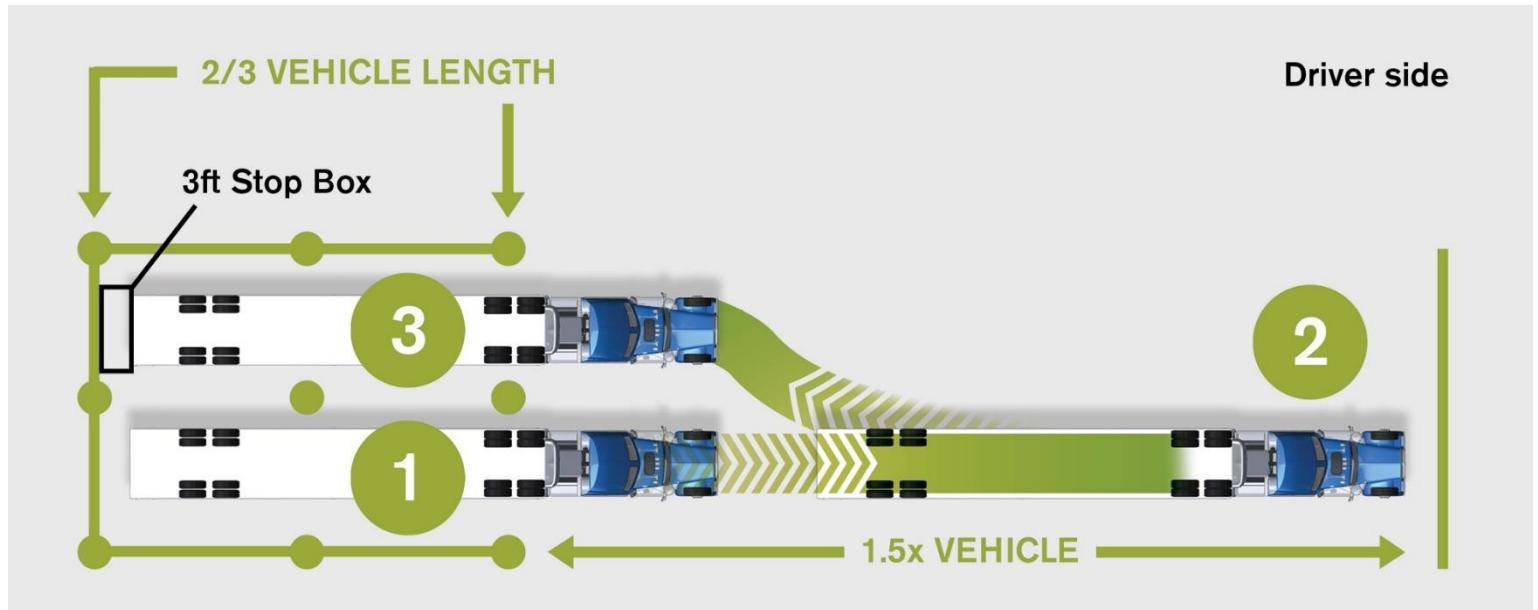
## Common mistakes

- Turning too much at the start (sharp jackknife)
- Waiting too long to counter-steer
- Staring at the tractor instead of the trailer tires
- Rushing—speed kills precision

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## • Offset Backing.

Driver-Side & Blind-Side — CDL Class A (Test + Real World)





Offset backing shows **setup discipline and mirror control**. It's easier than alley dock—but only if you **set it up wide and move slowly**.

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## **Golden Rules (Always)**

- **GOAL** (Get Out And Look) — use it early if unsure
- **Slow enough to stop instantly**
- **Small steering inputs**
- **Reset if the angle gets ugly**

Offset backing is won in the **setup**, not the steering.

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## **DRIVER-SIDE OFFSET (Preferred)**

### **Goal**

Move the trailer **one lane left or right** and back straight into the target lane/box.

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### **Setup**

1. Pull forward **past the target space**
2. Keep tractor and trailer **straight**

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3. Position yourself so the trailer tandems will line up with the opening after the shift

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## Backing Steps

1. Turn wheel **slightly toward the target lane** to start the offset
2. Watch **driver-side mirror** — let the trailer drift
3. When trailer enters the target lane, **turn opposite** to chase it
4. **Straighten tractor and trailer**
5. Finish with **micro-adjustments only**

**Mirror focus:** Driver side primary, passenger side to confirm clearance.

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## Common Errors

- Turning too much at the start
- Waiting too long to chase
- Over-correcting near the finish

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# BLIND-SIDE OFFSET (More GOAL, More Patience)

## Goal

Same maneuver, but with **reduced visibility**.

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## Setup

- Pull **farther forward** than driver-side
- Create **extra space** for visibility loss

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## Backing Steps

1. Turn **slightly toward the blind side**
2. GOAL early to confirm trailer path
3. Chase trailer gently
4. Square up and finish straight

**Rule:**

If you lose sight of the trailer → **STOP**.

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## **Mirror Discipline (Critical)**

- Trailer moves **toward the mirror you turn toward**
- If one mirror disappears → stop
- Let the trailer **respond** before correcting

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## **DRILLS (Practice These)**

### **Drill 1 — One Turn, Then Pause**

- Turn once
- Pause
- Watch trailer react
- Then correct

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### **Drill 2 — Tandem Alignment**

Say it out loud:

“Watching tandems... lining up...”

This keeps you from over-steering.

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### **Drill 3 — Professional Reset**

If angle exceeds control:

- Pull forward
- Re-square
- Restart

Pull-ups are **smart**, not failures.

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## **Automatic CDL Dings**

- Hitting cones/lines

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- No GOAL when needed
- Excessive speed
- Chasing the trailer late
- Losing mirror reference

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## CDL Examiner Gold Phrases

Use naturally:

- “I’m setting up for proper alignment.”
- “I’m watching trailer movement in the mirrors.”
- “I’m making small corrections.”
- “I’m getting out to look.”

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## One-Line Memory Hooks

- **Wide setup wins**
- **Turn → Pause → Chase**
- **Slow fixes fast**
- **Reset early**

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## Final Reality Check

Offset backing is a **confidence builder**.

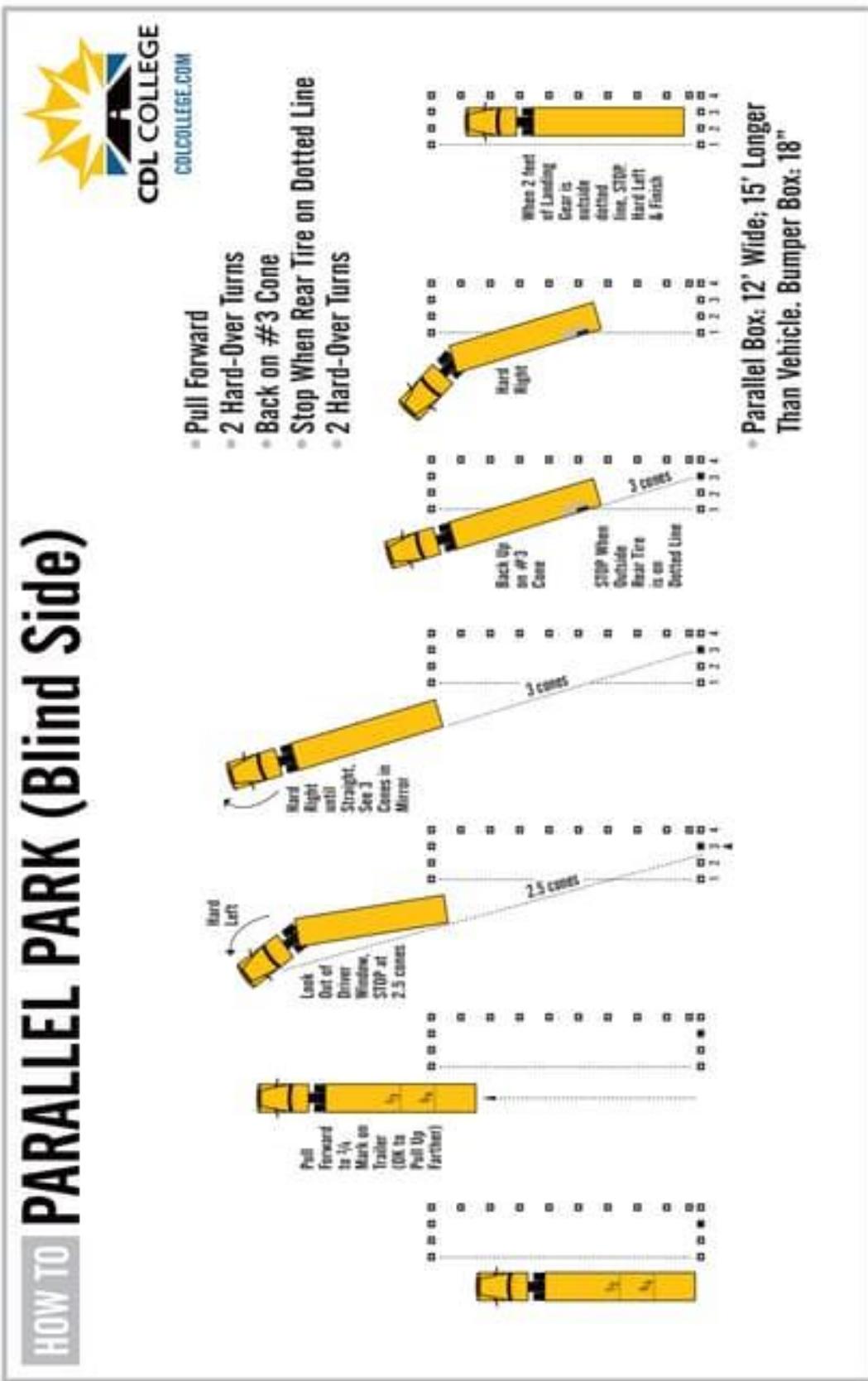
Do it slow, do it clean, and it sets you up to dominate **alley docks and parallels**.

# ● Parallel Parking.

## Parallel Parking

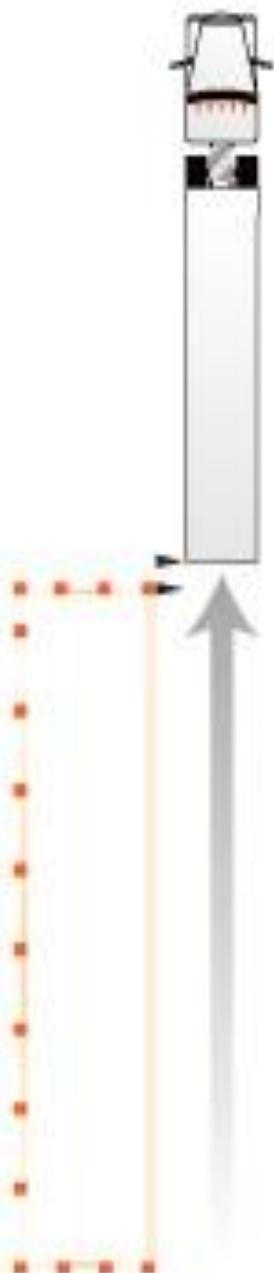
Driver-Side & Blind-Side — CDL Class A (Test + Real World)

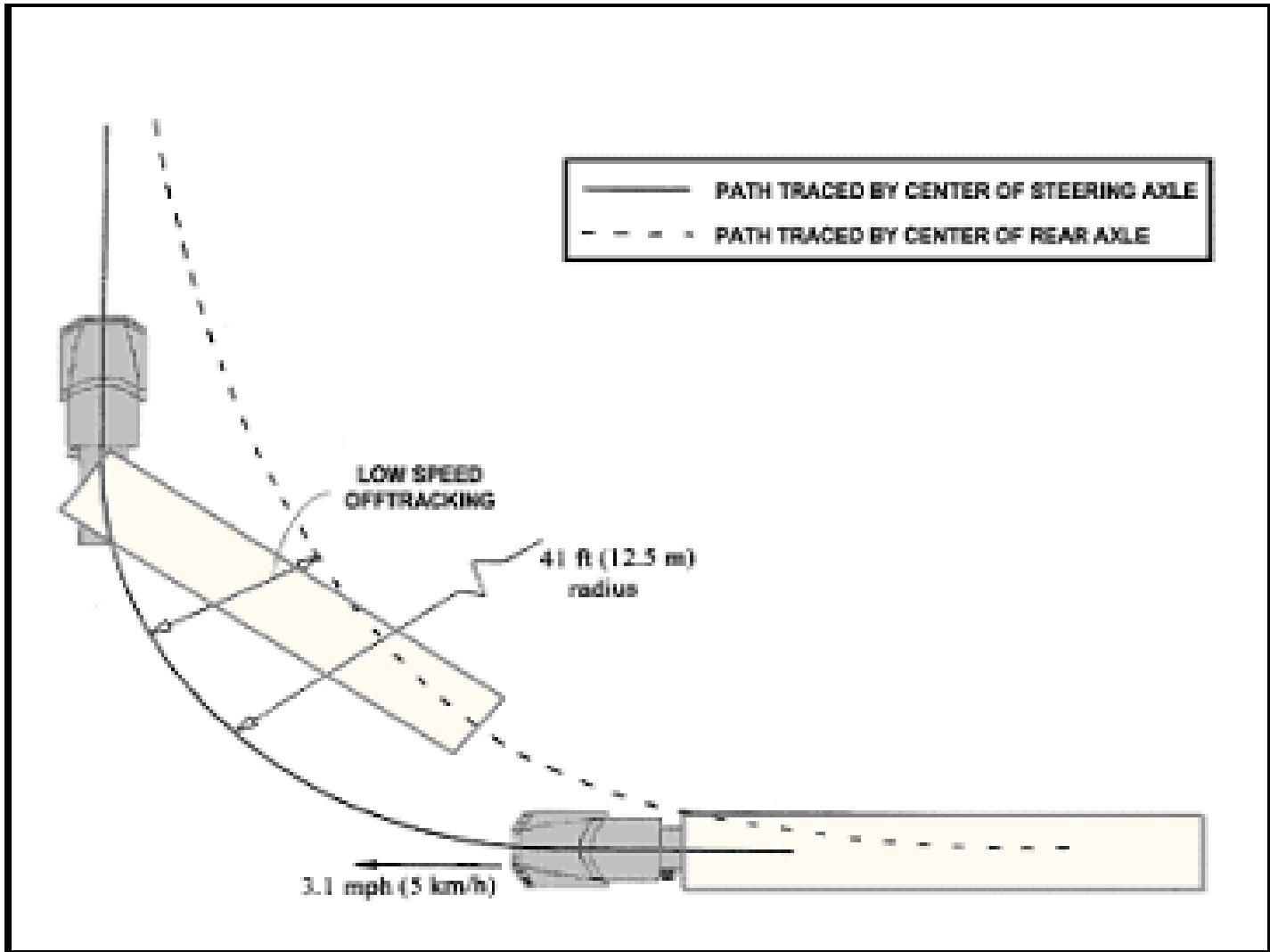
### HOW TO PARALLEL PARK (Blind Side)



1

Pull forward and stop when the rear of your trailer is 1 to 2 feet past the front line of cones.





Parallel parking proves **precision, patience, and mirror control**. It's slow-speed, high-accuracy work—exactly what examiners want to see under rules enforced by the **Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration**.

## **Golden Rules (Non-Negotiable)**

- **GOAL** (Get Out And Look) — use it
- **Small steering inputs**
- **Use both mirrors**
- **Stop if unsure**

Slow fixes fast. Rushing causes points—or damage.



# DRIVER-SIDE PARALLEL (Preferred & Safer)

## Goal

Back the trailer into the space **parallel to the curb** without touching cones/curb.

## Setup

1. Pull **even with the front of the space**
2. Leave **2–3 feet** from the curb/line
3. Straight wheels, stop

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## Backing Steps

1. Turn wheel **hard left** and back slowly (break the trailer)
2. Watch **driver-side mirror** for trailer angle
3. When trailer reaches  $\sim 45^\circ$ , **turn right** to chase it
4. Straighten tractor/trailer
5. Finish straight back with **micro-adjustments**

**Mirror focus:** driver side first, passenger side to confirm clearance.

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## Common Errors

- Over-steering
- Waiting too long to chase
- Ignoring trailer tandems

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# BLIND-SIDE PARALLEL (Higher Risk)

## Goal

Same result—**more GOAL, slower speed.**

## Setup

- Pull **slightly farther forward** than driver-side
- Create **extra space** for visibility loss

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## Backing Steps

1. Turn **hard right** to break trailer
2. GOAL early and often
3. Chase trailer carefully
4. Square up and finish straight

### Rule:

If you lose sight of the trailer → **STOP**.

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## Examiner Reality

- Blind-side is allowed but **heavily scrutinized**
- Excessive corrections = deductions
- GOAL is expected

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## Mirror Discipline (Critical)

- Trailer moves **toward the mirror you turn toward**
- If one mirror disappears → stop
- Watch **inside trailer tire** to avoid curb strikes

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## DRILLS (Practice These)

### Drill 1 — Break & Pause

- Break the trailer
- Pause steering
- Let trailer respond
- Then chase

### Drill 2 — Inside Tire Call-Out

Say it out loud:

“Watching inside tire... clearance good...”

### Drill 3 — Reset Like a Pro

If angle gets ugly:

- Pull forward
- Re-square
- Restart

Pull-ups are **professional**, not failures.

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## Automatic CDL Dings

- Hitting curb/cones
- No GOAL when needed
- Excessive pull-ups
- Uncontrolled speed
- Losing trailer sight

---

## Examiner Gold Phrases

Use naturally:

- “I’m setting up for proper alignment.”
- “I’m watching trailer off-tracking.”
- “I’m making small corrections.”
- “I’m getting out to look.”

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## One-Line Memory Hooks

- **Setup wins**
- **Break → Chase → Straight**
- **Slow is smooth**
- **GOAL saves points**

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## Final Truth

Even veteran drivers:

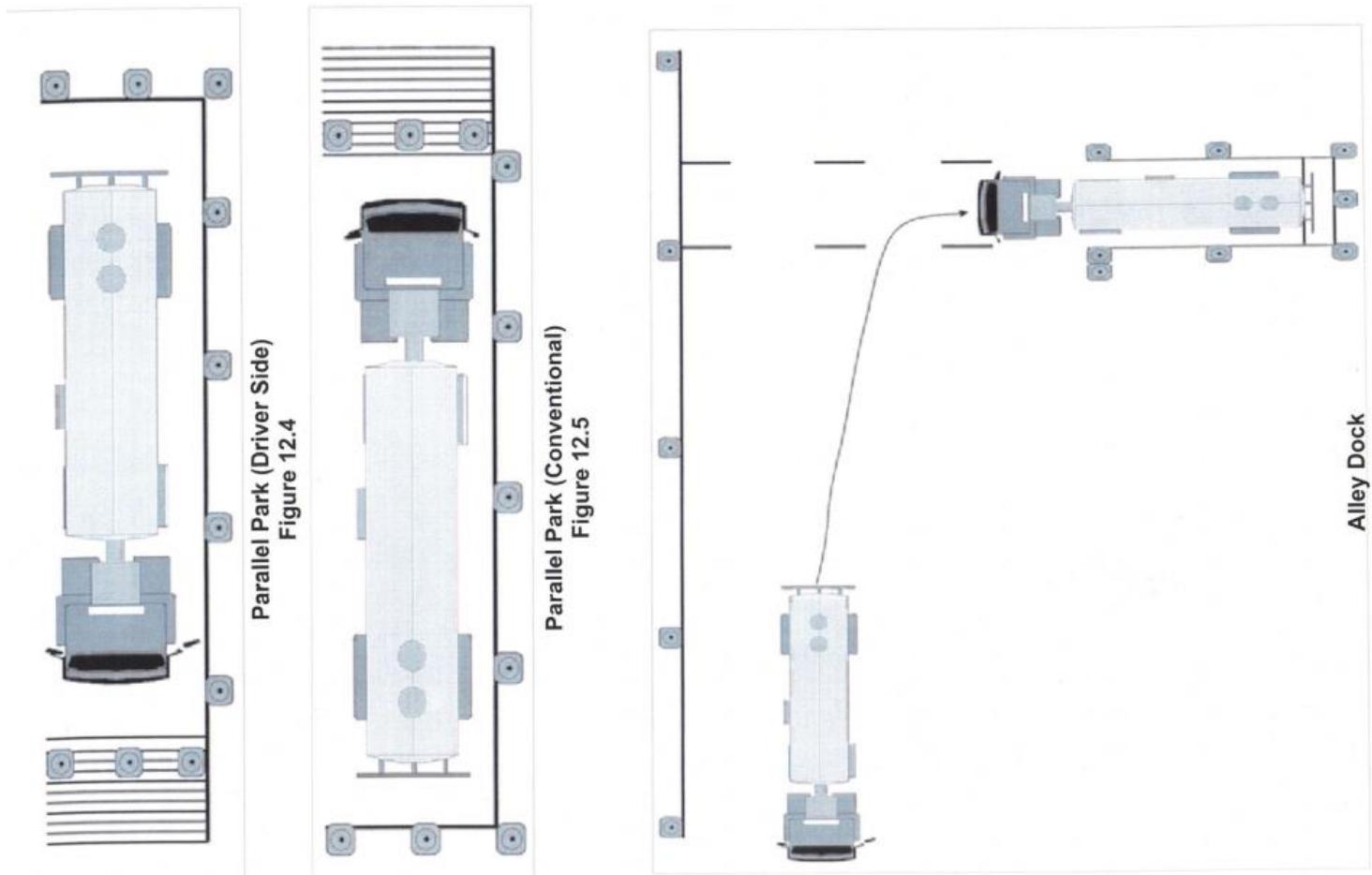
- Pull up
- GOAL
- Take their time

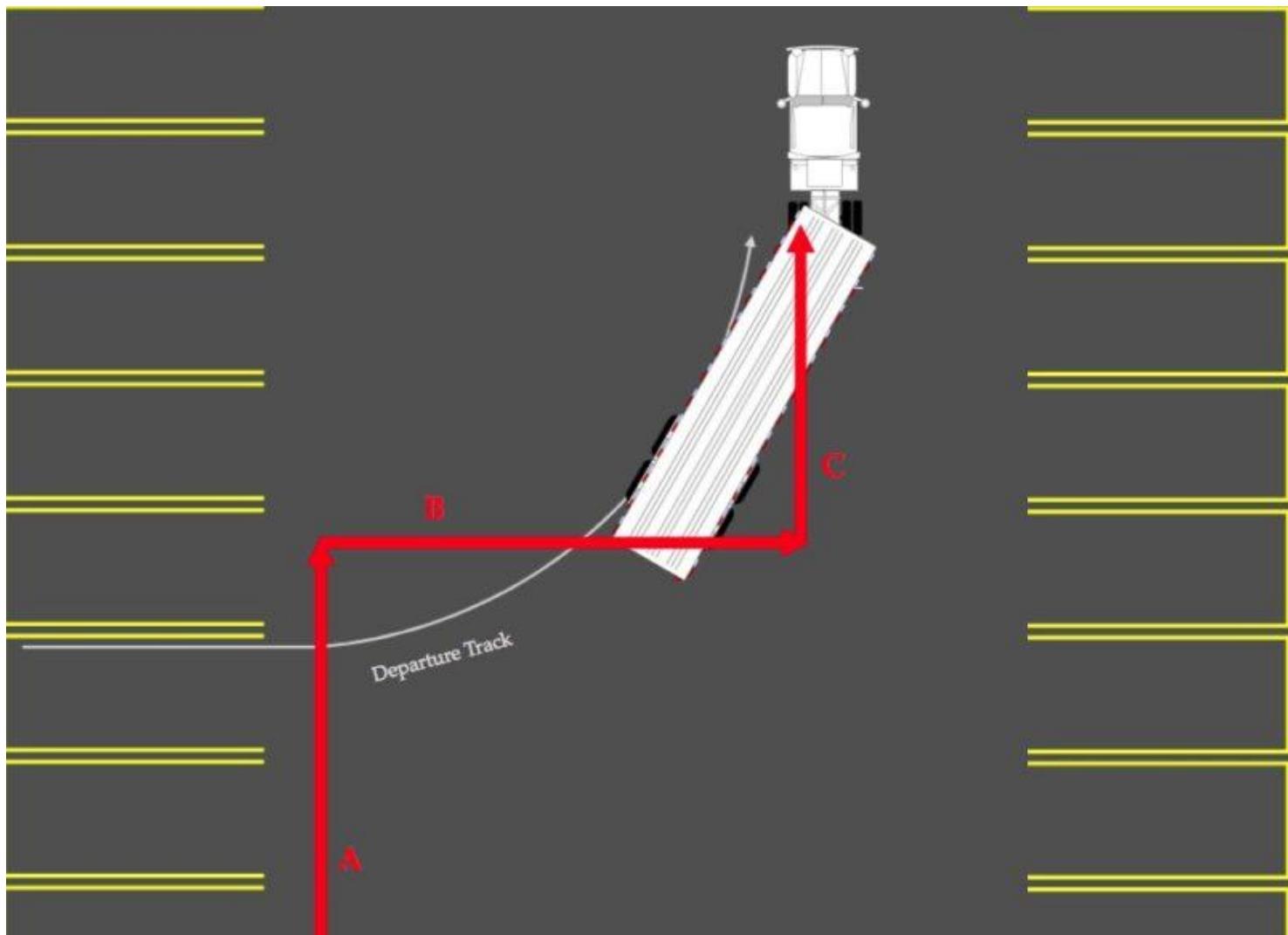
That's not weakness—it's **control**.

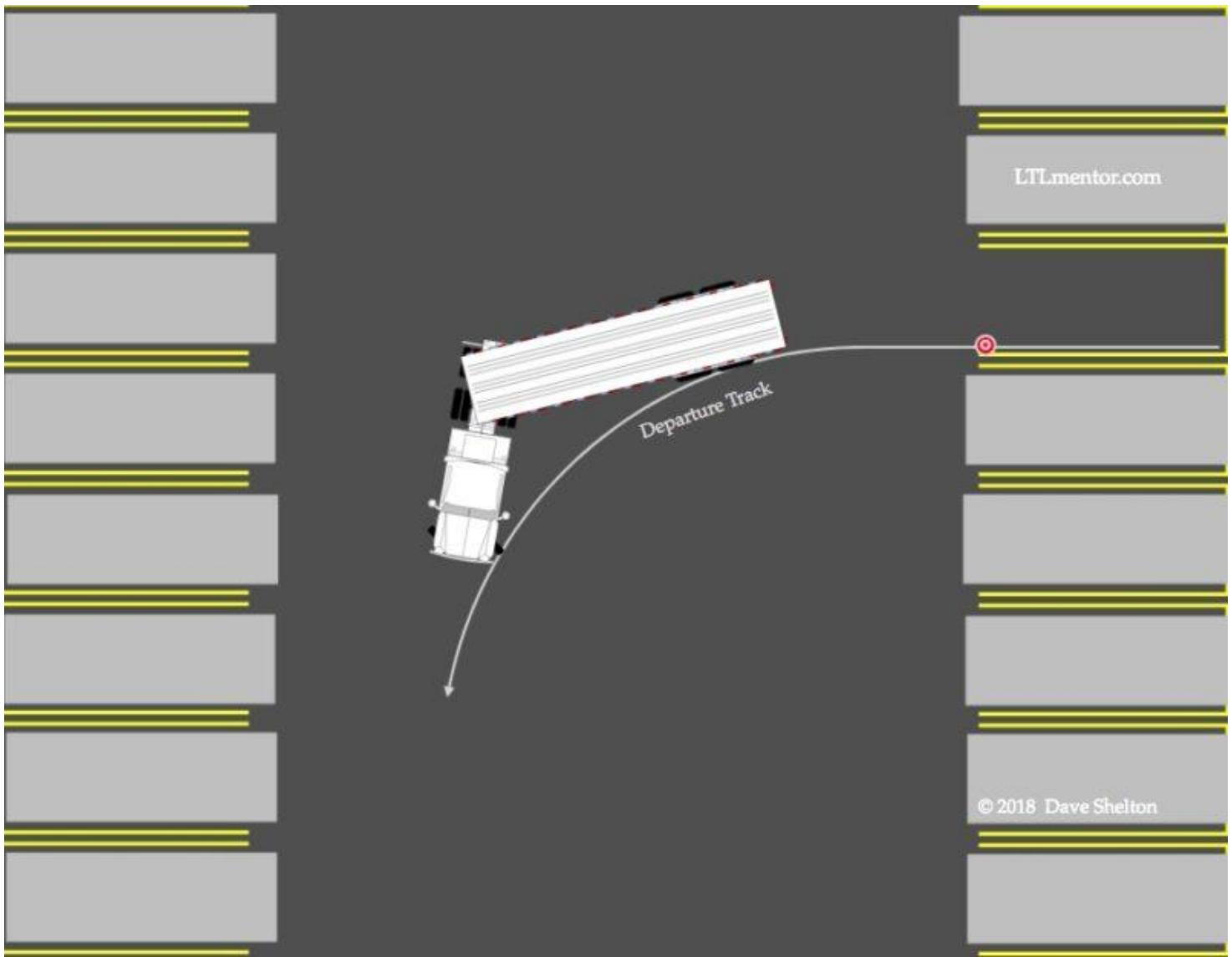
- **Alley dock (45/90 degrees).**

### Alley Dock Backing — 45° & 90°

CDL Class A | Real-World + Test-Ready







Alley docking is about **setup, patience, and mirror control**. Nail the setup and the backing becomes easy. Rush it and you'll chase the trailer all day.

---

## **Golden Rules (Always)**

- **GOAL** (Get Out And Look) — unlimited, use it
- **Slow enough to stop instantly**
- **Small steering inputs**
- **If it feels wrong → pull up and reset**

Perfect setup beats perfect steering.

---



## **45° ALLEY DOCK (Foundation Move)**

## Goal

Place the trailer at about **45°** to the dock, then straighten into the hole.

### Setup

1. Pull past the dock so your **rear trailer tandems** are just beyond the hole
2. Keep **3–5 feet** from the dock line
3. Straighten wheels

---

### Backing Steps

1. **Hard turn toward the dock** (to break the trailer)
2. Watch the **inside trailer tire** in the mirror
3. When trailer reaches  $\sim 45^\circ$ , **chase it** (turn opposite)
4. Straighten tractor and trailer
5. Finish with **small corrections only**

### Mirrors

- Primary: **driver-side mirror**
- Secondary: passenger mirror to confirm clearance

---

### Common Errors

- Not breaking the trailer enough
- Over-steering corrections
- Waiting too long to chase the trailer

---



## 90° ALLEY DOCK (Tight & Precise)

### Goal

Turn the trailer **fully perpendicular** to the dock and back straight in.

---

### Setup (MOST IMPORTANT PART)

1. Pull forward **farther** than  $45^\circ$  setup
2. Position tractor so your **rear trailer tandems** are near the dock opening
3. Create space — wide setups save mirrors and tires

If the setup feels too easy, it's probably too tight.

---

## Backing Steps

1. **Full turn toward dock** to aggressively break trailer
2. Let trailer swing until it points at the hole
3. **Chase the trailer early**
4. Square tractor with trailer
5. Straight back using **micro-adjustments**

---

## Mirror Discipline

- Watch **inside trailer tire** (don't clip dock)
- Check opposite mirror frequently
- If one mirror disappears → **STOP**

---

## Common Errors

- Turning too late
- Not pulling far enough forward
- Chasing too aggressively
- Skipping GOAL near the dock

---

## DRILLS (Use These Every Time)

### Drill 1 — Break & Pause

- Break the trailer
- Pause steering
- Let it respond
- Then correct

**Trailer reacts slower than the tractor.**

---

### Drill 2 — Inside Tire Focus

Say it out loud:

“Watching inside tire... watching dock edge...”

This prevents curb/dock strikes.

---

## **Drill 3 — Pull-Up Reset**

If angle exceeds control:

- Pull forward
- Re-square
- Restart

Pull-ups are **professional**, not failures.

---

## **Real-World Conditions (Truck Stops & Warehouses)**

### **Night**

- Half speed
- Double GOAL
- Shadows lie — mirrors don't

### **Tight Yards**

- Block traffic if needed
- Communicate with flashers
- Ignore pressure from others

### **Uneven Ground**

- Expect trailer to drift
- Make smaller corrections

---

## **CDL Examiner Gold Call-Outs**

Say these naturally:

- “I’m setting up for proper alignment.”
- “I’m watching trailer off-tracking.”
- “I’m making small corrections.”
- “I’m getting out to look.”

---

## **One-Line Memory Hooks**

- **Setup wins**
- **Break → Chase → Straight**
- **Slow fixes fast**
- **GOAL saves careers**

---

## 🏁 Final Truth

Every experienced driver:

- Pulls up
- GOALs
- Takes their time

That's not weakness—that's **control**.

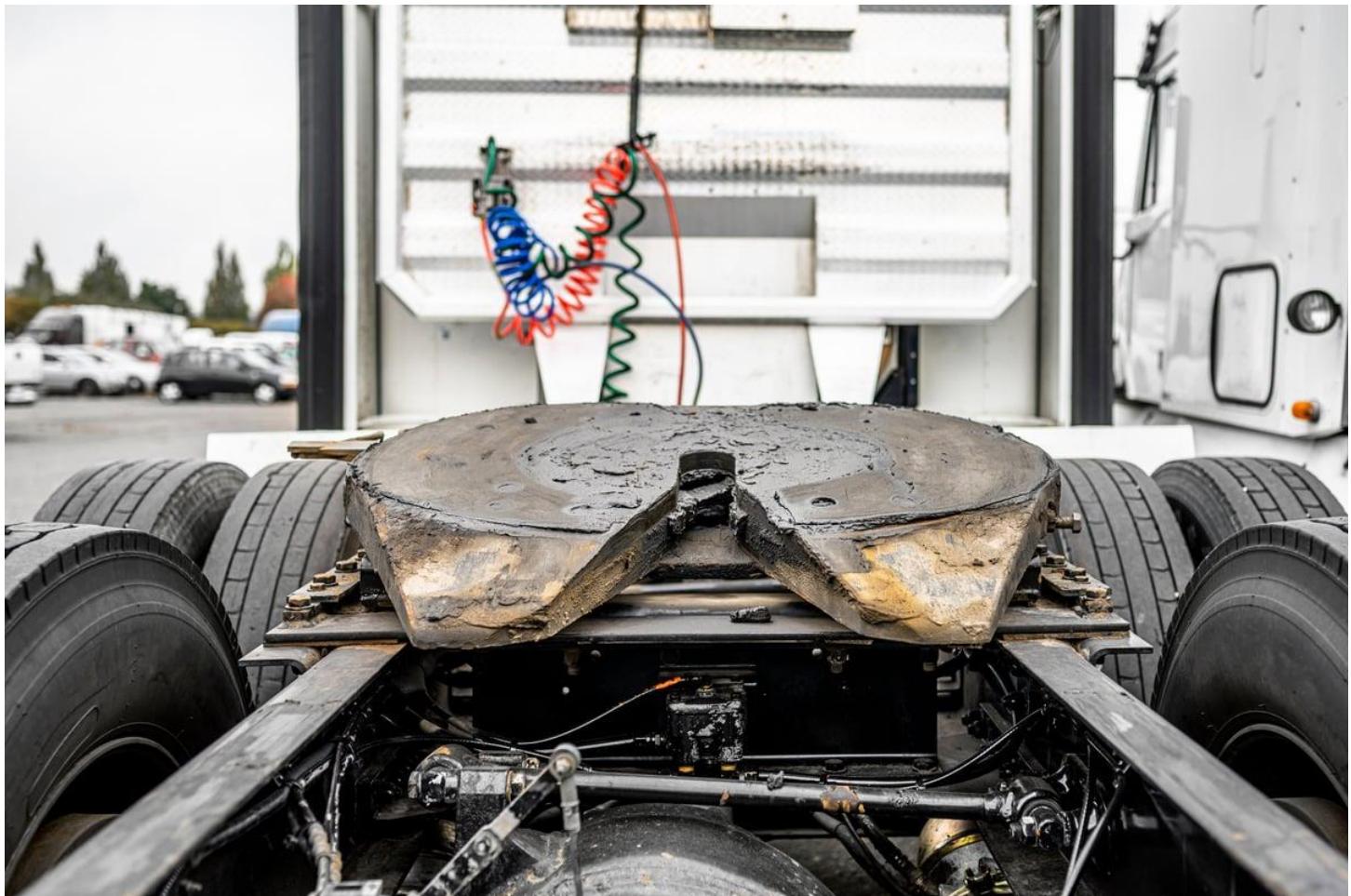
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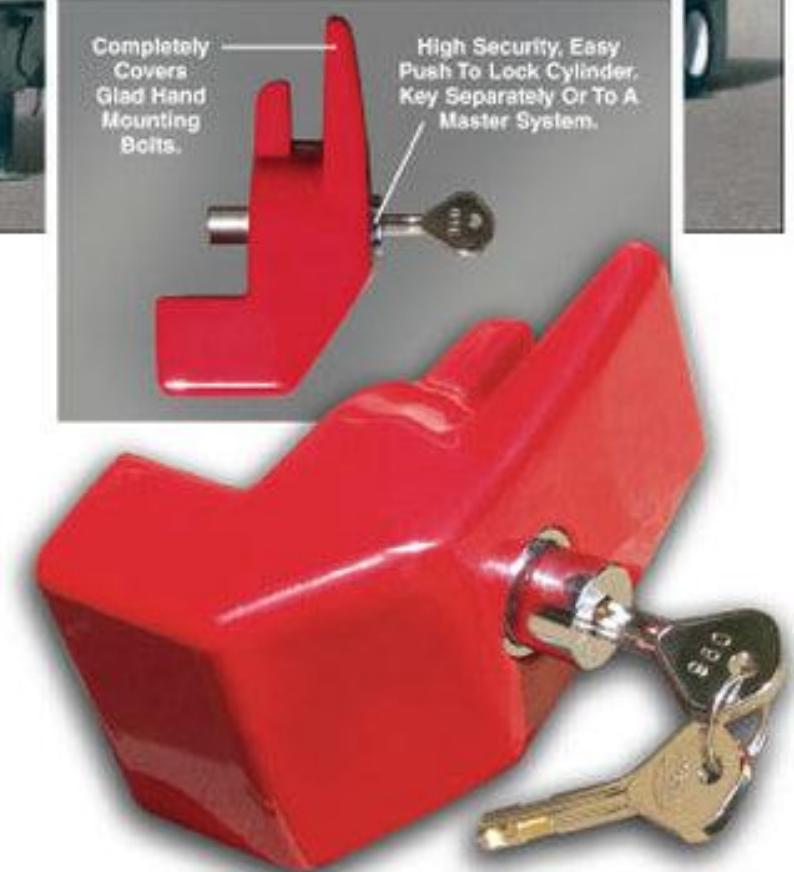
- **Coupling and Uncoupling.**

---

## **Coupling & Uncoupling**

**CDL Class A — Do It the Same Way, Every Time**





Coupling and uncoupling are **critical safety procedures**. Most accidents here happen because drivers **skip steps** or rush. Examiners and DOT expect a **clear, repeatable sequence**, following standards enforced by the **Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration**.

# COUPLING (Hooking to a Trailer)

## Goal

Secure the trailer **mechanically, pneumatically, electrically**, and verify it will not separate.

---

## Step-by-Step Coupling Procedure

### **1** Inspect Before Backing

- Fifth wheel properly greased
- Fifth wheel **tilted** (or jaws open)
- Trailer kingpin not damaged
- Trailer height slightly **lower than fifth wheel**
- Air lines and electrical cord out of the way

---

### **2** Line Up & Back Under

- Align tractor straight with trailer
- Back slowly until kingpin locks into fifth wheel
- Listen/feel for **solid connection**

---

### **3** Lock & Secure

- Ensure locking jaws fully closed around kingpin
- Release handle fully seated
- No space between fifth wheel and trailer apron

**Exam phrase:**

“I visually confirm the locking jaws are secure.”

---

### **4** Tug Test (MANDATORY)

- Set tractor brakes
- Release trailer brakes
- Gently pull forward

**Trailer must not move.**

---

## 5 Connect Air & Electrical

- Emergency (red) line
- Service (blue) line
- Electrical cord

Check:

- Lines not crossed
- No air leaks
- Cord secured

---

## 6 Raise Landing Gear

- Fully raise
- Crank handle secured
- No ground contact

---

## 7 Final Walk-Around

- Fifth wheel locked
- Lines secure
- Landing gear up
- Trailer brakes released
- Lights working

---



# UNCOUPLING (Dropping a Trailer)

## Goal

Leave the trailer **stable, supported, and safe**.

---

## Step-by-Step Uncoupling Procedure

### 1 Secure the Trailer

- Park on level ground

---

- Set tractor and trailer brakes
- Chock wheels if required

---

## 2 Lower Landing Gear

- Firm contact with ground
- Add **1–2 extra cranks** (support weight)

---

## 3 Disconnect Lines

- Electrical cord
- Air lines (hang properly)

---

## 4 Unlock Fifth Wheel

- Pull release handle
- Verify jaws are open

---

## 5 Pull Tractor Clear

- Ease forward slowly
- Stop and confirm trailer stays standing
- Clear completely before turning

---

## Common CDL Failures (Automatic Dings)

- No tug test
- Forgetting landing gear
- Crossing air lines
- Not checking locking jaws
- Dropping trailer too high/low
- Rushing the process

---

## Real-World Pro Tips

- Say each step **out loud** during the test
- Never trust a “clunk” alone—**look**

---

- If something feels off → stop & reset
- Wind, slopes, and soft ground = extra caution

---

## Examiner Gold Statements

Use these naturally:

- “I visually inspect the locking jaws.”
- “I perform a tug test.”
- “I check air lines and electrical connection.”
- “I ensure the landing gear is fully raised/lowered.”

---

## One-Line Memory Hooks

- **Look, lock, tug**
- **Air, electric, gear**
- **Slow beats dropped trailers**
- **Same steps, every time**

---

## Final Reality Check

Even experienced drivers:

- Miss nothing
- Never rush
- Follow the list

That's how trailers stay attached—and careers stay intact.

---

If you want next, I can:

-  Run a **verbal CDL coupling script**
-  Do **night/rain coupling scenarios**
-  Cover **high-hook vs low-hook mistakes**
-  Drill **exam scoring details**

Just tell me what to drill next.

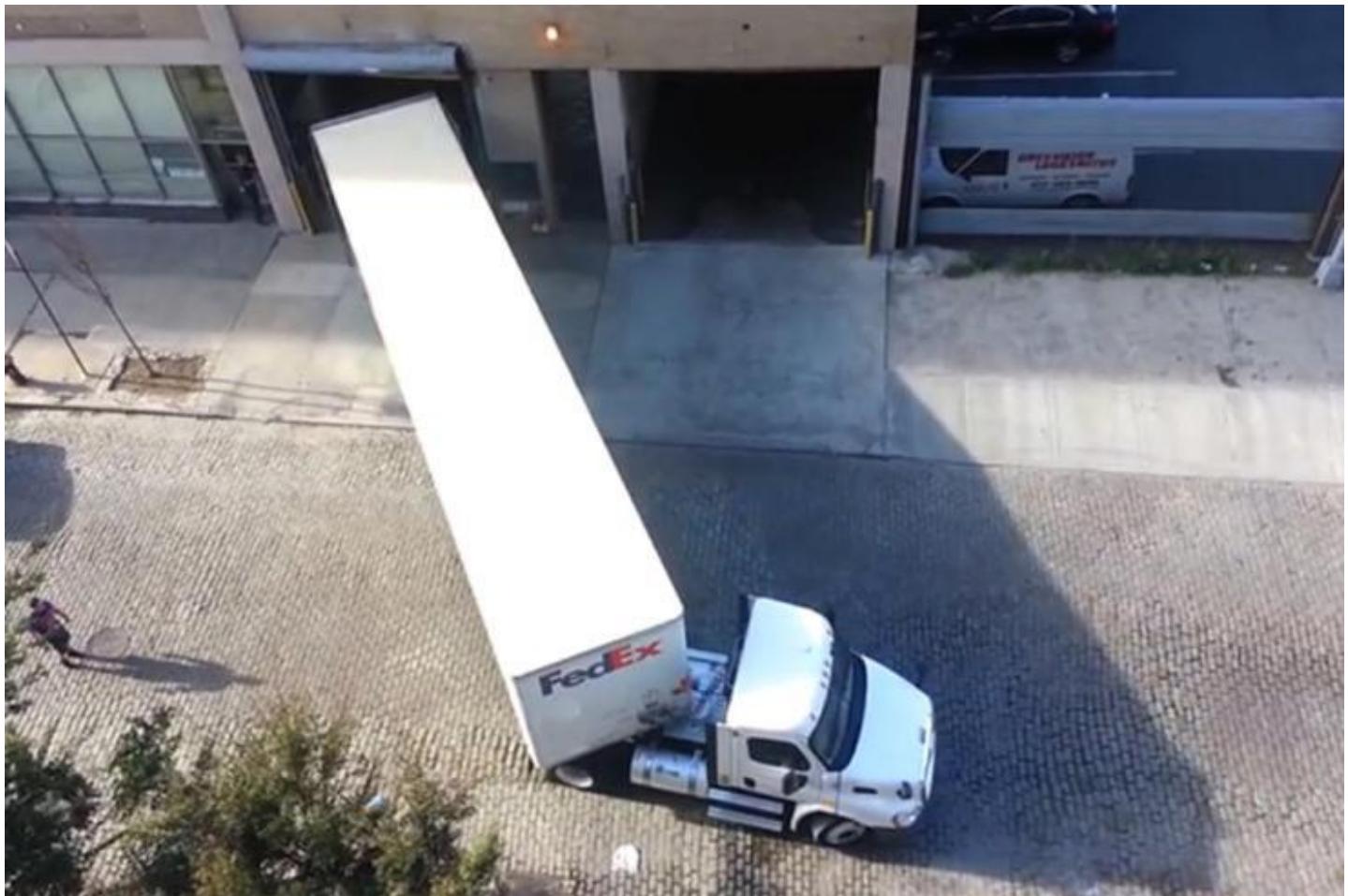
- **Real world backing (truck stops, warehouses, etc.) • we create challenging scenarios**

---

## Real-World Backing

**Truck Stops • Warehouses • Customers • Yards**  
*CDL Class A — Where Pros Separate from Rookies*





Backing is **low speed, high risk**. Most truck damage happens **off the highway**—not because drivers can't back, but because they rush or assume.

---

## The Golden Rules (Non-Negotiable)

1. **GOAL** — *Get Out And Look* (as many times as needed)
2. **Slow enough to stop instantly**
3. **Small steering inputs**
4. **If unsure → stop**

There is **no penalty** for getting out.  
There *is* a penalty for hitting something.

---

## Mirror Control (Your Primary Tools)

- Use **both mirrors constantly**
- Trailer moves **toward the mirror you turn toward**
- If you lose sight of one side → **STOP**

#### Memory hook:

*Hands follow the trailer, eyes follow the mirrors.*

---

## 🏁 BASIC BACKING METHOD (Works Everywhere)

### ▢ The “Setup – Straight – Finish” Formula

1. **Setup**
  - Position truck to give yourself space
  - Favor the **driver side** whenever possible
2. **Straight Back**
  - Get trailer rolling straight before steering
3. **Finish**
  - Small corrections only
  - Chase the trailer gently

---

## 🚦 TRUCK STOPS (Tight & Chaotic)

### ⚠ Real Hazards

- Pedestrians
- Other trucks moving unexpectedly
- Poor lighting at night
- Drivers backing at the same time

### ✓ Best Practices

- Park and **walk the space first**
- Back during **off-peak hours** if possible
- Use four-ways
- Expect people to walk behind you anyway

#### Pro rule:

*Assume someone will step behind your trailer.*

---

## WAREHOUSES & CUSTOMER DOCKS

## ⚠️ Real Hazards

- Poles, dock bumpers, yellow bollards
- Uneven pavement
- Dock plates
- Yard jockeys

## ✓ Best Practices

- Ask: “*Which door?*” (never assume)
- Watch trailer **height vs dock**
- Square up early
- Stop short, GOAL, then finish

### Dock wisdom:

*Perfect setup beats perfect steering.*

---

## 🌙 NIGHT BACKING (Multiplier Risk)

- Reduced depth perception
- Shadows hide objects
- Overconfidence from “doing it all day”

### Adjustments

- Move **half speed**
- Use work lights
- Get out **twice as often**

---

## ⌚ COMMON BACKING TYPES (Real World)

### ⌚ Straight Back

- Use small corrections
- Let trailer settle before adjusting

### ⌚ Offset Back

- Setup wide
- Two controlled turns
- Straighten early

### ⌚ Alley Dock

- Best from driver side
- Watch inside trailer tire
- Don't chase mistakes—reset

---

## Common Real-World Mistakes

- Rushing because someone is watching
- Over-steering
- Skipping GOAL “just this once”
- Fixating on one mirror
- Letting pride replace patience

---

## What Experienced Drivers Always Do

- Block traffic if needed
- Take space confidently
- Reset when it feels wrong
- Ignore pressure from others

**Backing confidence = calm + repetition.**

---

## One-Line Rules to Live By

- **Slow fixes fast**
- **Get out or get written up**
- **Setup is everything**
- **Ego causes damage**

---

## Final Reality Check

Every professional driver—**even 20-year veterans**—still:

- GOAL
- Pull up
- Reset
- Take their time

That's not weakness.

That's **experience**.

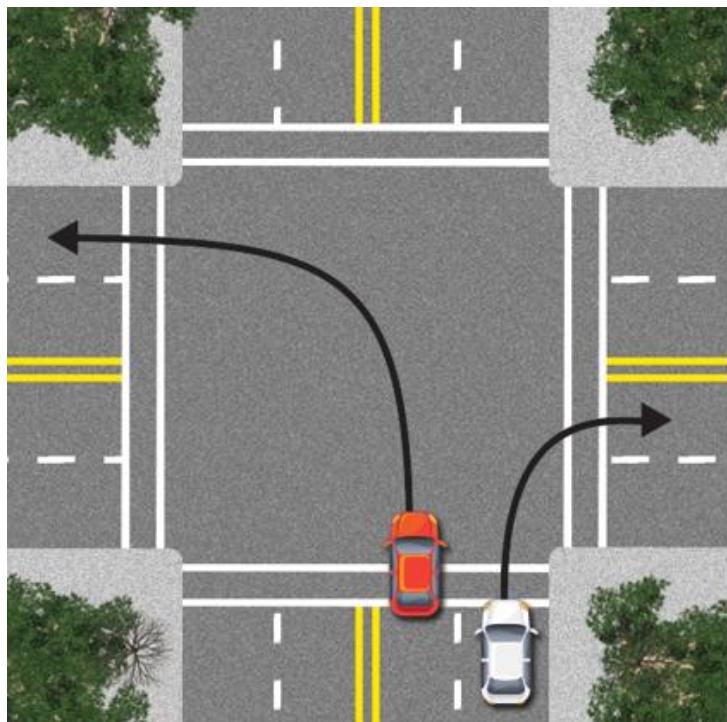
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# BEHIND THE WHEEL ROAD TRAINING

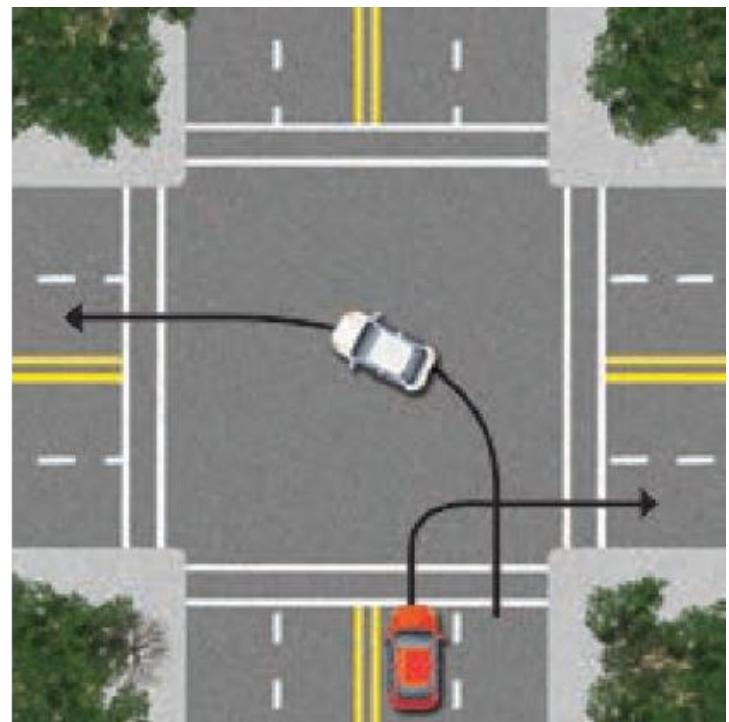


- **Behind-the-Wheel - Public Road.**

 **Behind-the-Wheel — Public Road Driving** CDL Class A | What Examiners Expect to See Every Second



Into wrong lane



From wrong lane

This is the **live performance** portion of the CDL test. On public roads, you're judged on **control, awareness, decisions, and professionalism**, under standards enforced by the **Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration**.

---

## **What the Examiner Is Really Watching**

Not perfection—**consistency**.

They want to see that you:

- Stay aware at all times
- Control speed and space
- Communicate clearly
- Make safe, legal decisions
- Correct small issues calmly

---

## **VISUAL SEARCH & AWARENESS (Always On)**

- Scan **12–15 seconds** ahead
- Check mirrors **every 5–8 seconds**
- Look left/right at intersections
- Check mirrors **before braking, turning, or lane changes**

**Missed head checks = points off.**

---

## **SPEED & SPACE MANAGEMENT**

- Obey posted speeds
- Adjust for traffic, weather, visibility
- Maintain **6–7 seconds** following distance
- No tailgating, no rushing

**Say it out loud if needed:**

“Maintaining safe following distance.”

---

## **LANE CONTROL & POSITION**

- Stay centered in your lane
- Right lane unless passing
- No drifting
- Avoid riding lane lines

**Smooth steering beats quick corrections.**

---

## ↔ LANE CHANGES

1. Mirror
2. Signal
3. Mirror + blind-spot check
4. Move smoothly
5. Cancel signal

 Passenger-side blind spot is critical.

---

## ⬅ ➡ TURNS (Left & Right)

- Signal early
- Correct lane position
- Slow **before** the turn
- Watch trailer off-tracking
- Finish in the proper lane

 No curb strikes  
 No wide-swing surprises

---

## 🚦 INTERSECTIONS

- Scan **left-right-left**
- Stop fully behind the line
- No rolling stops
- Yield when required

**Clear intersection before entering.**

---

## 🌀 CURVES & GRADES

- Brake before curves

- Maintain steady speed
- No braking mid-curve if avoidable
- Downshift early on grades

**Rollover prevention matters.**

---

## SIGNS, SIGNALS & COMPLIANCE

- Obey traffic signs & lights
- School zones = full compliance
- Railroad crossings: slow, scan, listen

Missed signs = automatic deductions.

---

## COMMUNICATION & SIGNALING

- Turn signals 3–5 seconds early
- Brake lights used smoothly
- Four-ways for slow speeds or hazards
- Horn used only as warning

**Predictable = safe.**

---

## ATTITUDE & COMPOSURE

- Calm
- Confident
- No arguing
- Accept corrections smoothly

**Nervous drivers rush. Professional drivers breathe.**

---

## Examiner “Green Flag” Behaviors

- Verbal hazard recognition
- Early speed reduction
- Mirror checks you can see
- Smooth gear changes
- Clear lane discipline

---

## Common Public-Road Test Fails

- Missed mirror checks
- Late signals
- Rolling stops
- Speeding
- Lane drifting
- Curbing a tire
- Panic braking

---

## Verbal Call-Outs That HELP You

You're allowed to talk:

- "Checking mirrors."
- "Maintaining space."
- "Covering brake."
- "Clear left, clear right."

Talking shows awareness.

---

## Final Test-Day Mindset

**Slow is smooth. Smooth is safe. Safe passes.**

You don't need to impress—  
you need to **prove you're ready**.

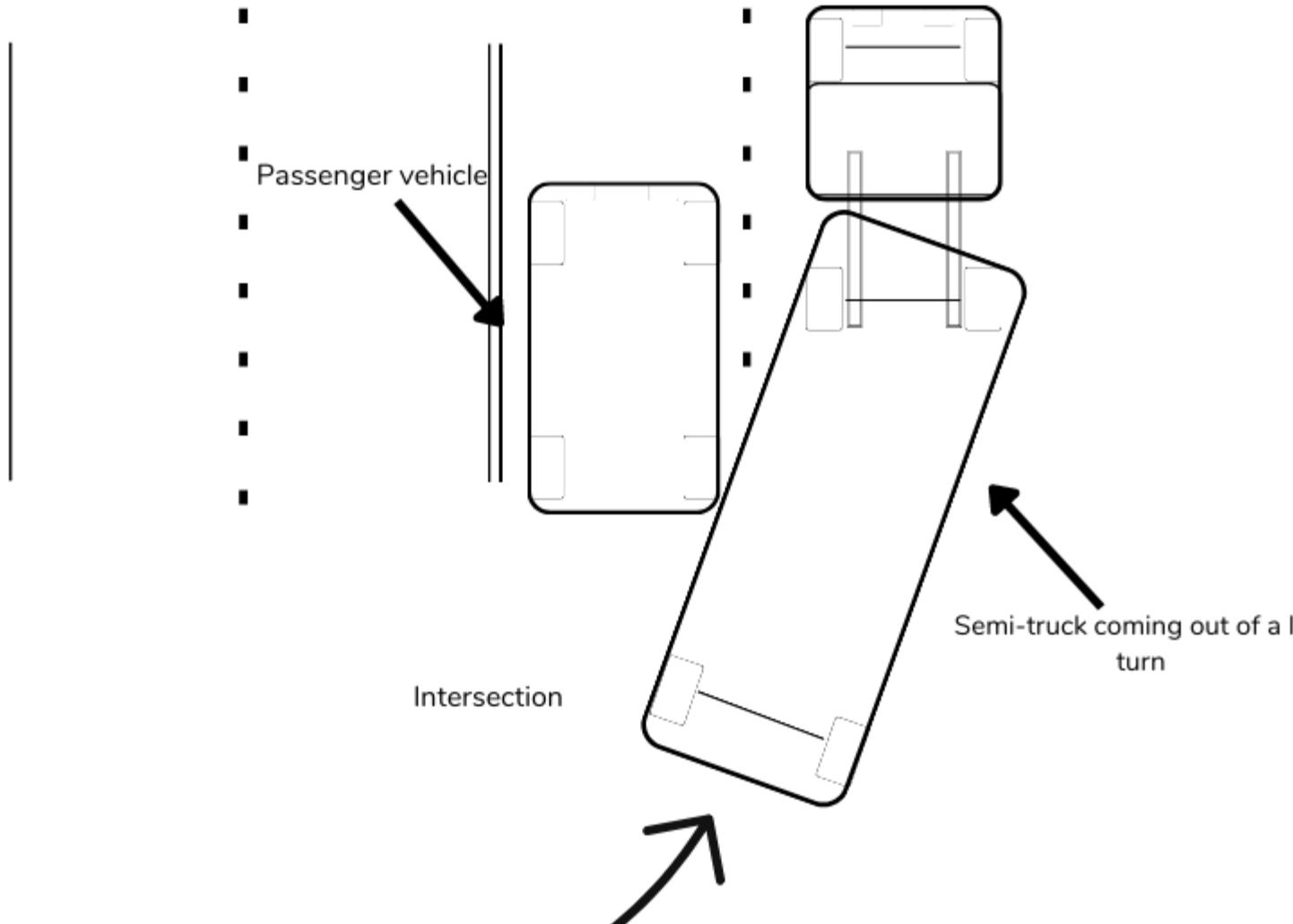
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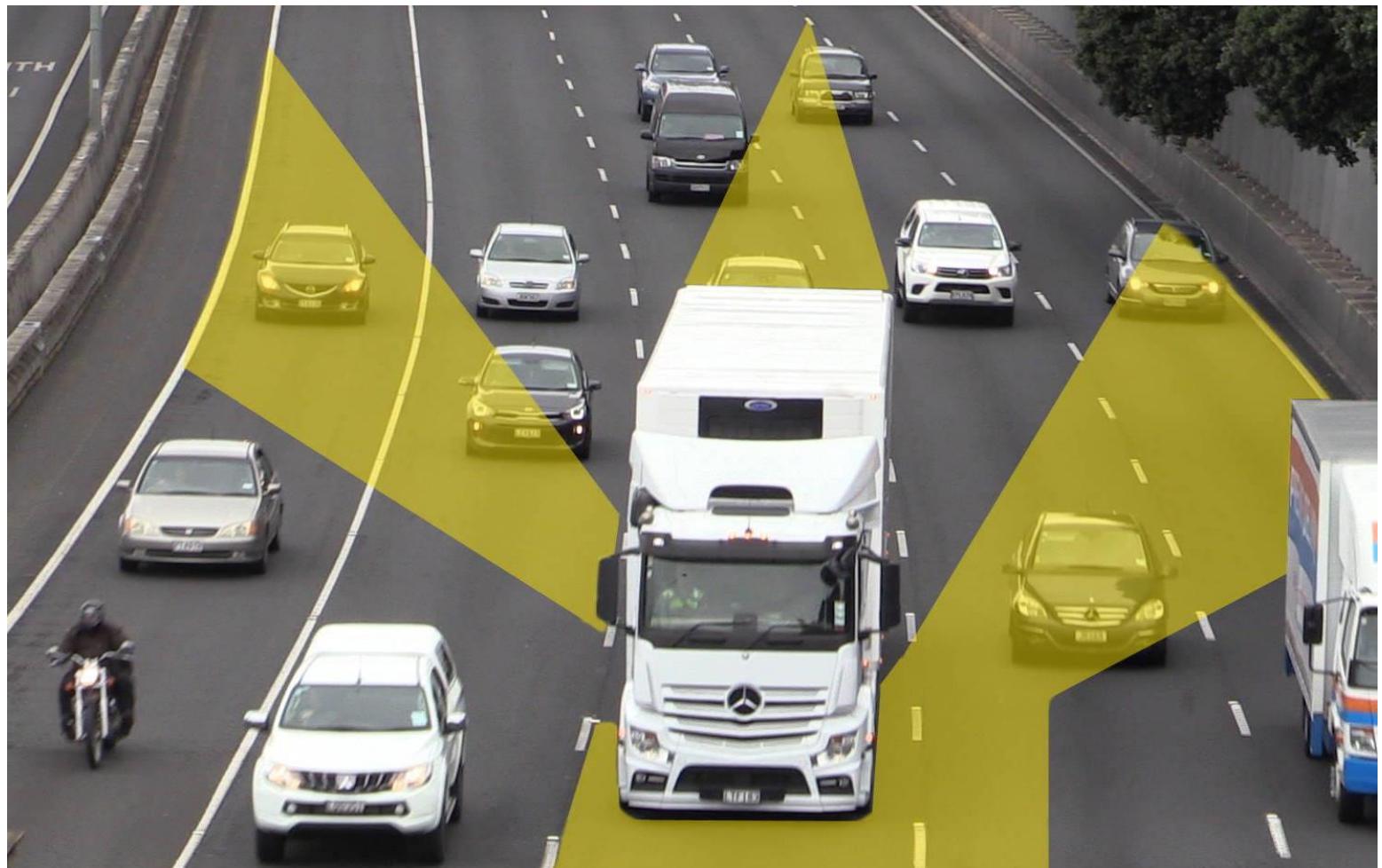
- **Unit A3.1 Vehicle Controls Including: Left Turn, Right Turns, Lane Changes, Curves at Speed.**

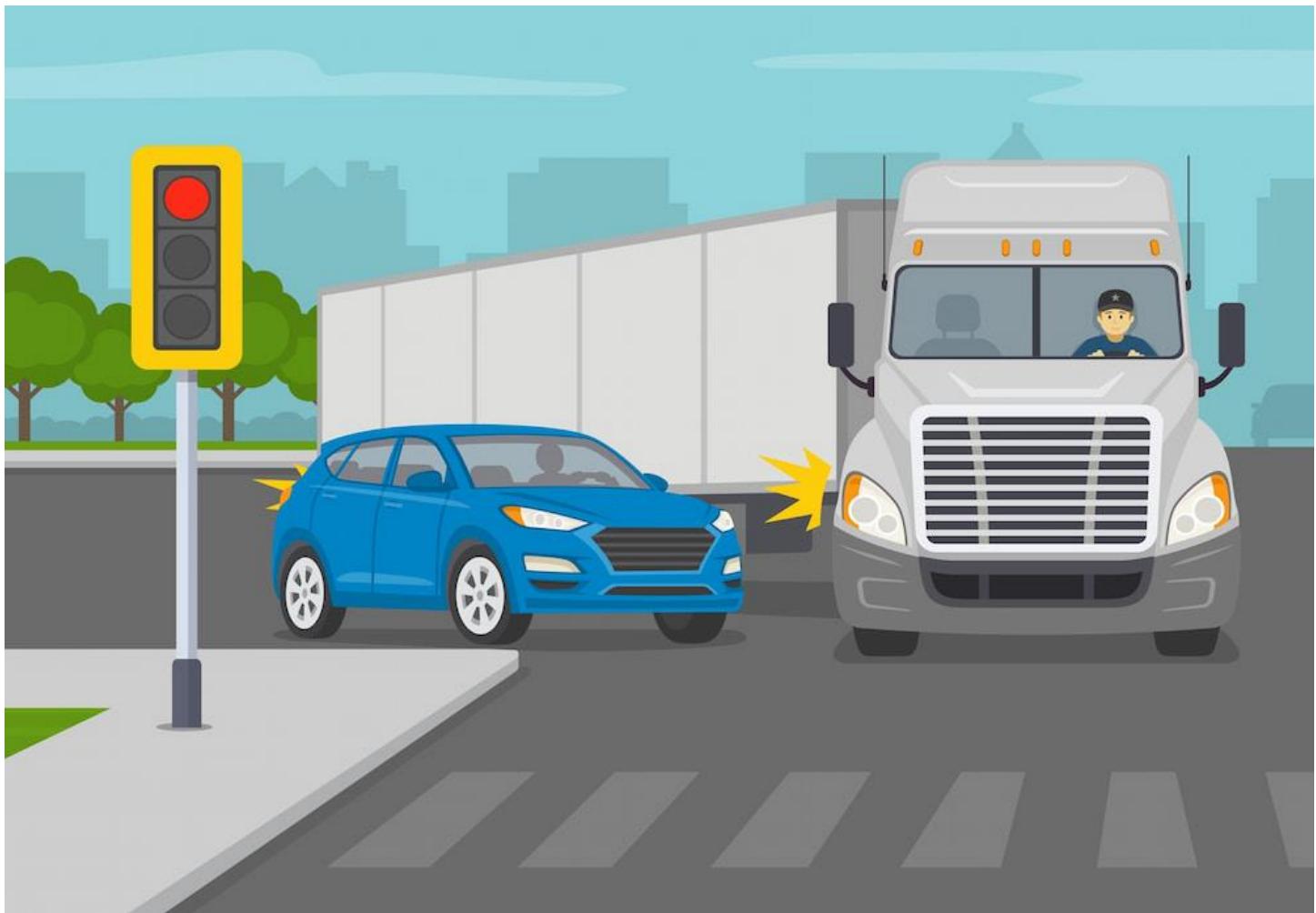
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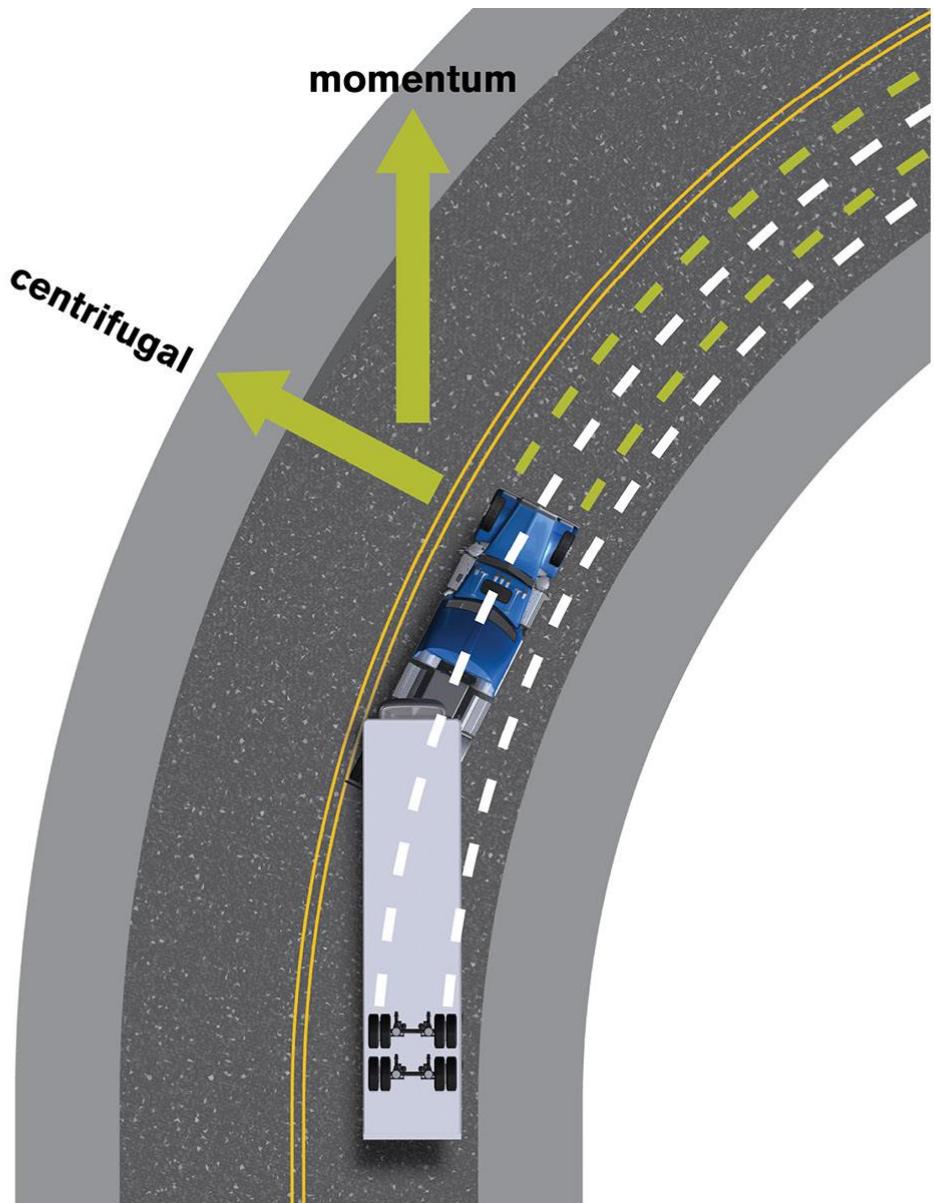
## Vehicle Controls

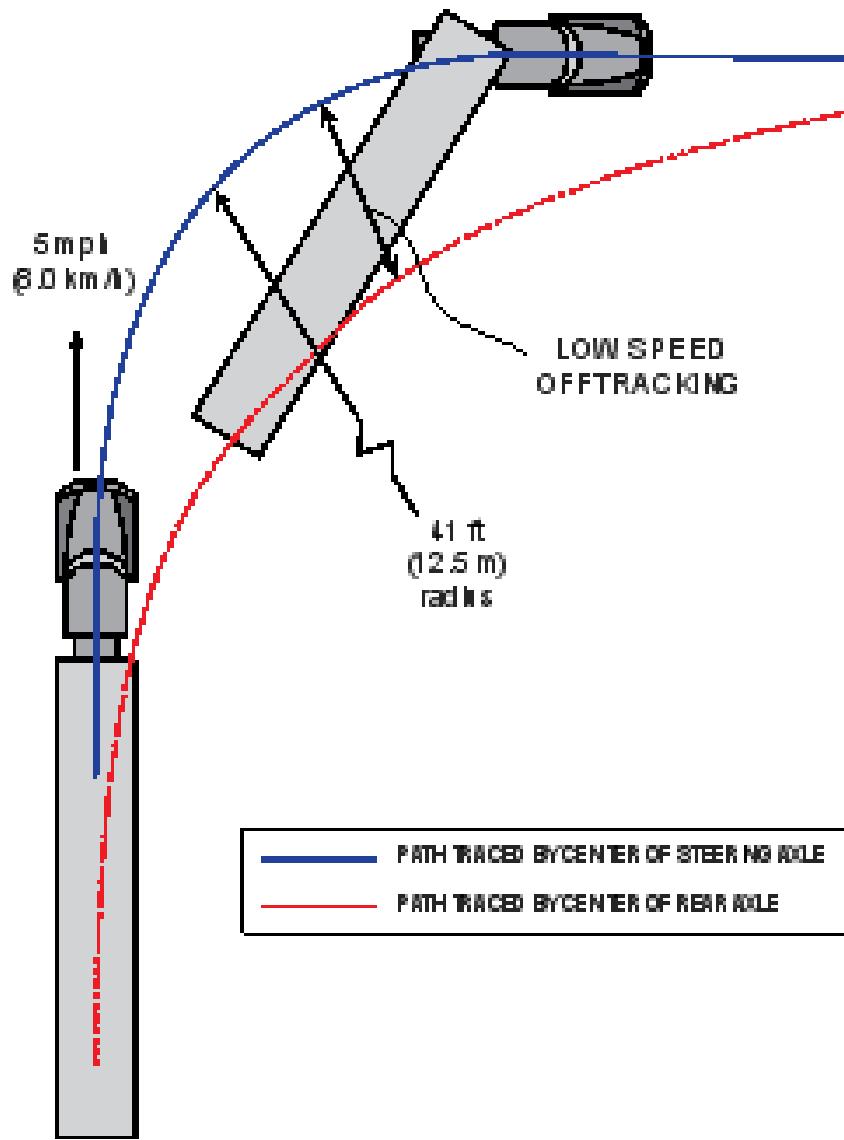
**Left Turns • Right Turns • Lane Changes • Curves (at Speed)**  
*CDL Class A — Precision, Control, Predictability*











Vehicle control is where examiners decide if you're **safe to share the road**. Every move must be **planned, signalled, smooth, and legal**, following standards enforced by the **Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration**.

## ⬅ LEFT TURNS (High-Risk Maneuver)

### 🎯 Goal

Clear oncoming traffic, control off-tracking, and finish in the **correct lane**.

### 🔄 Step-by-Step

1. **Signal early** (at least 100 ft / 3–5 seconds)
2. Scan intersection (left, right, left)
3. Move close to center line (don't cross it)
4. Enter intersection **only when clear**
5. Turn wide enough for trailer
6. Finish in the **left-most legal lane**

## ⚠ Watch For

- Oncoming speed misjudgment
- Cars trying to sneak around you
- Trailer cutting the corner

### Exam phrase:

“I wait until the intersection is clear and complete the turn safely.”

---

## ➡ RIGHT TURNS (Most Common Truck Crash)

### 🎯 Goal

Prevent **right-side squeeze** and trailer curb strikes.

### ➡ Step-by-Step

1. **Signal early**
2. Check right mirror continuously
3. Position truck close to right curb/line
4. Slow before the turn
5. Turn wide, watch trailer wheels
6. Finish in nearest legal lane

### ⚠ Never:

- ✗ Swing left before turning right
- ✗ Let cars squeeze between you and curb

### Golden Rule:

*If they fit, you quit — block the lane.*

---

## ↔ LANE CHANGES (Mirror Discipline)

### 🎯 Goal

Change lanes without surprising anyone.

## Proper Lane Change

1. Check mirrors
2. Signal
3. Check blind spot
4. Move smoothly
5. Cancel signal

**Mirror checks:** every **5–8 seconds**, more during maneuvers.

## Key Hazards

- Passenger-side blind spot
- Fast-approaching cars
- Motorcycles

**Exam phrase:**

“I check mirrors and blind spots before changing lanes.”

---

## CURVES (At Speed)

### Goal

Maintain lane control and prevent rollovers.

## Curve Control Drill

1. Spot curve warning signs early
2. **Brake before the curve**
3. Downshift if needed
4. Maintain steady speed through curve
5. Accelerate **after** curve

## Rollover Risks Increase With:

- High center of gravity
- Liquid loads
- Excessive speed
- Braking mid-curve

**Rule:**

*Slow in, smooth through, power out.*

---

## Common CDL Control Errors

- Late signals
- Over-steering
- Cutting corners
- Braking during turns
- Poor mirror usage

---

## DAILY CONTROL DRILLS

### Drill 1 — Mirror Habit

Every signal → mirror check.

### Drill 2 — Turn Talk

Say out loud:

“Signal... mirror... space... trailer.”

### Drill 3 — Curve Speed Check

Ask before curve:

- Am I in control at this speed?

If unsure → slow down.

---

## CDL Examiner Gold Statements

Use these naturally:

- “I signal early and check mirrors.”
- “I control speed before turns.”
- “I watch trailer off-tracking.”
- “I complete turns into the proper lane.”
- “I maintain lane control in curves.”

---

## One-Line Memory Hooks

- **Signal before steering**
- **Wide turns save tires**
- **Mirrors tell the truth**
- **Brake before curves, not in them**

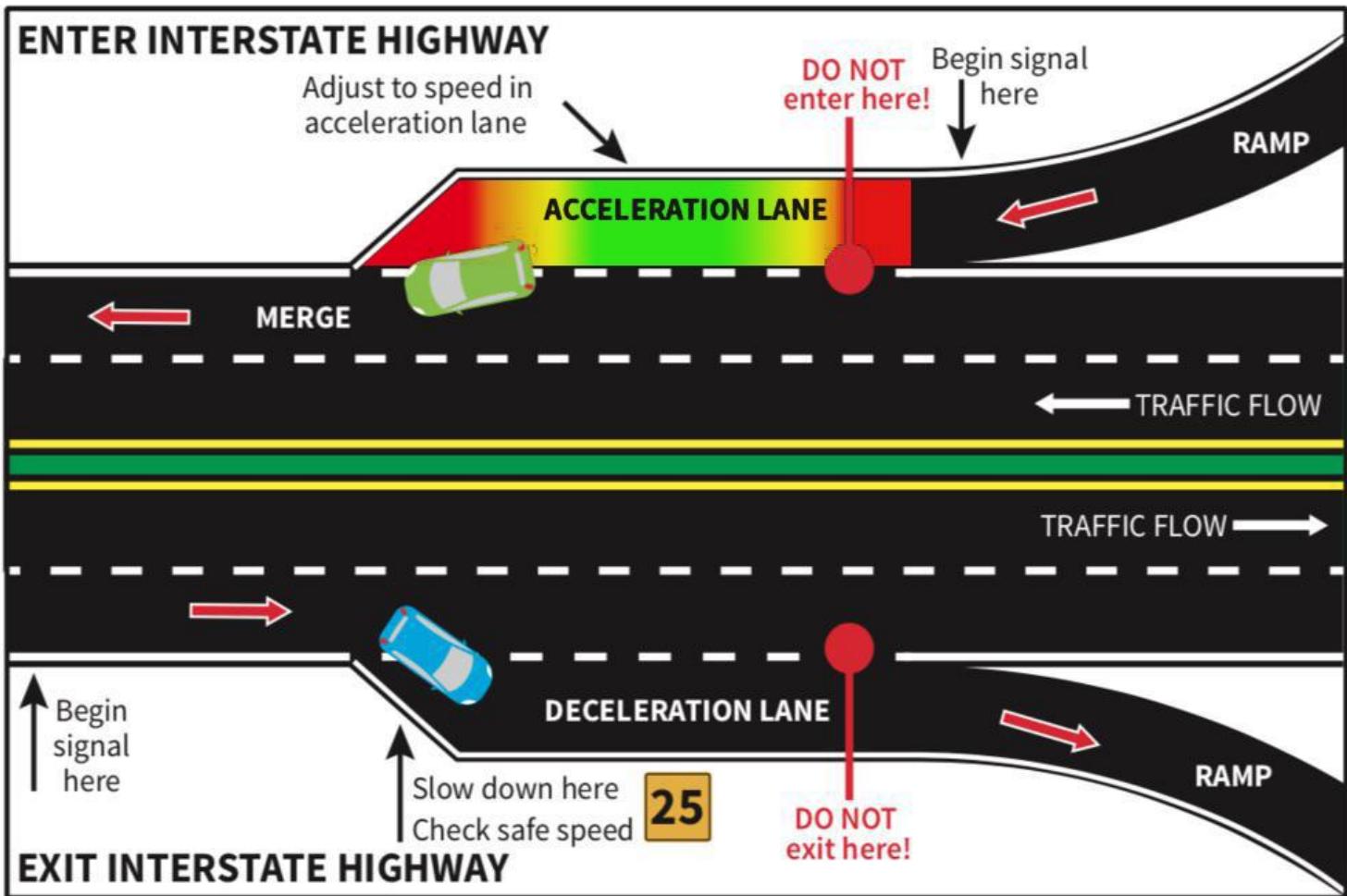
---

- **Highway Speeds, and Entry and Exit on the Interstate or Controlled Access Highway.**

### Highway Speeds, Entry & Exit

Interstate / Controlled-Access Highway — CDL Class A





Highway driving is about **smooth speed control and clean communication**. Most crashes happen during **merging, lane changes, and exits**—not cruising. Standards are enforced by the **Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration**.

## 🚦 HIGHWAY SPEED MANAGEMENT

### ✓ Drive for Conditions (Not Just the Sign)

- Traffic density
- Visibility (night, rain, fog)
- Road surface
- Load weight & height
- Construction zones

**Rule:**

*If you can't stop safely at this speed, you're too fast.*

## ⌚ Following Distance

- **6–7 seconds minimum**
- Add **+1–2 seconds** for night, rain, heavy load

## Lane Discipline

- Right lane = default
- Left lanes = pass only
- Avoid camping beside other vehicles

---

# ENTERING THE INTERSTATE (On-Ramps)

## Goal

Merge **at traffic speed**, not below it.

## Step-by-Step Entry Drill

1. **Signal early** on the ramp
2. **Accelerate hard enough** to reach highway speed
3. **Scan mirrors + traffic gap** (don't fixate)
4. **Commit to the merge**—don't hesitate
5. **Cancel signal once established**

**Do NOT:**

-  Stop on the ramp
-  Merge at low speed
-  Force traffic to brake for you

**Exam phrase:**

“I use the acceleration lane to match traffic speed and merge safely.”

---

# MERGING REALITY CHECK

- Cars may not move
- Expect last-second cut-ins
- Leave yourself an escape route (shoulder if needed)

**Pro move:** Ease off throttle slightly to fall **behind** a car rather than forcing in front.

---

# EXITING THE INTERSTATE (Off-Ramps)

## Goal

Leave smoothly **without disrupting traffic**.

### Step-by-Step Exit Drill

1. **Signal at least 5 seconds early**
2. Check mirrors
3. Move fully into exit lane
4. **Do NOT slow on the highway**
5. Brake **only** after entering the ramp

**Critical:**

*Exit ramps are designed for slowing—highways are not.*

---

## Curves, Ramps & Cloverleafs

- Advisory speeds are **maximums**, not suggestions
- Heavy loads = slower entry
- Downshift **before** the curve
- No braking mid-curve if possible

---

## Common CDL Mistakes (Instant Dings)

- Slowing on the interstate before exiting
- Merging too slow
- Late or no signal
- Cutting across gore areas
- Riding brakes on long ramps

---

## DRILLS (Use These Daily)

### Drill 1: Merge Speed Check

Ask:

- Am I within 5 mph of traffic?
- Do I have a clear gap?  
If not—keep accelerating.

### Drill 2: Exit Discipline

Say it out loud:

“Signal... mirrors... lane... brake on ramp.”

### **Drill 3: Space Reset**

After merging or being cut off:

- Ease off
- Rebuild your 6–7 seconds

---

### **CDL Examiner Gold Statements**

Say these confidently:

- “I match traffic speed when entering the highway.”
- “I signal early and merge smoothly.”
- “I slow only after entering the exit ramp.”
- “I maintain a safe following distance.”

---

### **One-Line Memory Hooks**

- **Speed to merge, not to race**
- **Brake on the ramp, not the road**
- **Signal early, move once**
- **Smooth in, smooth out**

---

# • Unit A3.2 Shifting/Transmission.

---

## Shifting / Transmission

### CDL Class A — Smooth Control, Zero Grind

Shifting is about **control**, not speed. Done right, it protects the drivetrain, keeps the truck stable, and proves professionalism—something examiners and DOT (under **Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration** standards) watch closely.

---

## Core Principles (Memorize These)

- **RPM controls the shift**
- **Smooth beats fast**
- **Gear before grade**
- **Never force a gear**

Grinding = rushing or wrong RPM.

---

## Types of Transmissions You'll See

- **Manual (10, 13, 18-speed)** – CDL test common
- **Automated Manual (AMT)** – still requires gear awareness
- **Range selector & splitter** – doubles usable gears

*(Even with automatics, you must understand gear selection for grades and control.)*

---

## Upshifting (Getting to Speed)

### Double-Clutch Method (Exam-Approved)

1. Clutch → Neutral
2. Clutch out → RPM drops
3. Clutch → Next gear
4. Clutch out → Throttle

**Typical upshift RPM:** ~1,400–1,600 (varies by truck)

### Pro Tips

- Light throttle
- Pause briefly in neutral
- Listen to the engine—not the tach alone

---

## Downshifting (Control & Safety)

### Downshift Steps

1. Brake lightly (slow truck)
2. Clutch → Neutral
3. Throttle blip (RPM up)
4. Clutch → Lower gear

**Downshift RPM target:** ~1,600–1,900

### When to Downshift

- Before curves
- Before downgrades
- Before intersections
- Before traffic compression

### Rule:

*If you wait until you need the gear, you waited too long.*

---

## Grades & Downgrades (Critical)

- **Select gear before the hill**
- **Use engine brake**
- Never coast in neutral
- Same gear down as it took to go up (or lower)

If speed increases downhill → **downshift early**, don't ride brakes.

---

## Range Selector & Splitter (High Gears)

- **Range selector:** low → high range (usually after 5th)
- **Splitter:** half gears (useful for heavy loads & hills)

**Exam mistake:** flipping switches late.

**Fix:** set switches *before* clutching.

---

## Common CDL Shifting Errors

- Riding the clutch
- Looking at shifter instead of road
- Skipping gears on test (unless allowed)
- Grinding through panic
- Downshifting too late on hills

---

## DRILLS (Practice These)

### Drill 1: RPM Awareness

Call out RPM numbers as you shift to build timing.

### Drill 2: Neutral Pause

Practice smooth neutral pauses—no rush.

### Drill 3: Downshift Early

Downshift *before* braking zones, not during.

---

## CDL Examiner Verbal Gold

Say these clearly:

- “I shift smoothly using proper RPM.”
- “I downshift before curves and grades.”
- “I do not coast in neutral.”
- “I select the proper gear for control.”

---

## One-Line Memory Hooks

- **RPM first, gear second**
- **Slow hand, smooth truck**
- **Gear before grade**
- **Grind = wrong time**

---



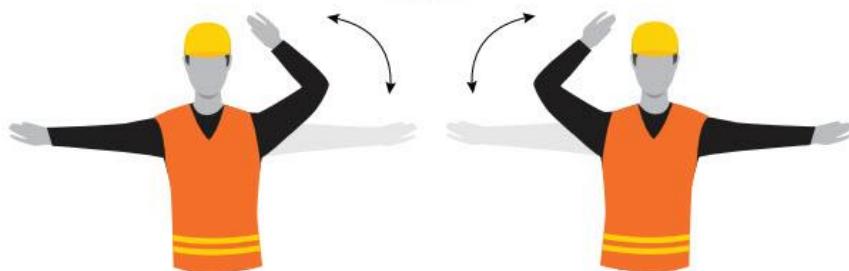
# • Unit A3.3 Communications/Signaling.

## Communications & Signaling

CDL Class A — Be Predictable, Be Understood

## SPOTTER HAND SIGNALS

TURNS



Point one arm to indicate the direction to turn. Bend monitoring arm repeatedly toward head to indicate continued turning.

EMERGENCY STOP



Start with hands clasped over head. Extend downward repeatedly until vehicles stops.

PROCEED SLOWLY



Face palms in direction of desired travel. Bend both arms repeatedly toward head and chest, and then extend.

STOP



Cross both arms above head.

DISTANCE TO STOPPING POINT



Face palms forward, with hands above head. Bring elbow forward and hands together.

Good communication prevents crashes **before** they start. You can't control other drivers—but you *can* make your intentions obvious and early. Standards are enforced by the **Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration**.



### Core Rule

**Signal early. Signal clearly. Never surprise anyone.**

If others can predict you, they can avoid you.

---

## Turn Signals (Your Primary Language)

### Best Practices

- Signal **3–5 seconds before** lane changes or turns
- Signal **before braking**, not during
- Cancel signals promptly after the maneuver

### Common Mistakes

- Late signaling
- “Courtesy blinks”
- Forgetting a signal is still on (confuses traffic)

**Exam phrase:**

“I signal early and clearly to communicate my intentions.”

---

## Brake Lights (Silent but Powerful)

- Brake **early and smoothly** to warn traffic
- Avoid hard, last-second braking
- Tap brakes lightly when slowing gradually (especially with tailgaters)

**Rear-end crashes are the #1 truck collision—brake communication matters.**

---

## Hazard Flashers (4-Ways)

**Use When:**

- Traveling **well below traffic speed**
- Sudden slowdown or traffic backup
- Breakdowns or roadside stops
- Severe weather (rain, snow, fog)
- Climbing steep grades at low speed

**Don't Use:**

- As a replacement for turn signals
- Just because it's dark

---

## **Horn Use (Less Is More)**

### **Proper Use**

- Short, controlled blasts
- Warning only—not anger
- Pedestrians, merging vehicles, blind spots

### **Never:**

- Lean on the horn
- Use it in road rage
- Use air horn unnecessarily in residential areas

**Horn = warning, not punishment.**

---

## **Hand Signals (When Needed)**

Used if lights fail or visibility requires it:

- **Left turn:** arm straight out
- **Right turn:** arm up
- **Stop/slow:** arm down, palm back

Know them—DOT and CDL exams still test this.

---

## **Headlights & Light Signals**

### **Headlights**

- On from dusk to dawn
- On in rain, fog, snow
- Don't rely on DRLs alone

### **Light Flashes**

- Flashing headlights to warn of hazards
- Avoid aggressive flashing to “demand” space

---

## **Communication by Situation**

### **Highway**

- Signal lane changes early
- Use hazards in sudden slowdowns
- Brake gradually to warn traffic

## Back Roads

- Extra early signaling (limited visibility)
- Use horn lightly at blind curves if needed
- Watch for locals who don't expect trucks

## Truck Stops / Yards

- Signal every turn
- Crawl speed
- Expect pedestrians who don't look

---

## CDL Examiner Gold Lines

Say these confidently:

- "I communicate early using turn signals."
- "I use four-way flashers to warn traffic."
- "I brake smoothly to alert drivers behind me."
- "I use my horn only as a warning device."

---

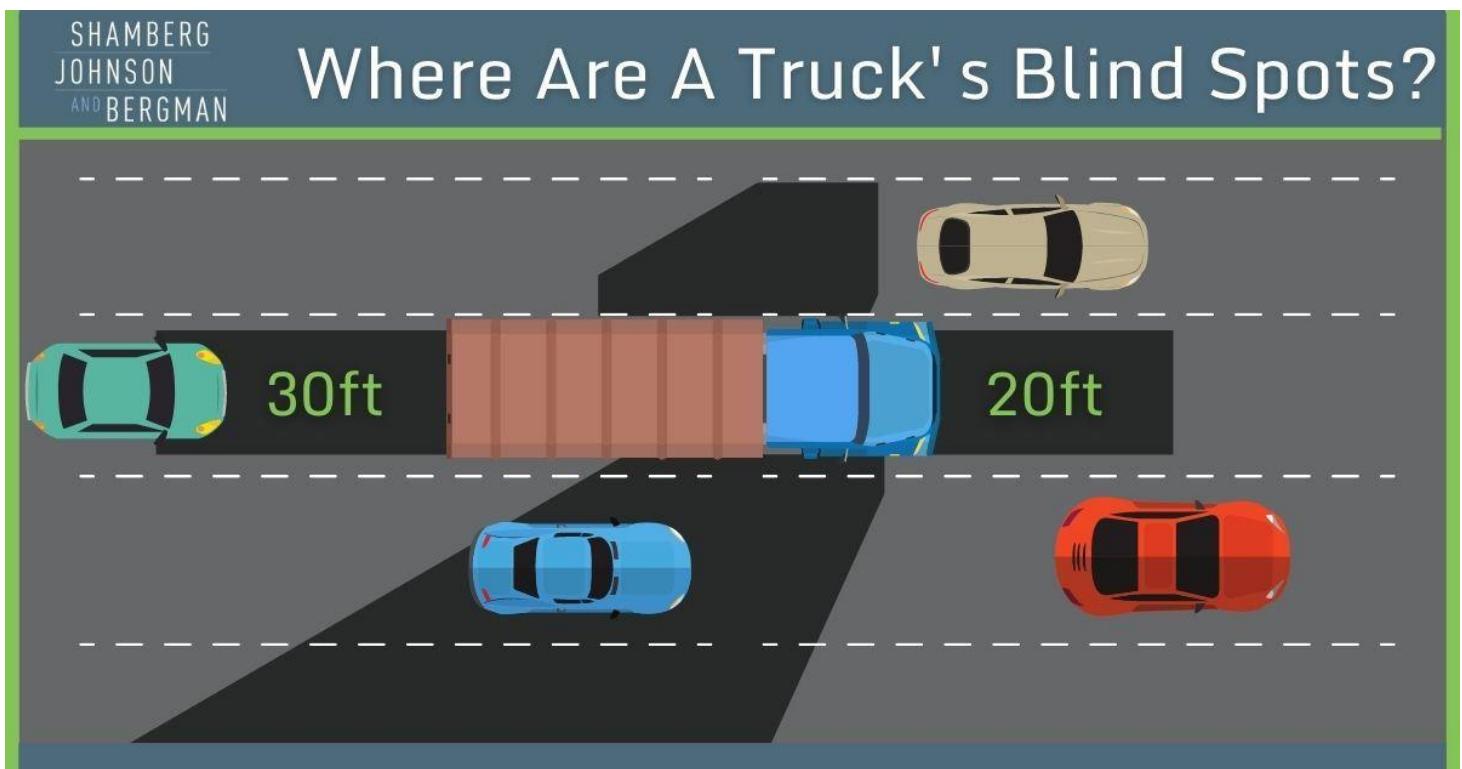
## One-Line Memory Hooks

- **Early beats loud**
- **Signals before brakes**
- **Predictable = safe**
- **Your lights speak for you**

---

- **Unit A3.4 Visual Search.**

-  **Visual Search (CDL Class A – Seeing What Matters)**







Good **visual search** is not just *looking* — it's **seeing, predicting, and prioritizing**. Professional drivers search the environment in patterns to find hazards early and avoid surprises.

---

## **The Core Idea**

**You see what you look for.**  
**You act on what you see early.**

Your eyes are the first line of defense — the sooner you detect a risk, the sooner you can react safely.

---

## **The Three Zones You Must Always Monitor**

1. **Far Ahead** — Straight up the road  
*Scan 12–15 seconds ahead*  
Find: brake lights, slow vehicles, merges, signals, curves.

---

2. **Side to Side** — Shoulders and cross streets  
Look for: pedestrians, bikes, cars entering/exiting.
3. **Near & Behind** — Mirrors and adjacent lanes  
Look for: tailgaters, fast traffic, lane changes.

---

## Continuous Search Pattern

Real pros never stare straight ahead. They use a **rhythm**:

**Far → Side → Rear Mirror → Dashboard → Forward → Side**

Repeat every **5–8 seconds**.

This keeps your *situational awareness* high and surprises low.

---

## Why Search, Not Just Look?

Because hazards often start **outside your path**:

- A car on the shoulder about to pull out
- A pedestrian stepping into the road
- Brake lights three cars ahead
- A truck weaving in the next lane

If you *don't see it early*, you can't *react early*.

---

## Scan the Scene — What to Watch For

### Far Ahead

- Brake lights
- Slow traffic
- Road signs
- Traffic signals
- Intersections
- Curves, hills

### Side Areas

- Driveways
- Side roads
- People/cyclists
- Animals

- Parked cars

## Around & Behind

- Mirrors every **5–8 seconds**
- Trucks cutting in
- Tailgaters tightening space

## Inside Cab

- Gauges & warnings
- Speed
- Air pressure

---

## Blind Spots (No-Zones) You Must Actively Scan Around

- Front (close in on corners)
- Sides (especially passenger side)
- Rear
- Trailer corners

Don't just know them—**actively check them** before moving.

---

## Refining Your Search

### Drill 1 — 12-Second Rule

Pick a fixed point up the road (sign, shadow).  
Count: *one-thousand-one...* up to 12 seconds.

Ask:

- What's ahead of me?
- What could become a hazard?

If no answer—slow down.

---

### Drill 2 — Mirror Micro-Checks

Every time you:

- Change speed

- Change direction  
...do a mirror check.

Even if nothing changes — check again.

---

## Drill 3 — Scan Left/Right/Far/Rear

Every 8 seconds:

1. Far ahead
2. Left roadside
3. Right roadside
4. Rearview
5. Adjacent lanes

**Consistent scanning = fewer surprises.**

---

## How This Prevents Crashes

Good visual search:

- Spots hazards early
- Avoids last-second braking
- Maintains space around you
- Helps you *not assume* other drivers will behave well

---

## CDL Examiner Call-Out Lines

Say things like:

- “I scan far ahead and into potential conflict areas.”
- “I check mirrors every 5–8 seconds.”
- “I look for hazards side to side, not just ahead.”
- “I plan my speed based on what I see.”

This proves you’re not just reacting—you’re anticipating.

---

## One-Line Memory Hooks

- Eyes moving will save your **hides** moving.
- Far → Side → Mirror → Forward—repeat.

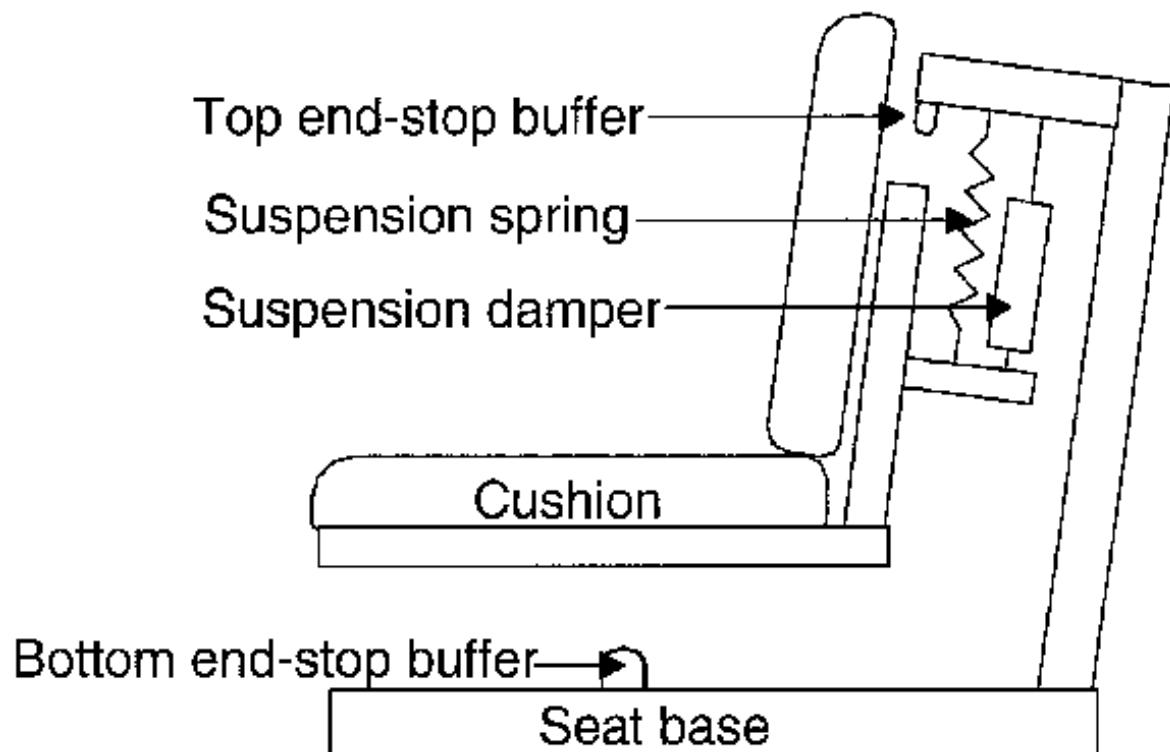
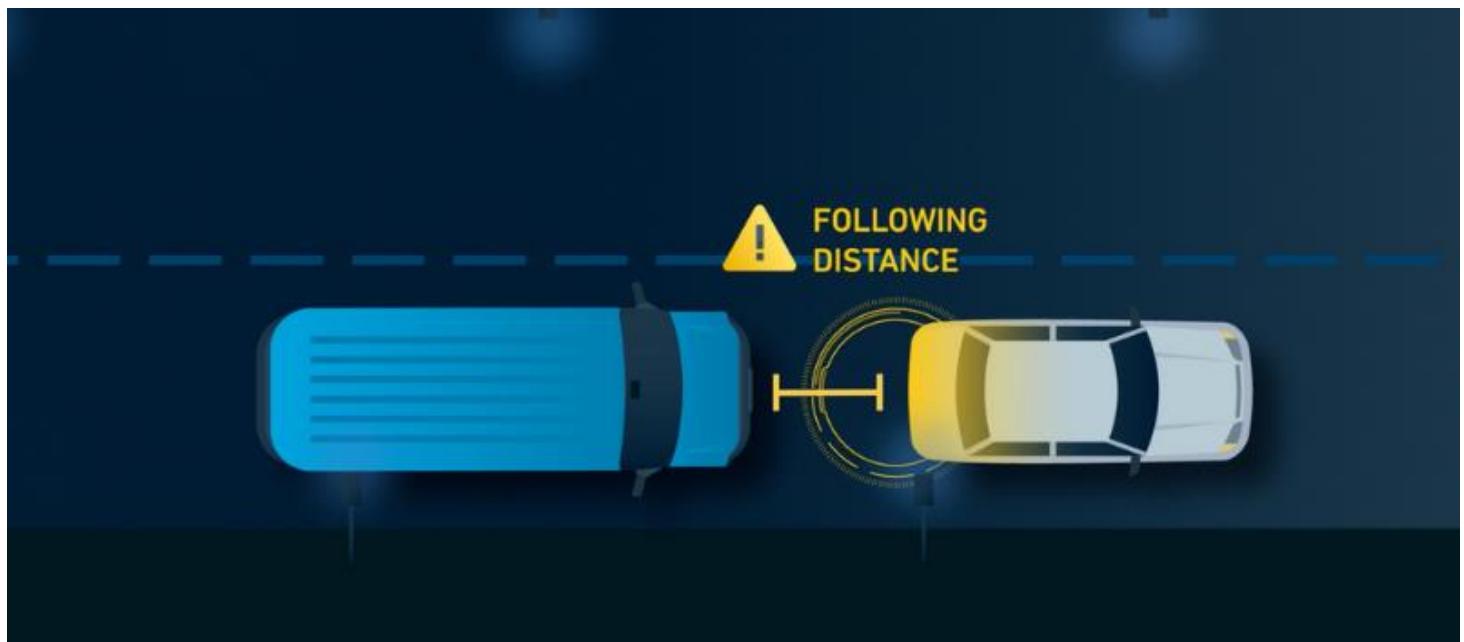
- **Every 8 seconds = new scan.**
- **See early, act early.**

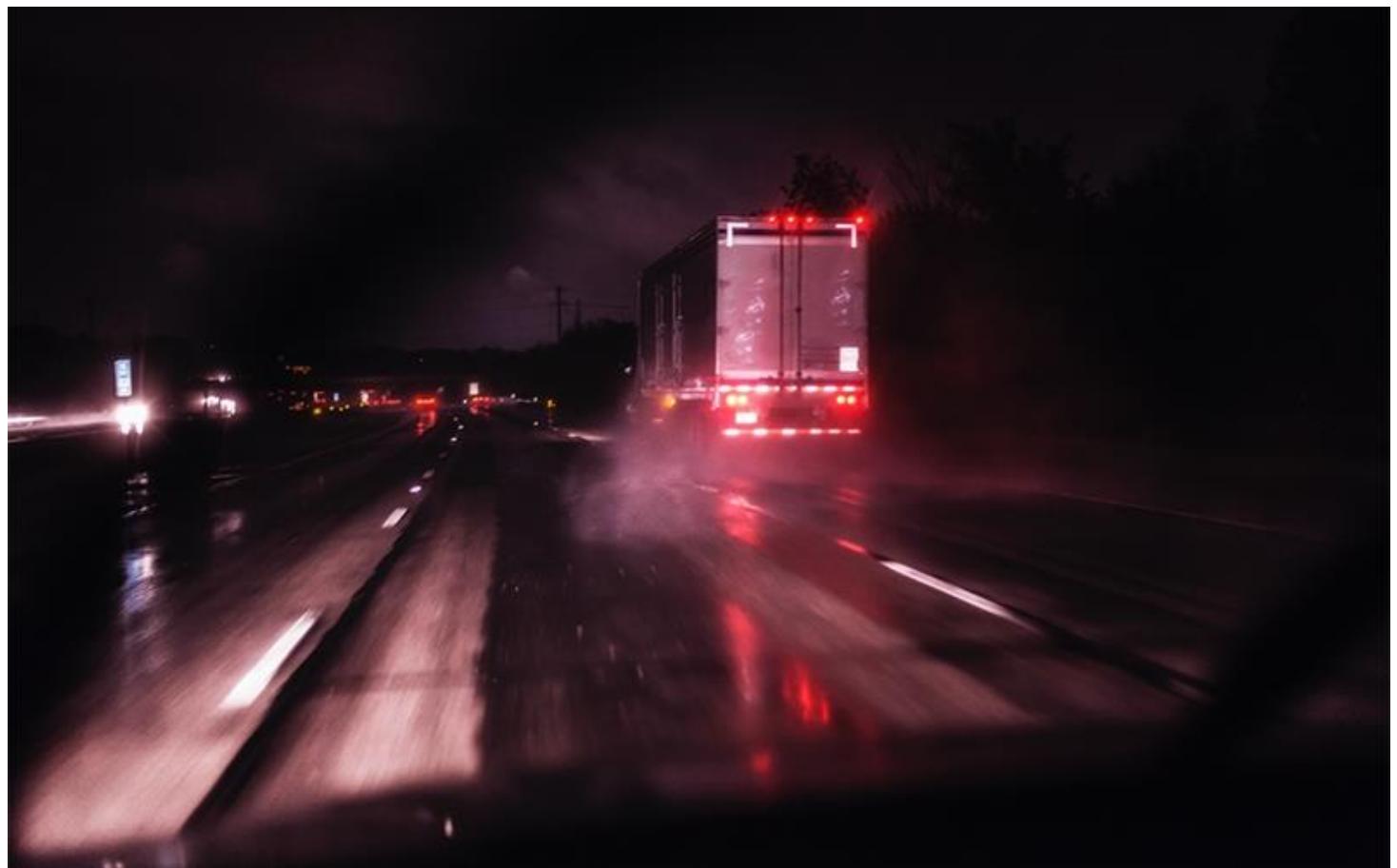
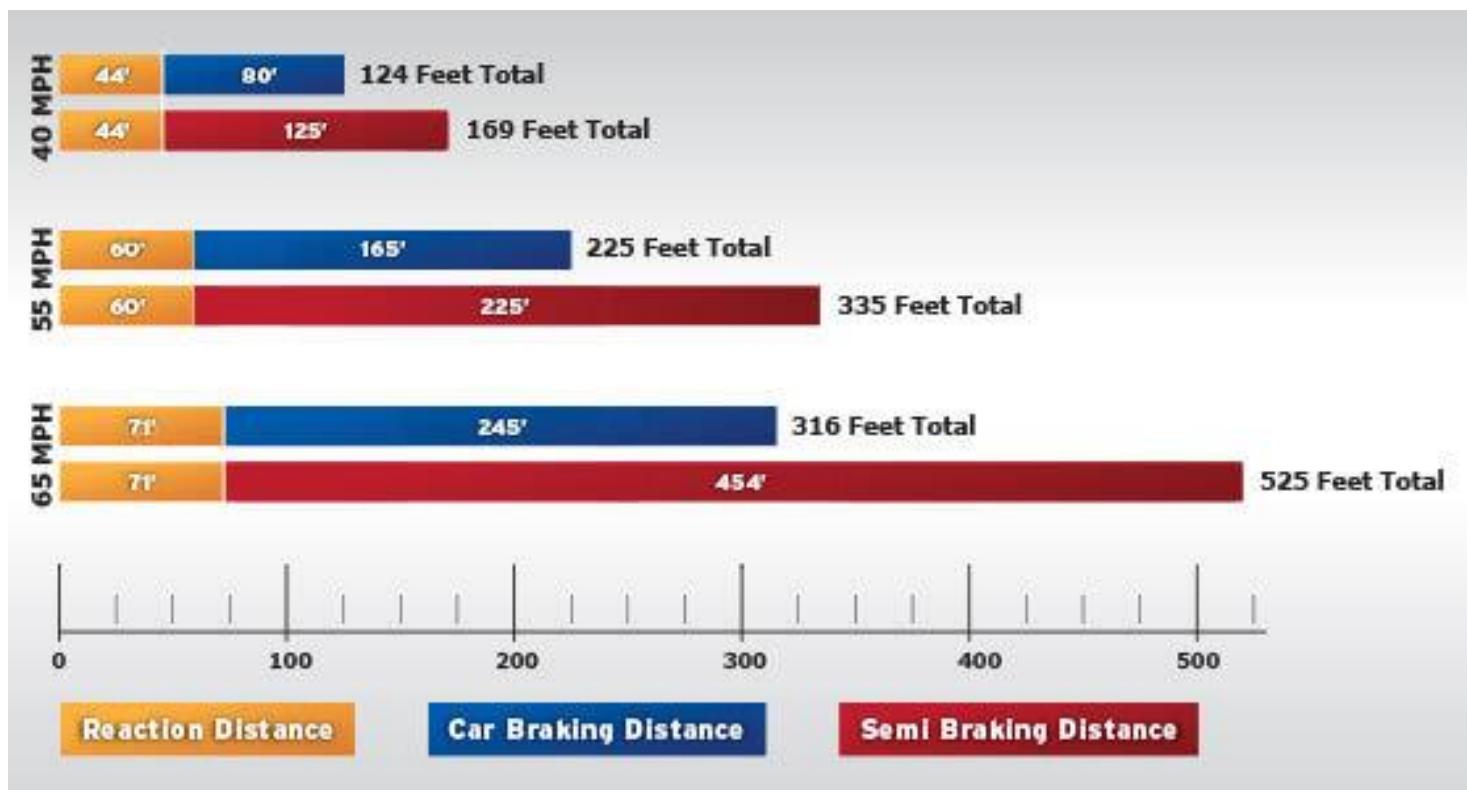
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## • Unit A3.5 Speed and Space Management.

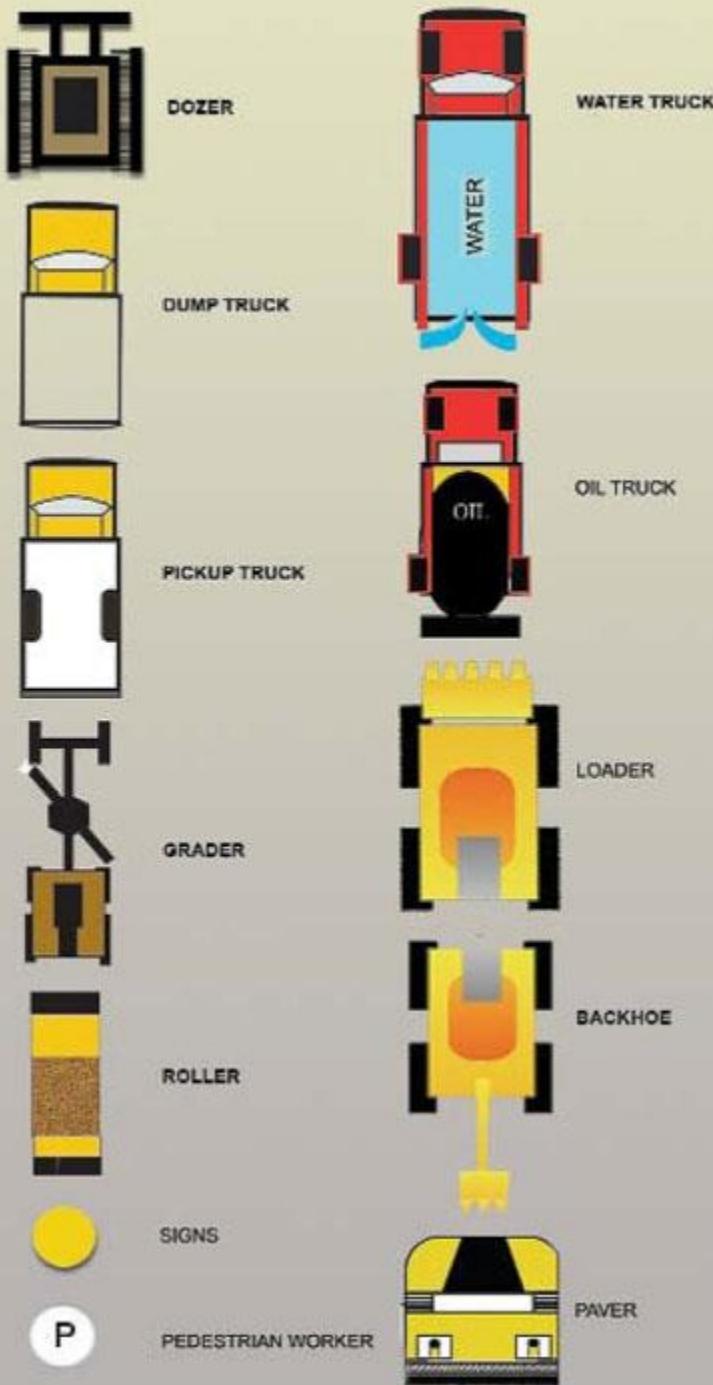
### Speed & Space Management

CDL Class A — Control the Truck, Control the Outcome





## LEGEND - Symbols used in Model Plans



Speed and space are **married**. If one is wrong, the other won't save you. Mastering both is how pros avoid crashes, tickets, and stress.

Guided by standards enforced by the **Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration**.

---

## Core Principle

**Speed determines space. Space buys time. Time prevents crashes.**



## SPEED MANAGEMENT (Real-World Rules)

### ✓ Drive for Conditions — Not the Sign

Posted speed is for **ideal conditions**.

Reduce speed for:

- Traffic density
- Curves & downgrades
- Rain, fog, snow, ice
- Night driving
- Construction zones
- Heavy or high loads

**Exam phrase:**

“I adjust speed for traffic, weather, visibility, and road conditions.”



### Slow Down *Before* Trouble

- Ease off throttle early
- Brake while straight
- Avoid sudden speed changes
- Let traffic compress **ahead of you**, not on you

**Pro tip:** If you feel rushed, you’re already too fast.



## SPACE MANAGEMENT (Your Safety Bubble)

### ⌚ Following Distance (Minimums)

- **6–7 seconds** at highway speed
- **+1–2 seconds** for:
  - Night
  - Rain/wet roads
  - Heavy loads
  - Poor visibility

**How to count:**

Object passes → “one-thousand-one...” until you pass it.

## ↔ Side Space

- Stay centered in lane
- Avoid driving beside other vehicles
- Expect cars to drift into your lane
- Move lanes early when possible

---

## ❸ Front Space (The Most Important)

You need room to:

- See hazards early
- Brake smoothly
- Avoid panic stops
- Prevent rear-end crashes (most common truck accident)

**If someone cuts in:**

Back off. Rebuild space. Don't take it personally.

---

## ⬅ BACK Rear Space (Often Ignored)

- Avoid hard braking
- Tap brakes early to warn traffic
- Downshift early on downgrades

**You're responsible for what's behind you, too.**

---

## ...

## Adjustments by Condition

### Rain / Wet Roads

- Reduce speed
- Double following distance
- Watch for hydroplaning

### Night

- outrun your headlights = crash risk
- Increase space
- Scan for movement, not shapes

### Work Zones

- Narrow lanes

- Sudden stops
- Workers close to traffic

**Rule:** Slow early, stay smooth.

---

## DRILLS (Use These Daily)

### Drill 1: Space Rebuild

Every time someone cuts in:

1. Ease off throttle
2. Recount seconds
3. Reset cushion

---

### Drill 2: Speed Check-in

Ask every 5 minutes:

- Can I stop safely at this speed?
- Do I see 12–15 seconds ahead?
- Do I have an escape route?

---

### Drill 3: Brake Discipline

- Brake early
- Brake smooth
- Avoid last-second braking

---

## Common CDL Mistakes

- Tailgating to “keep traffic moving”
- Speeding downhill
- Matching traffic speed blindly
- Relying on brakes instead of space

**Space is cheaper than brakes — and tickets.**

---

 **CDL Examiner Gold Statements**

Say these confidently:

- “I maintain a safe following distance.”
- “I adjust speed for conditions.”
- “I leave myself an escape route.”
- “I avoid sudden braking and lane changes.”

---

 **One-Line Memory Hooks**

- **Space buys time**
- **Slow early, not late**
- **You can't rush 80,000 lbs**
- **Let them go — you'll still get paid**

---

- **Unit A3.6 Safe Driver Behavior.**

---

💡 **Driver Behavior (CDL Class A – What Separates Pros from Statistics)**





**Driver behavior** is the #1 factor you fully control. Your attitude behind the wheel directly affects **safety, inspections, tickets, and your career**.

Regulators (like the **Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration**) and examiners don't just watch *what* you do—they watch **how you think**.

---

## The Professional Driver Mindset

A professional CDL driver is:

- Calm under pressure
- Predictable to others
- Patient, not reactive
- Thinking **minutes ahead**, not seconds

**Rule:**

*You don't win arguments in an 80,000-lb truck.*

---

## High-Risk Behaviors (Career Killers)

### Aggressive Driving

- Tailgating
- Speeding
- Brake checking
- Blocking lanes

**Reality:** Cars can escape mistakes. Trucks can't.

---

### Distracted Driving

- Phone use (even hands-free if attention drifts)
- Eating while steering
- Messing with GPS while rolling

**One glance = one lane-length traveled blind.**

---

### Road Rage / Ego Driving

- "Teaching lessons"
- Chasing vehicles
- Gestures, horns, intimidation

**DOT + cameras + witnesses = guaranteed trouble.**

---

## Fatigue & Complacency

- Pushing HOS limits
- “I’m fine” thinking
- Zoning out on highways

Fatigue is impairment—no excuses.

---

## Professional Behaviors That Save Lives

### Defensive Driving

- Expect others to mess up
- Leave space cushions
- Cover the brake in risk zones
- Always have an escape plan

---

### Communication

- Early signals
- Brake lights used intentionally
- Eye contact when possible
- Horn used **sparingly and early**, not angrily

---

### Patience & Time Management

- Don’t rush docks
- Don’t rush merges
- Don’t rush bad weather

Late beats never.

---

### Accountability

- Own your logs
- Own your speed
- Own your mistakes

“Dispatch told me” is not a legal defense.

---

## **Situational Behavior Adjustments**

### **Highway**

- Stay predictable
- Let speeders go
- Expect sudden cut-ins

### **Back Roads**

- Slow ego down
- Assume unseen hazards
- Respect locals who don't understand trucks

### **Truck Stops / Yards**

- Pedestrians everywhere
- Crawl speed only
- Courtesy = reputation

---

## **CDL Examiner & DOT Gold Phrases**

Say (and live) these:

- “I remain calm and professional at all times.”
- “I avoid aggressive driving behaviors.”
- “I drive defensively and leave space.”
- “I do not engage in road rage.”
- “I manage fatigue responsibly.”

---

## **One-Line Rules to Live By**

- **Ego off, engine on**
- **Space buys time**
- **Slow is smooth, smooth is safe**
- **Your CDL is always on camera**

---

- **Unit A3.7 Hours of Service (HOS) Requirements.**

 **Hours of Service (HOS) Requirements** CDL Class A – What You Actually Need to Know (Exam + Real World)





# OVERVIEW OF HOS RULES



11-Hour Driving Limit



14-Hour Duty Limit



30-Minute Break Requirement



60/70-Hour Weekly Limit

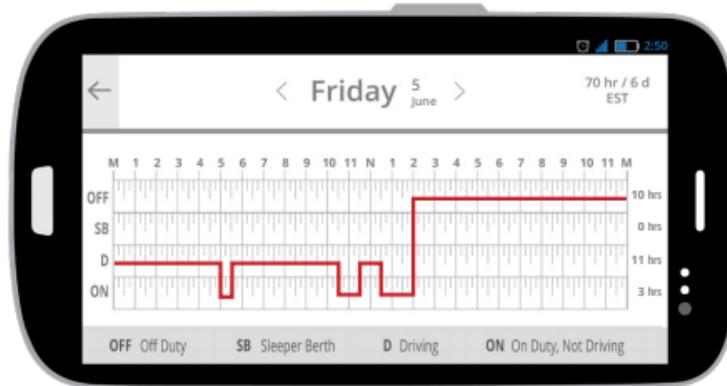


34-Hour Restart

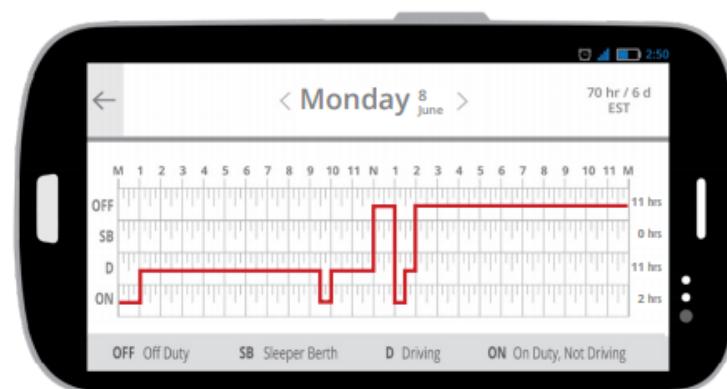


Sleeper Berth Provision

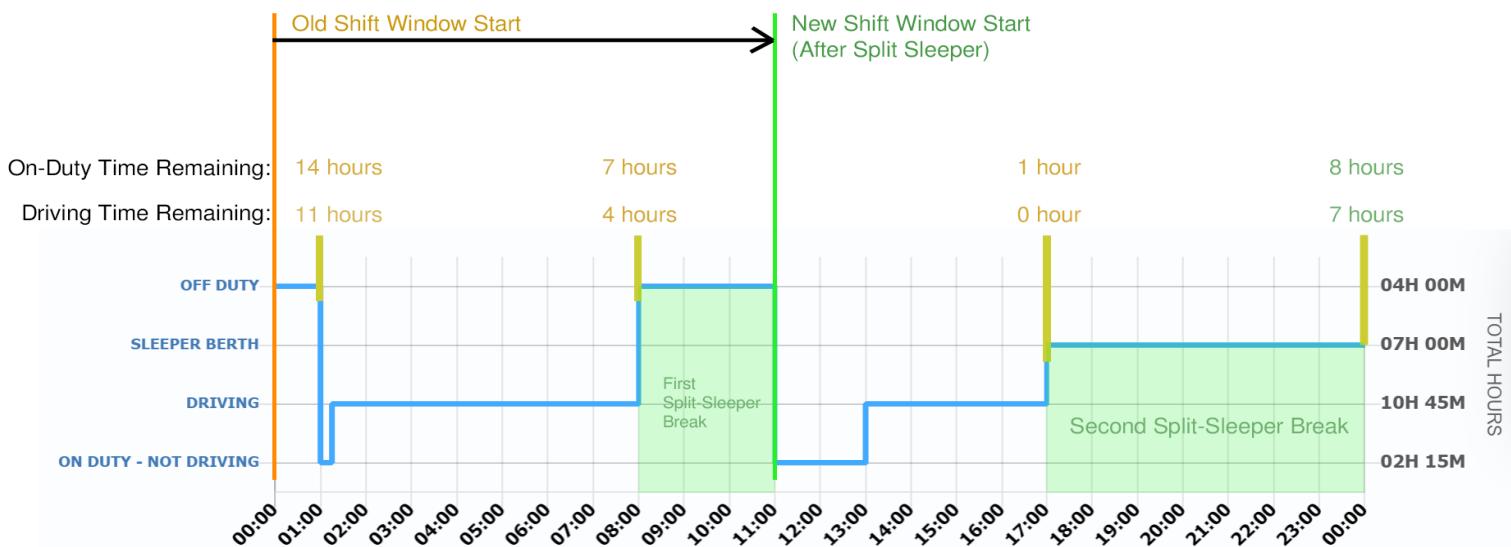
**No Violation** After 10 hours off-duty the driver comes on-duty at midnight and drives for 5 hours, goes on-duty (not driving) for a  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour, drives for 5 more hours, goes on-duty (not driving) for 1 hour, drives for 1 hour, goes on-duty (not driving) for 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  hours, and then takes 10 consecutive hours off-duty. Under the new HOS rule, the 30-minute on-duty break taken between 5 and 5:30 a.m. will suffice for the mandatory 30-minute break, and the property-carrying driver is allowed to drive up to the maximum of 11 hours (6 more hours in this example), before needing 10 consecutive hours off-duty.



**Violation** There is a violation between 9 and 9:30 a.m. After 10 hours off-duty, the driver comes on-duty (not driving) at midnight for 1 hour, drives for 8  $\frac{1}{2}$  hours, goes on-duty (not driving) for a  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour, drives for 2 hours, goes off-duty for 1 hour, goes on-duty (not driving) for a  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour, drives for a  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour, and then takes 10 consecutive hours off-duty. The violation occurs at 9 a.m., as the driver drives for more than 8 consecutive hours without at least a 30-minute rest break. A consecutive 30-minute interruption of driving status may be satisfied either by off-duty, sleeper berth, or on-duty (not driving) time; or by a combination of off-duty, sleeper berth, and on-duty (not driving) time. That did not happen in this example, which led to the violation.



HOS rules exist to prevent fatigue. Examiners, DOT officers, and carriers expect you to know these cold.



All rules are enforced by **Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA)**.

---

## The Core HOS Rules (Memorize These)

### 11-Hour Driving Rule

- You may **drive up to 11 hours**
- Only **after 10 consecutive hours off duty**

 You cannot extend driving past 11 hours for traffic, weather, or delays.

---

### 14-Hour On-Duty Window

- You have **14 hours total** after coming on duty
- Driving must stop when the 14 hours expires
- Off-duty time **does NOT stop** the 14-hour clock (except sleeper split)

**Think:**

*The 14-hour clock is ruthless.*

---

### 30-Minute Break Rule

- Required after **8 hours of driving**
- Must be **off duty, sleeper berth, or on-duty not driving**
- Break **resets the 8-hour driving clock**, not the 14

---

### 10-Hour Off-Duty Requirement

- Before starting a new shift:
  - 10 consecutive hours off duty
  - Or sleeper berth combinations (see below)

---

## Sleeper Berth (Advanced but Testable)

### Split Sleeper Option

- 8 hours sleeper berth +

- 2 hours off duty or sleeper
- Must equal **10 hours total**

 Pauses the 14-hour clock

 Does **not** add more driving hours

**Exam tip:** Many fail this—know the concept even if you don't use it daily.

---

## **60 / 70-Hour Weekly Limits**

- **60 hours / 7 days** (some carriers)
- **70 hours / 8 days** (most carriers)

## **34-Hour Restart**

- 34 consecutive hours off duty
- Resets your 60/70-hour clock
- Can be done anywhere legal to park

---

## **ELD (Electronic Logging Device) Basics**

- Automatically records driving time
- You must:
  - Certify logs daily
  - Know how to change duty status
  - Present logs during inspection

**You are legally responsible—even if dispatch messes up.**

---

## **Common HOS Violations (Real World)**

- Driving past 11 hours
- Running out of 14-hour clock
- Missing 30-minute break
- Falsifying logs
- Not certifying logs

**DOT doesn't care why—you're still liable.**

---

## **HOS Survival Mindset**

Ask constantly:

- How much **drive time** do I have left?
- How much **14-hour clock** remains?
- Where will I park **before** I run out?
- Do I need a **break now**, not later?

---

## CDL Examiner Verbal Gold

Say these confidently:

- “I follow the 11-hour and 14-hour rules.”
- “I take a 30-minute break before 8 hours of driving.”
- “I complete 10 hours off duty before driving.”
- “I maintain accurate ELD logs.”

---

## One-Glance Memory Hooks

- **11** = drive
- **14** = work window
- **30** = break
- **10** = reset
- **60/70** = weekly limit
- **34** = restart

---

- **Real world driving on highway, back roads**

---

 **Real-World Driving: Highway vs Back Roads (CDL Class A Reality)**



This is where book knowledge meets **real consequences**. Highway driving and back-road driving require **different mindsets**, but the same discipline.

---

 **HIGHWAY DRIVING (Interstates & Major Routes)**

 **What You'll Deal With**

- High speeds
- Heavy traffic

- Aggressive 4-wheeler
- Frequent lane changes
- Weigh stations & enforcement

## Real-World Strategy

### Speed control

- Don't race traffic—let it pass
- Slow down *before* congestion, not in it

### Following distance

- Minimum 6–7 seconds
- Add more at night, rain, or heavy loads

### Lane discipline

- Right lane = default
- Left lane = pass only (get back over)

### Merging traffic

- Expect cars to cut you off
- Ease off throttle early to avoid hard braking

### Blowouts & debris

- Scan far ahead
- Don't swerve—brake controlled, hold lane

---

## Highway Hazards

- Sudden traffic stops
- Brake-checkers
- Tire debris
- Construction zones
- Fatigue at steady speed

**Pro rule:** *If traffic feels “smooth,” stay extra alert—danger hides in comfort.*

---

## BACK ROADS / TWO-LANE / RURAL ROADS

### What You'll Deal With

- Narrow lanes

- Sharp curves
- No shoulders
- Oncoming traffic inches away
- Animals, farm equipment, unmarked driveways

## Real-World Strategy

### Slow is smart

- Posted speed may still be too fast
- Brake *before* curves—not in them

### Lane control

- Hug your lane
- Watch trailer off-tracking on turns

### Blind curves & hills

- Assume someone is coming
- Be ready to stop in your lane

### Intersections

- Many are unmarked
- Look twice—cars don't expect trucks

---

## Back-Road Hazards

- Deer at dawn/dusk
- Loose gravel
- Soft shoulders
- Low branches/wires
- Bridges with reduced weight limits

**Golden rule:** *If you can't see the road ahead, you don't own it.*

---

## Night Driving (Both Environments)

- Reduced depth perception
- Headlight glare
- Tired drivers everywhere

### Adjustments

- Slow down

- Increase space
- Dim dash lights
- Scan for movement, not just shapes

---

## Constant Questions to Ask Yourself

- Where's my escape route?
- What's my stopping distance right now?
- What's coming from the sides?
- What changed in the last 10 seconds?

---

## CDL Examiner & Real-Boss Mentality

Say it, live it:

“I adjust speed for conditions, not just posted limits.”

“I maintain a space cushion.”

“I anticipate hazards before they develop.”

---

If you want, I can:

- Walk you through a **full highway drive scenario**
- Do **back-road curve & downgrade drills**
- Run **night + rain + traffic combo situations**
- Turn this into **verbal CDL test answers**

Just tell me how deep you want to go.

## ● Weight stations, cat scales

---

### ⚖️ Weight Stations & CAT Scales (CDL Class A Essentials)



### 🚧 Weight Stations (Weigh Stations / Scales on the Highway)

#### Purpose

- Enforce **legal weight limits**
- Check **axle weights**, permits, and sometimes **safety compliance**

#### What Happens

- You'll see signs like "*All Trucks Must Enter*" or "*Weigh Station Open*"
- Follow instructions from:
  - Static scales
  - Rolling scales
  - Bypass systems (PrePass / Drivewyze)

#### Key Rules

- **Never skip** an open station unless you're told to bypass
- Obey posted speeds and lane directions
- Have paperwork ready (CDL, registration, permits)

## Common Violations

- Over gross weight
- Over axle weight
- Tandems not slid correctly
- Missing permits



## CAT Scales (Truck Stop Scales)

### What They Are

- Certified public scales used by drivers to **check weight before hitting the road**
- Found at many truck stops nationwide (e.g., CAT Scale)

### Why Drivers Use Them

- Avoid tickets at weigh stations
- Adjust **sliding tandems or fifth wheel**
- Get a **legal weight ticket** (accepted by DOT)



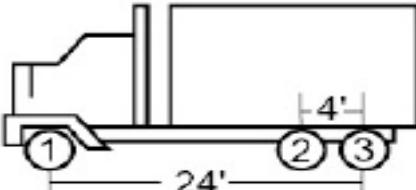
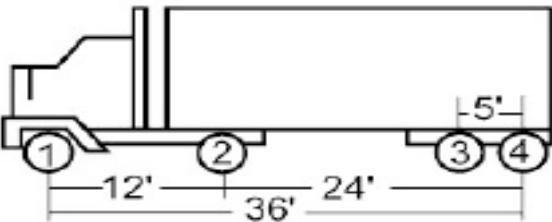
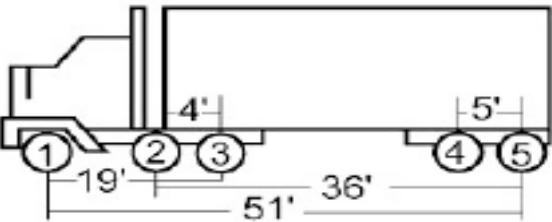
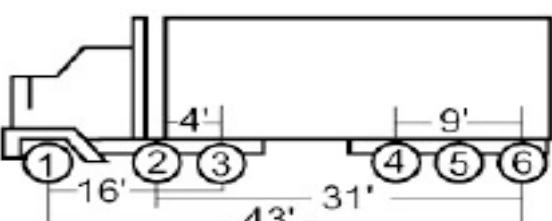
## How a CAT Scale Weigh Works (Step-by-Step)

1. Pull on the scale when the light turns green
2. Position axles correctly:
  - Steer axle → first pad
  - Drive axles → second pad
  - Trailer tandems → third pad
3. Push the intercom button and give:
  - Truck number
  - Company name
4. Get ticket inside or via app

## 💡 Legal Weight Limits (Typical – Federal)

- **Steer axle:** 12,000 lbs
- **Drive axles:** 34,000 lbs
- **Trailer tandems:** 34,000 lbs
- **Gross vehicle weight:** 80,000 lbs

⚠ States may have **stricter limits**—always verify.

Vehicle or Combinations	Maximum Weight, Pounds												
	<table> <tr> <td>Axle 1</td><td>20,000</td></tr> <tr> <td>Axles 2,3</td><td>34,000</td></tr> <tr> <td>Axles 1,2,3</td><td>54,000</td></tr> </table>	Axle 1	20,000	Axles 2,3	34,000	Axles 1,2,3	54,000						
Axle 1	20,000												
Axles 2,3	34,000												
Axles 1,2,3	54,000												
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ELECTRONIC SCALE TICKET		No. _____
DATE		
SELLER		
BUYER		
ADDRESS		
CITY	STATE	ZIP
COMMODITY		
PRICE		
REMARKS		
DRIVER	<input type="checkbox"/> ON	<input type="checkbox"/> OFF
WEIGHER		
Form ES-4		

Understanding **weight stations** and **CAT scales** keeps you **legal, safe, and moving**—and it's a favorite topic for CDL exams and roadside inspections.

## Sliding Tandems & Weight Adjustment

- **Slide tandems forward** → puts *more* weight on trailer axles
- **Slide tandems back** → shifts weight to drive axles
- Small moves matter (a few holes can change thousands of pounds)

## CDL Test & Real-World Tips

- Always **scale after loading**
- Re-scale after adjusting (re-weigh is cheaper)

- Don't assume the shipper loaded you legal
- If overweight → **don't roll the dice** with a weigh station

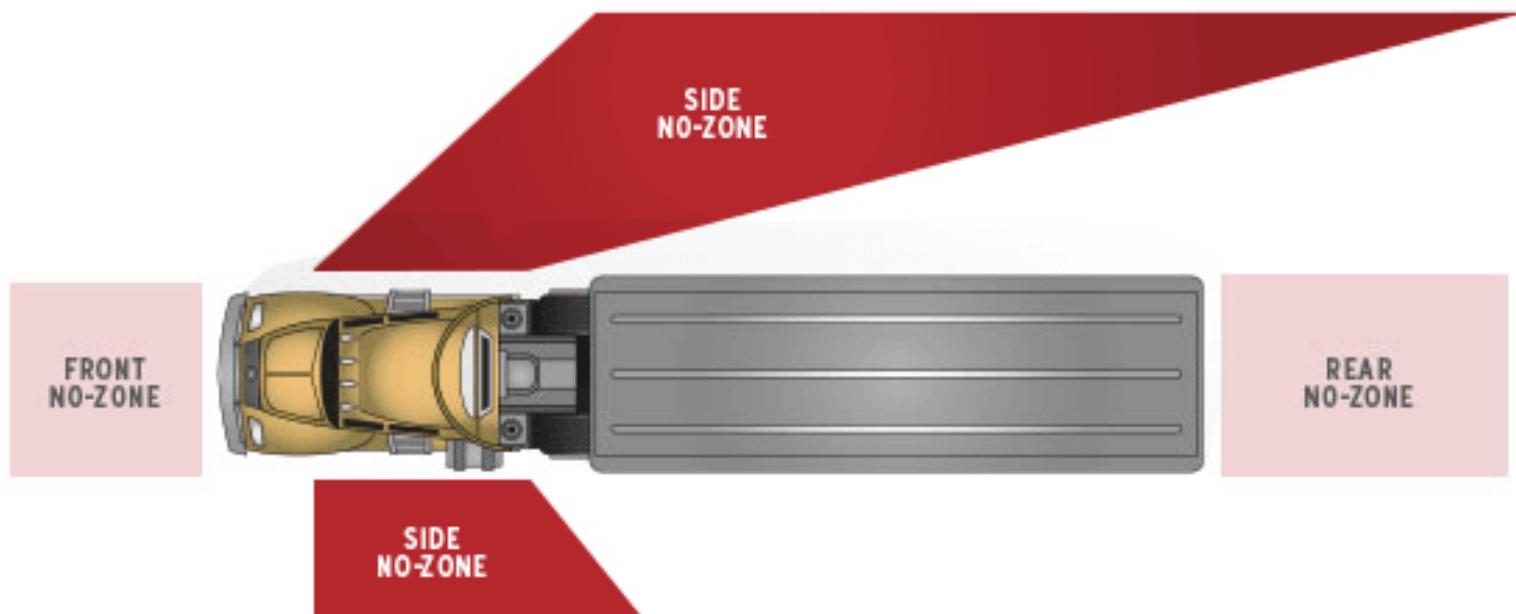
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## Examiner Sound Bites (Say These Confidently)

- "I scale my load to verify axle and gross weight."
- "I adjust sliding tandems to remain legal."
- "I obey all open weigh stations unless directed to bypass."

- **Unit A3.8 Hazard Perception.**

🚧 **Hazard Perception (CDL Class A Focus)**



# How weather and seasons affect drivers



## Spring

- ▲ Detours due to road maintenance
- ▲ Hydroplaning
- ▲ Flash floods
- ▲ Rain
- ▲ Strong winds
- ▲ Tornadoes



## Summer

- ▲ Bright glares
- ▲ Dust storms
- ▲ High temperatures
- ▲ Hurricanes
- ▲ Increased traffic due to tourism
- ▲ Tire blowouts
- ▲ Truck malfunctions due to overheating



## Fall

- ▲ Farming equipment on the road
- ▲ Heavy rain
- ▲ Increase in pedestrians
- ▲ Limited visibility due to fog
- ▲ School traffic
- ▲ Slick roads due to wet leaves
- ▲ Wild animals crossing the street



## Winter

- ▲ Freezing rain
- ▲ Fuel freezing
- ▲ Hail storms
- ▲ Icy/Snowy roads
- ▲ Less visibility
- ▲ Light glare from snow
- ▲ Trailer wheels freezing

## 🔍 What Counts as a Hazard?

Anything that can **force you to brake, steer, or change speed** unexpectedly:

- Vehicles (cars, motorcycles, other trucks)
- Pedestrians, cyclists, animals
- Road conditions (curves, potholes, debris)
- Weather and visibility issues
- Driver behavior (aggressive, distracted, impaired)

---

## 👀 The CDL Hazard Perception Mindset

Think in layers and time.

### 1. Scan Far Ahead (12–15 seconds)

- Look beyond the vehicle in front of you
- Spot brake lights, merging traffic, curves, or congestion early

### 2. Scan Side-to-Side

- Intersections, on-ramps, shoulders, sidewalks
- Watch for movement—not just vehicles

### 3. Check Mirrors Every 5–8 Seconds

- Know what's around and behind you *before* you need to react

---

## ⚠️ High-Risk Hazard Zones (Know These Cold)

- **Intersections** – biggest crash zone
- **Work zones** – narrow lanes, sudden stops
- **Railroad crossings** – always slow, never rush
- **Truck stops/rest areas** – pedestrians everywhere
- **Urban areas** – impatient drivers cutting in
- **Rural roads** – animals, tractors, unlit vehicles

---

## 🌙 Night & Extreme Condition Hazards

- Reduced depth perception
- Fatigue masking danger
- Glare from headlights
- Ice, rain, fog hiding road edges

**Rule:** *If you can't see it, assume it's there.*

---

## Predictive Questions to Ask While Driving

- *What's the worst thing that could happen here?*
- *Where's my escape route?*
- *What will I do if that car stops suddenly?*
- *What's changing right now?*

---

## Space = Safety

- Increase following distance (especially at night or in rain)
- Never crowd intersections
- Leave yourself an **out** (lane, shoulder, space cushion)

---

## CDL Examiner Tip

They love hearing you **talk through hazards**:

“Pedestrian on right... vehicle merging left... light stale... covering brake.”

That narration proves awareness—even if nothing happens.

---

If you want, I can:

- Turn this into a **CDL verbal test script**
- Give **real-world hazard scenarios** (night, rain, mountains)
- Drill **hazard call-outs** like an examiner 

- **Unit A3.9 Railroad (RR)-Highway Grade Crossing.**

---

### Railroad (RR) – Highway Grade Crossing

CDL Class A — Mandatory Procedure, Zero Shortcuts





Railroad crossings are **high-risk, zero-forgiveness zones**. CDL drivers must follow **specific, testable steps**—and DOT expects perfection. Rules are enforced under the **Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration**.

---

## 🎯 Who **MUST** Stop at RR Crossings

You **must stop** if operating:

- Vehicles hauling **hazardous materials**
- **Passenger vehicles** (bus/van)
- **Placarded loads**
- **School buses**
- Any vehicle **required by state law or signage**

If required to stop, **there are no exceptions**.

---

## 🔴 Required **STOP** Procedure (Exam-Critical)

### ⌚ Step-by-Step (Say It, Do It)

1. **Activate hazard flashers**
2. **Stop 15–50 feet from nearest rail**
3. **Put transmission in neutral**

4. Set parking brake (if required by examiner)
5. Turn off radio / fan
6. Roll windows down
7. Look left, right, left
8. Listen for trains
9. Proceed only when completely clear

**Exam phrase:**

“I am stopping, looking, and listening for approaching trains.”

---

## **Gear & Movement Rules**

- **Never shift while crossing**
- **Cross in a gear that will not require shifting**
- **Do not stop on the tracks**
- **Clear the crossing completely**

**Rule:**

*Once you commit—keep rolling.*

---

## **When You Do NOT Have to Stop**

If:

- You're **not** hauling hazmat/passengers
- No stop sign, signal, or flagman
- Crossing is marked “**Exempt**”

 Even then: **slow, scan, and be ready.**

---

## **Automatic CDL Test Fails**

- Failing to stop when required
- Stopping too close or too far
- Forgetting hazard flashers
- Not placing transmission in neutral
- Not looking/listening clearly
- Shifting on tracks
- Stalling on tracks

Any of these = **instant fail**.

---

## **Real-World Dangers (Why This Matters)**

- Trains can't stop quickly
- Trains can be silent until very close
- Visual illusions make trains look farther away
- Multi-track crossings hide second trains

If you see one train, expect another.

---

## **Practice Drill (Use This on Test Day)**

Say out loud:

“Hazards on... stopping 15 to 50 feet... neutral... windows down... radio off... looking left, right, left... tracks clear... proceeding.”

Talking helps you **not miss a step**.

---

## **Examiner Gold Statements**

Use these naturally:

- “I’m required to stop at railroad crossings.”
- “I placed the transmission in neutral.”
- “I looked and listened for trains.”
- “I crossed without shifting.”

---

## **One-Line Memory Hooks**

- **Hazards • Stop • Neutral • Listen**
- **15–50 feet**
- **No shift, no stall**
- **Clear it completely**

---

## **Final Reality Check**

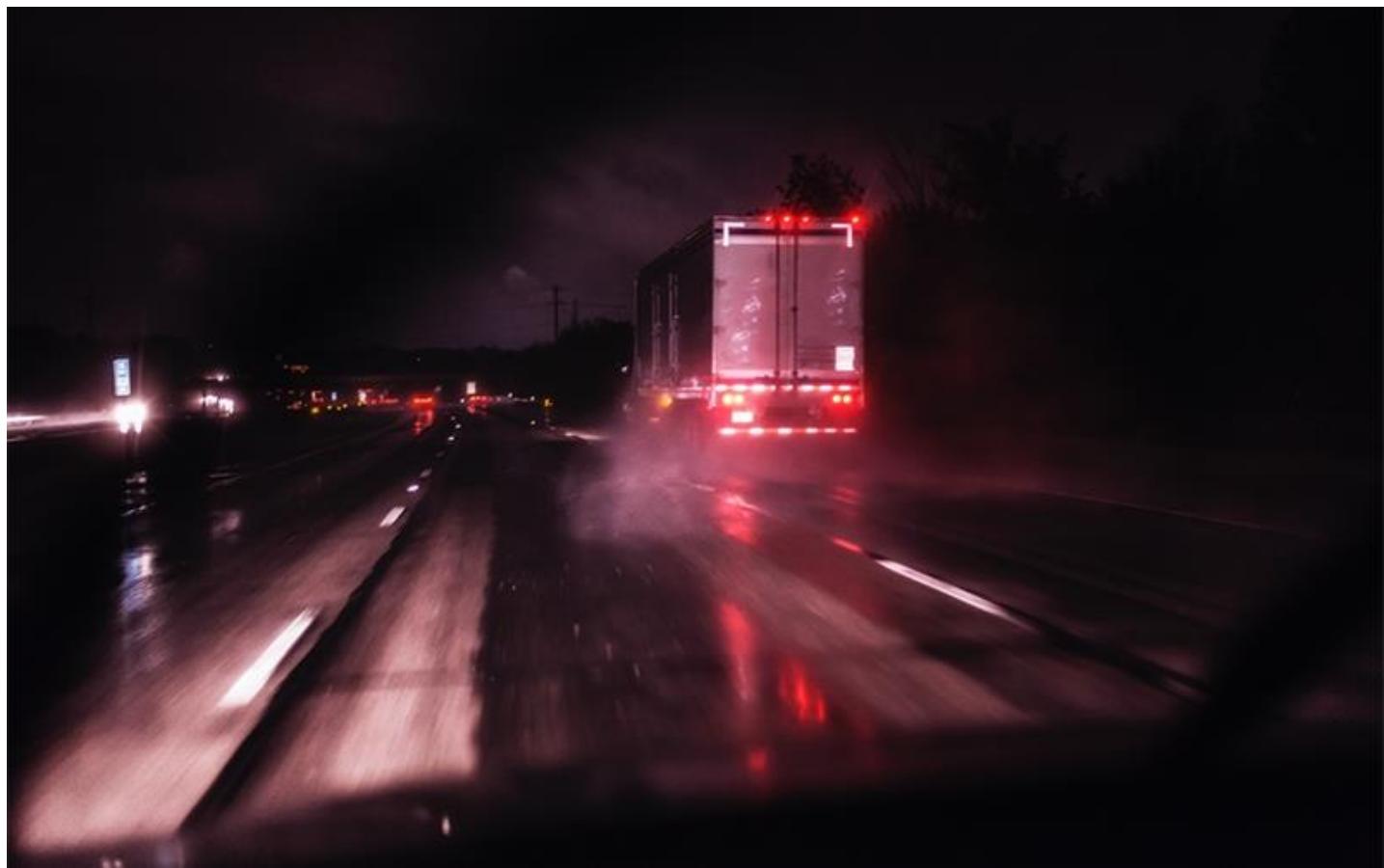
Drivers don’t get second chances at railroad crossings.  
Do it **slow, loud, and by the book**—every time.

- **Unit A3.10 Night Operation.**

---

CDL Class A — See Less, Think More, Drive Smarter







Night driving isn't just "daytime but darker." It changes **vision, reaction time, traffic behavior, and fatigue risk**. Examiners and DOT expect you to **adjust your driving** accordingly, under standards enforced by the **Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration**.

---

## Core Rule

**If you can't see it, assume it's there.**

At night, hazards appear **later** and disappear **faster**.

---

## VISION & VISUAL SEARCH (Biggest Change at Night)

### What's Different

- Reduced depth perception
- Narrowed field of vision ("tunnel vision")

- Headlight glare masks hazards
- Dark objects blend into pavement

## Adjustments

- Scan **12–15 seconds ahead** (farther if possible)
- Look for **movement**, not shapes
- Check mirrors **every 5–8 seconds**
- Don't fixate—keep eyes moving

### Exam phrase:

“I increase my visual search at night.”

---

## SPEED & SPACE (Night = More Time Needed)

### Following Distance

- Add **1–2 extra seconds** minimum
- Even more in rain or fog

### Speed Control

- Slow enough to **stop within headlight range**
- Don't outrun your headlights
- Reduce speed on curves and rural roads

### Rule:

*If your stopping distance is longer than what you can see—you're too fast.*

---

## LIGHTING & SIGNAL USE

### Headlights

- Use **low beams** when following or approaching traffic
- High beams only when appropriate—and dim early
- Ensure lights are clean and working

### Glare Management

- Look **slightly right** of oncoming headlights
- Dim dash lights to reduce reflection
- Don't stare into bright lights

---

## Weather at Night (Risk Multiplier)

- Rain hides lane markings
- Fog reflects light back at you
- Ice is harder to spot

### Adjustments

- Slow down earlier
- Increase space more than daytime
- Use four-ways if significantly below traffic speed

---

## FATIGUE (Silent Danger)

### Warning Signs

- Heavy eyes
- Missed signs
- Lane drifting
- Late reactions

### Countermeasures

- Stop early—don't push
- Take breaks **before** you feel tired
- Hydrate
- Avoid relying on caffeine alone

### Reality:

Fatigue = impairment.

---

## RURAL & BACK-ROAD NIGHT HAZARDS

- Deer and animals (dawn/dusk worst)
- Unlit vehicles or farm equipment
- Soft shoulders
- Sharp curves with no warning

### Golden Rule:

*If you can't see around it—slow before it.*

---

## Common Night-Driving Mistakes

- Driving daytime speeds
- Following too close
- Overusing high beams
- Ignoring fatigue
- Assuming “less traffic = safer”

Night crashes are often **more severe** due to speed and delayed reaction.

---

## CDL Examiner Gold Statements

Say these naturally:

- “I reduce speed for night conditions.”
- “I increase following distance.”
- “I scan farther ahead at night.”
- “I manage glare and fatigue.”

---

## One-Line Memory Hooks

- See less → slow more
- Space buys reaction
- Movement reveals danger
- Tired equals impaired

---

## Final Reality Check

Most professional miles are driven at night.

The safest night drivers aren’t aggressive—they’re **patient, alert, and conservative**.

- **Unit A3.11 Extreme Driving Conditions.**

---

**CDL Class A — When Conditions Decide the Speed, Not You**







# SEMI TRUCKS **DRIVING IN** **HIGH WINDS:** 7 TIPS FOR TRUCKERS



Extreme conditions demand **discipline, patience, and judgment**. Most serious crashes happen because drivers **fail to adjust early**. Expectations and enforcement come from the **Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration**.

---

## Core Rule

**When conditions change, your driving must change immediately.**

If traction, visibility, or control is reduced—**slow down or stop**.

---

## HEAVY RAIN

### Hazards

- Hydroplaning
- Reduced braking
- Hidden debris
- Poor visibility

### Adjustments

- Slow down early
- Double following distance
- Avoid cruise control
- Light, steady braking

**Hydroplaning warning:** steering feels light or unresponsive.

---

## SNOW & ICE (Highest Risk)

### Hazards

- Black ice
- Jackknifing
- Long stopping distances
- Invisible lane markings

### Adjustments

- Reduce speed drastically
- Gentle throttle, steering, braking
- Increase following distance **3–5×**
- Use engine brake cautiously (or turn off on ice)

## Truth:

If you're asking "Can I make it?" — you probably shouldn't.

---

## FOG

### Hazards

- Near-zero visibility
- Disorientation
- Sudden traffic stops

### Adjustments

- Slow to stopping-within-vision distance
- Use **low beams only**
- Increase following distance
- Use four-ways if below traffic speed

 Never use high beams in fog.

---

## HIGH WINDS

### Hazards

- Trailer push
- Sudden gusts on bridges
- Blowovers (especially empty/light trailers)

### Adjustments

- Reduce speed
- Firm steering grip
- Avoid passing or being passed by large vehicles
- Consider parking if empty/light

**Wind + empty trailer = danger.**

---

## EXTREME HEAT

### Hazards

- Tire blowouts
- Brake fade
- Engine overheating

## Adjustments

- Monitor gauges
- Increase following distance
- Brake early
- Avoid riding brakes

---

## 🌙 NIGHT + EXTREME CONDITIONS (Multiplier)

- Less visibility
- Faster fatigue
- Slower reactions

### Rule:

Night + weather = slow more than you think you need to.

---

## ⚠ WHEN TO PARK IT (Professional Decision)

- You can't maintain lane
- You can't see ahead clearly
- Traction is unreliable
- You feel rushed or unsafe

**Parking is not quitting—it's judgment.**

---

## 🎯 CDL Examiner Gold Statements

Say these confidently:

- “I reduce speed for conditions.”
- “I increase following distance.”
- “I adjust braking and steering.”
- “I will stop if conditions become unsafe.”

---

## 🧠 One-Line Memory Hooks

- **Traction before speed**
- **Vision controls motion**
- **Slow early, stop early**
- **You're paid to be safe, not brave**

---

## 🏁 Final Reality Check

Extreme conditions don't care about:

- Schedules
- Dispatch
- Experience

They only respect **smart decisions**.

- **Unit A3.12 Skid Control/Recovery, Jackknifing, and Other Emergencies.**

---

**Skid Control / Recovery, Jackknifing & Other Emergencies** CDL Class A — Control the Panic, Control the Truc

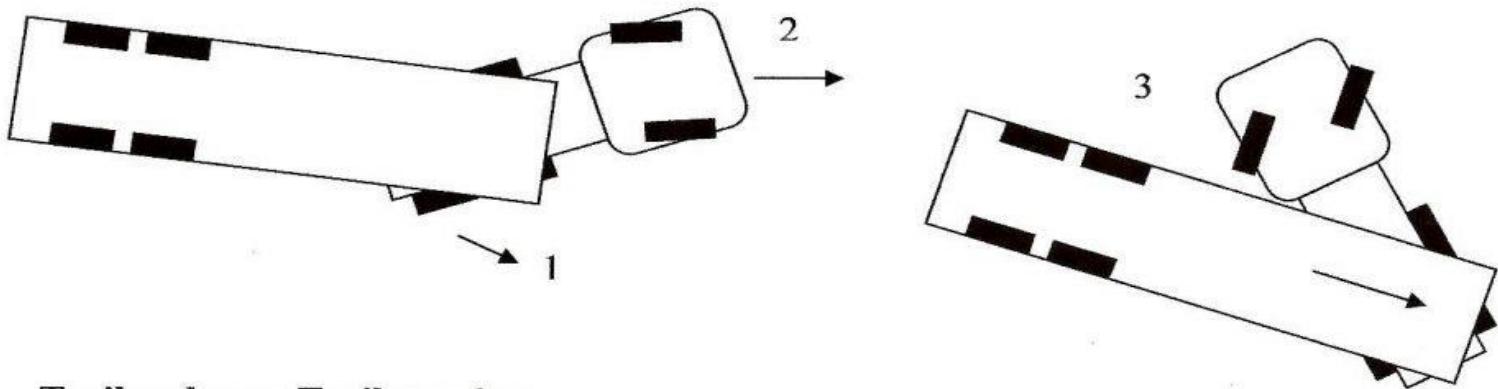


## Skidding

- 1, The tractor begins to skid.
- 2, The driver steers into the skid, corrects it and drives on.

## Jackknifing

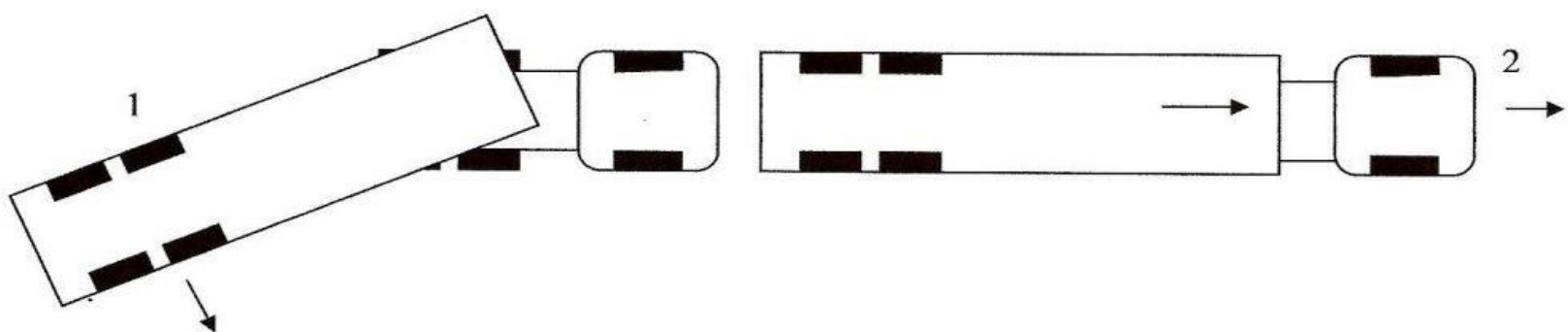
- 3, If however, the skid is not corrected in time, the trailer will push the tractor around until the cab hits the trailer.

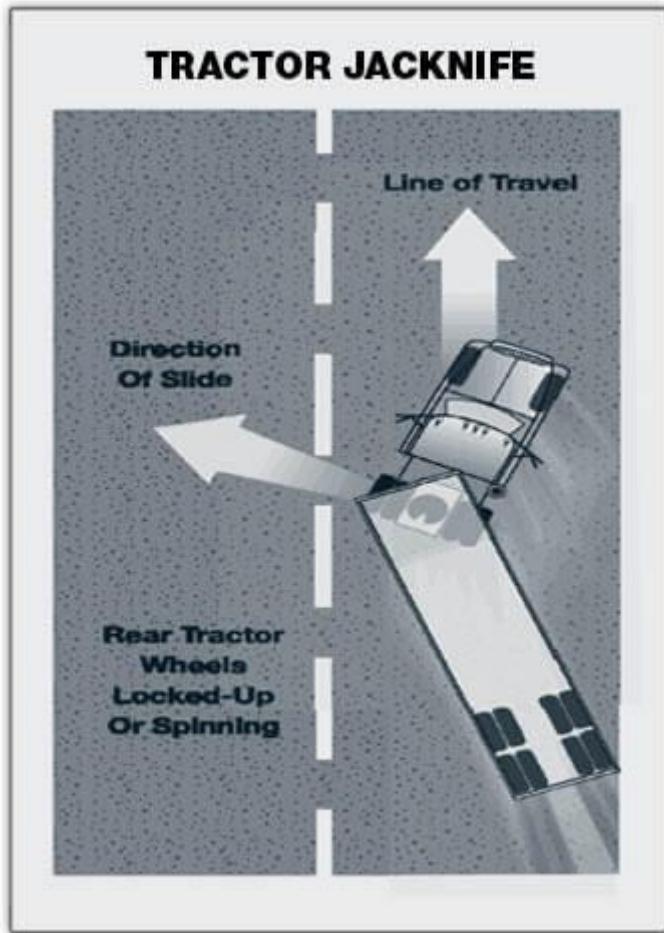


## Trailer slew or Trailer swing

**(This is not to be confused with jackknifing)**

- 1, The trailer skids while braking on a slippery surface.
- 2, The driver releases the brakes and continues to drive forwards pulling the trailer back into line. (This is not normally dangerous but if the driver doesn't release the brakes, the trailer could slide into a ditch, collide with parked cars or oncoming traffic.)





**Figure 2.19**

Emergencies happen **fast**. Survival depends on **recognition, correct response, and restraint**—not hero moves. Expectations and enforcement follow guidance from the **Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration**.

---

## **Core Emergency Rule**

**Ease off → Steer where you want to go → Regain traction**

Overreaction turns incidents into crashes.

---

## **SKID CONTROL & RECOVERY**

### **What Causes Skids**

- Excessive speed

- Hard braking
- Sharp steering
- Low traction (rain, ice, gravel)
- Engine brake misuse on slick roads

## Types of Skids

- **Drive-axle skid** (rear slides)
- **Front-wheel skid** (loss of steering)
- **Trailer skid** (swinging trailer)

---

### Recovery Steps (Most Skids)

1. **Release brakes / throttle**
2. **Steer in the direction of the skid**
3. **Let traction return**
4. **Re-stabilize gently**

 Don't slam brakes

 Don't over-steer

**Memory hook:** *Off → Aim → Wait.*

---

## JACKKNIFING (High-Severity Emergency)

### What It Is

- Tractor and trailer fold toward each other (L or V shape)

### Common Causes

- Locked drive wheels
- Hard braking on slick roads
- Speeding downhill
- Improper engine brake use

---

### Prevention (Best Defense)

- **Brake early and lightly**
- Use snub braking on downgrades
- Reduce speed before curves
- Disable engine brake on ice

## Once It Starts

- Do NOT accelerate
- Release brakes
- Steer to regain alignment if possible

**Reality:** Prevention is the only reliable cure.

---

## **TIRE BLOWOUT (STEER AXLE = MOST DANGEROUS)**

### **What You'll Feel**

- Loud bang
- Pull toward failed tire
- Steering wheel vibration

### **Correct Response**

1. Firm grip on wheel
2. Do NOT brake hard
3. Ease off throttle
4. Maintain lane
5. Slow gradually
6. Pull over safely

 Panic braking = loss of control

---

## **BRAKE FAILURE / RUNAWAY**

### **Warning Signs**

- Burning smell
- Loss of braking power
- Overheating on downgrades

### **Response**

- Downshift immediately
- Use engine brake
- Apply snub braking
- Use runaway truck ramp if needed

Never fear the ramp—it's there to save lives.

---



## SUDDEN OBSTACLE / EMERGENCY STOP

### Decision Priority

1. Brake straight
2. Maintain control
3. Steer only if space is guaranteed

### Rule:

Don't swerve unless you know exactly where you're going.

---



## EMERGENCY CONDITIONS THAT MULTIPLY RISK

- Rain + speed
- Ice + engine brake
- Curves + downhill
- Night + fatigue
- Empty trailer + wind

When risks stack—slow way down or stop.

---



## Common CDL Emergency Mistakes

- Over-braking
- Over-steering
- Freezing (doing nothing)
- Relying on ABS to fix everything
- Driving too fast “for experience level”



## CDL Examiner Gold Statements

Say these confidently:

- “I reduce speed to prevent skids.”

- “I ease off controls to regain traction.”
- “I steer in the direction of the skid.”
- “I avoid hard braking on slick roads.”
- “I use runaway ramps if necessary.”

---

## One-Line Memory Hooks

- **Traction first**
- **Release to recover**
- **Prevention beats recovery**
- **Control the panic**

---

## Final Reality Check

Emergencies don't test bravery—they test **discipline**.  
The best emergency move is the one you **never have to make**.

- **Sliding tandems, eld logs**

---

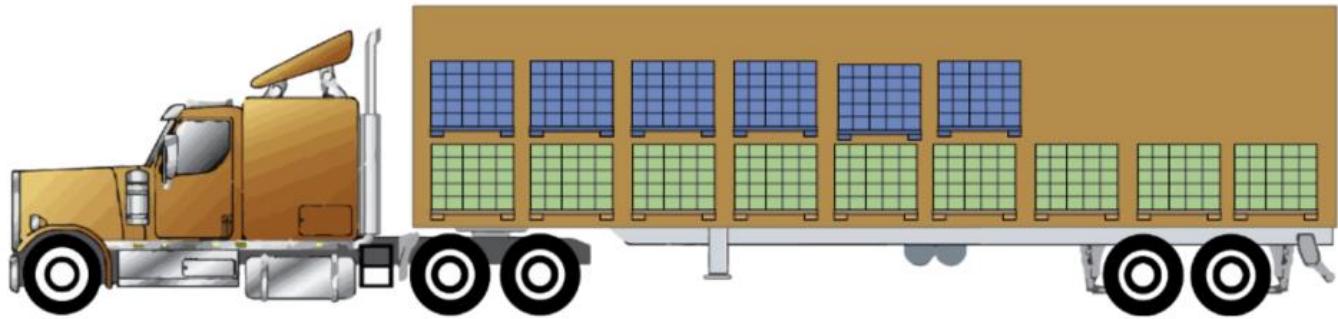
\*\*Sliding Tandems & ELD Logs — CDL Class A Essentials\*\*

 **Sliding Tandems &  ELD Logs**

CDL Class A — Weight Control + Legal Time Control







Axle Weight



12,000 lbs

Axle Weight



34,000 lbs

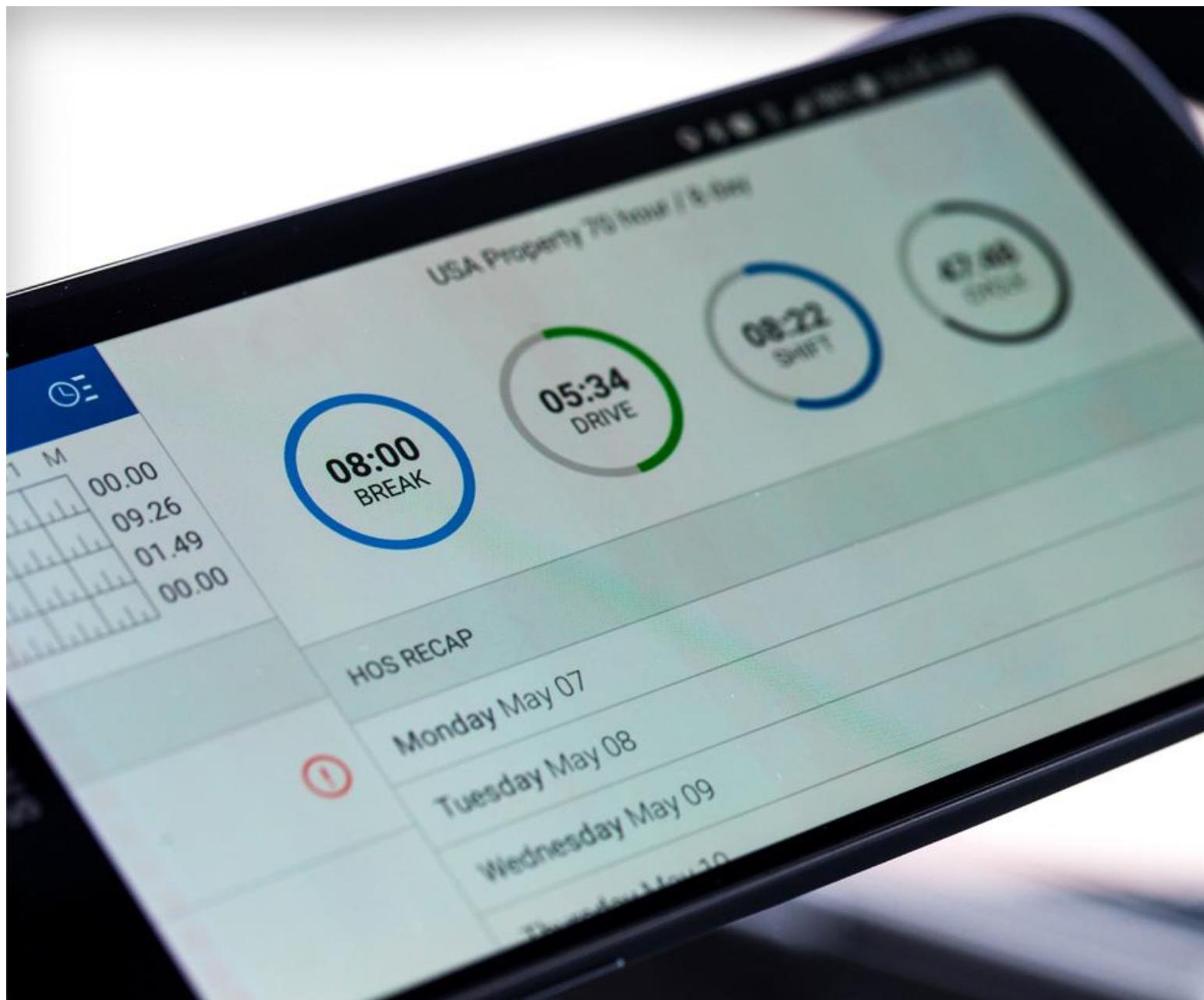
Axle Weight

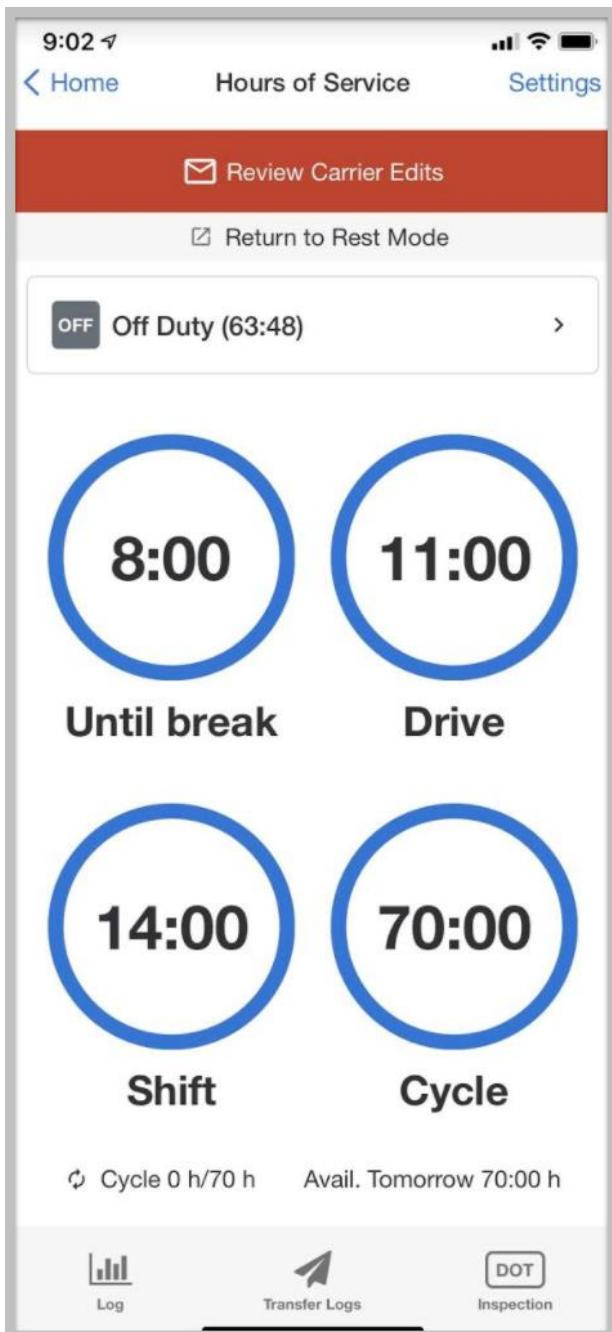


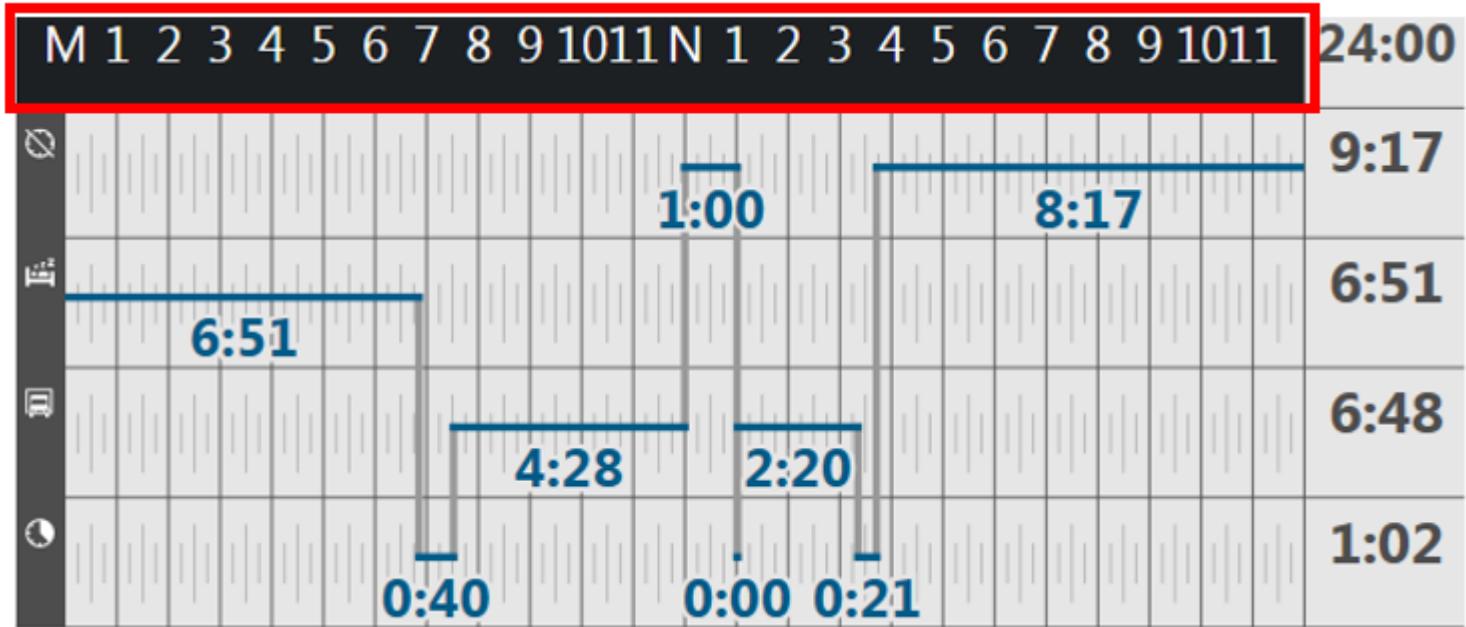
34,000 lbs

80,000 lbs









These two topics get drivers **tickets, out-of-service orders, and test failures** when misunderstood. Master them and you stay **legal, smooth, and employed**.

All rules are enforced by the **Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration**.

---

# SLIDING TANDEMS (Weight Distribution)

## Purpose

- Balance **axle weights**
- Stay legal at **weigh stations**
- Meet **bridge laws**
- Prevent tickets and re-work

---

## Basic Weight Rules (Typical)

- **Steer axle:** ~12,000 lbs
- **Drive axles:** 34,000 lbs
- **Trailer tandems:** 34,000 lbs
- **Gross:** 80,000 lbs

*(Always verify state-specific limits.)*

---

## How Sliding Tandems Affects Weight

- **Slide tandems FORWARD** → more weight on **trailer axles**
- **Slide tandems BACK** → more weight on **drive axles**

**Memory hook:**

*Forward fixes heavy drives. Back fixes heavy trailer.*

---

## Step-by-Step: Sliding Tandems Safely

1. Park on **level ground**
2. Set tractor & trailer brakes
3. Release **tandem pins**
4. Gently pull forward or back to desired hole
5. Re-set trailer brakes
6. Re-engage pins (verify locked)
7. **Re-scale** to confirm

- ✗ Never move tandems with pins partially engaged
- ✗ Never assume holes = same weight every time

---

## Common Tandem Mistakes

- Forgetting to re-lock pins
- Sliding without re-scaling
- Moving tandems on uneven ground
- Guessing instead of weighing

DOT will check pin engagement.

---

## ELD LOGS (Hours of Service Control)

### Purpose

- Track **legal driving time**
- Prevent fatigue
- Provide DOT inspection records

---

### Core HOS Rules (Quick Review)

- **11 hours driving**
- **14-hour on-duty window**
- **30-minute break** before 8 driving hours
- **10 hours off duty**
- **60/70 hours** in 7/8 days
- **34-hour restart**

If the ELD says stop—you stop.

---

## Duty Statuses (Know These)

- **Off Duty**
- **Sleeper Berth**
- **On Duty (Not Driving)**
- **Driving** (auto-recorded)

---

## Real-World ELD Habits (That Save You)

- Change duty status **before** moving
- Certify logs **daily**
- Add remarks when unusual delays happen
- Review logs **before inspections**
- Never let someone else “fix” your logs

**You are legally responsible—even if dispatch edits.**

---

## **Common ELD Violations**

- Driving after 11 hours
- Running out of 14-hour clock
- Missing 30-minute break
- Not certifying logs
- Falsifying duty status

**“Dispatch told me” is not a defense.**

---

## **CDL Examiner Gold Lines**

Use these confidently:

- “I slide tandems to balance axle weights.”
- “I verify pin engagement after sliding.”
- “I scale my load before traveling.”
- “I maintain accurate ELD logs.”
- “I comply with all HOS regulations.”

## **One-Line Memory Hooks**

- **Slide → Lock → Scale**
- **Forward trailer / Back drives**
- **ELD doesn’t negotiate**
- **Weight + Time = Tickets**

## **Final Reality Check**

Most preventable DOT problems come from:

- **Improper weights**
- **Poor time management**

Control your tandems. Control your clock.

That's how professionals roll.



## ● Some actual dark driving

---

This isn't textbook night driving. This is **02:30 AM, middle-of-nowhere, headlights-only reality**—where mistakes show up fast and quiet.

---

### What Changes in REAL Darkness (No City Glow)

- Headlights are your **only** vision
- Lane lines disappear in spots
- Depth perception lies to you
- Fatigue creeps in silently
- Animals appear *inside* your stopping distance

If your headlights can't cover your stopping distance — you're too fast.

---

### Visual Search in Real Dark

Forget "looking far." You're **hunting for movement**.

#### What Actually Works

- Scan **far–near–right shoulder–mirrors**
- Watch for **eye shine** (animals)
- Brake lights **2–3 vehicles ahead**
- Slight lane shimmer = wet/ice risk

#### What Fails

- ✗ Staring straight ahead
- ✗ Trusting lane lines
- ✗ Overusing high beams near traffic

---

### Speed Reality at Night

Posted speed ≠ safe speed.

#### Real adjustment:

- Drop **5–15 mph** depending on road
- Add **2–3 extra seconds** following distance
- Slow *before* curves you can't see through

Night speed isn't about confidence — it's about **margin**.

---

## Rural Night Hazards (The Sneaky Ones)

- Deer at **dawn/dusk**
- Unlit farm vehicles
- Soft shoulders that vanish
- Driveways with no reflectors
- Parked cars with no lights

### **Rule:**

If you can't see beyond it — slow before it.

---

## Dark + Weather = Trap

Rain or fog at night:

- Eats lane markings
- Reflects light back at you
- Doubles stopping distance

### **Fix:**

- Low beams
- Four-ways if well below traffic speed
- Smooth inputs only

---

## Fatigue (The Real Enemy)

You don't "feel tired" — you **miss things**.

### Early Warning Signs

- Missed signs
- Late reactions
- Lane drift
- Heavy blinking

### **Professional move:**

Pull over **before** you're fighting it.

Caffeine buys minutes. Sleep buys safety.

---

## REAL DARK-DRIVING DRILL (Use This Tonight)

### Every 30 Seconds Ask:

- Can I stop within what I see?
- What's my escape route?
- What changed just now?

### Every 5–8 Seconds:

- Mirrors
- Right shoulder
- Road ahead

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## Most Common Night Mistakes

- Driving daytime speed
- Following too close
- Trusting high beams
- Ignoring fatigue
- Assuming “less traffic = safer”

Night crashes are **harder** and **worse**.

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## What Examiners & DOT Love Hearing

- “I reduce speed for limited visibility.”
- “I increase following distance at night.”
- “I scan for movement, not just vehicles.”
- “I manage fatigue proactively.”

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## One-Line Truths

- **Dark lies**
- **Slow wins**
- **Space saves**
- **Fatigue kills quietly**

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## Final Reality Check

Good night drivers aren't aggressive.  
They're **boringly consistent**.

That's how you survive dark miles and still clock in tomorrow.

- **Truck stop etiquette**

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Real-World Rules — How Pros Move Without Causing Chaos





# Fuel Island Etiquette

## Things You Should Do

- If it's busy, HUSTLE
- Throw away your garbage in the receptacle
  - If the receptacle by your pump is full, find one with space
- Move up ahead of the pumps when possible
- Hand out Channel 19 Experience Encouragement Cards!!

## Things You Should **NOT** Do

- Do NOT urinate or defecate anywhere near the fuel island - use the bathroom
- Do NOT take your 30 minute break on the fuel island
- Do NOT take your 30 minute break in front of the fuel island
- Do NOT touch anyone else's equipment
- Do NOT throw any trash on the ground
- Do NOT empty your cups on the ground
- Do NOT use the Window Brush/Squeegee on anything but windows
  - Do not wash the bugs off your hood/grill
  - Do not wash your truck body
  - Do not wash your fuel tanks
  - Do not wash your engine
  - Do not wash your fifth wheel
- Do NOT take the fuel nozzle(s) with you

## Additional Good Ideas

- Use Gloves
- Use a spare set of shoes - fuel islands are messy
- Make sure to collect your loyalty rewards
- Learn to use touchless methods of payments with Truckstop Apps
- Don't swipe your cards if you can help it - avoid skimmers
- Get a discount fuel card - never pay the price on the sign
  - Reach out to us for more information





# 5 STEPS TO PEDESTRIAN SAFETY ON THE MOVE®

Everyone in your facility is responsible for creating a reliable work environment. Teaching pedestrians how to act responsibly in environments where lift trucks are operating can create a more secure, productive environment.

## THERE ARE 5 KEY STEPS PEDESTRIANS SHOULD FOLLOW:



### USE DEDICATED PEDESTRIAN WALKWAYS



Designated walkways are the best place for pedestrians to make their way across the warehouse floor. Keeping aisles and driving lanes clear will not only help everyone stay safe but also boost productivity by allowing fewer work interruptions.

### STOP, LOOK AND LISTEN FOR ONCOMING TRAFFIC



The same rules apply as when you are crossing a busy street. Be aware of your surroundings and stop, look and listen for trucks if you need to cross an aisle or lane.



### MAKE EYE CONTACT WITH DRIVERS

Make yourself known on the floor. It is important to make eye contact with oncoming operators to ensure they know you are in their vicinity.



### GIVE A FORKLIFT ADEQUATE TIME TO STOP

Lift trucks cannot stop on a dime. When on the warehouse floor, keep in mind it takes a lift truck an average of 16 feet to come to a complete stop.



### STAND CLEAR OF LIFT TRUCKS IN OPERATION

Staying clear of forklifts not only leads to pedestrian safety but also ensures the operation stays productive and efficient.

To learn more about what Raymond is doing to ensure warehouse, distribution and supply chain operations stay efficient and productive, visit [www.raymondcorp.com](http://www.raymondcorp.com).

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Truck stops are **tight, busy, and unforgiving**. Most conflicts, damage, and near-misses happen here—not on the highway. Etiquette isn’t about being nice; it’s about **not creating problems**.

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## **Golden Rule**

**If you slow everyone down, block space, or surprise people — you’re doing it wrong.**

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## **FUEL ISLAND ETIQUETTE (BIG ONE)**

### **Do This**

- Pull up **tight to the pump**
- Fuel **efficiently**
- Pull forward **immediately after fueling**
- Finish paperwork, food, bathroom **after pulling up**

### **Don’t Do This**

- Take a 30-minute break at the pump
- Go inside while blocking fuel lanes
- Clean your windshield for 10 minutes during peak hours

**Fuel island = pit stop, not parking.**

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## **PARKING SPOTS & BACKING**

### **Proper Behavior**

- Use four-ways when backing
- GOAL as many times as needed
- Be patient — backing takes time
- Block traffic if needed **safely**

### **What Gets You Hated**

- Rushing because people are watching
- Blind-side backing when driver-side is possible
- Parking crooked and stealing two spots
- Leaving your trailer too close to another truck

**Slow backing beats fast repairs.**

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## NIGHTTIME ETIQUETTE

- Kill bright headlights when parked
- Avoid revving engines
- Use marker lights, not high beams
- Be aware drivers are sleeping

**Your headlights = someone else's alarm clock.**

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## PEDESTRIANS EVERYWHERE

- Expect people to walk behind trailers
- Crawl speed only
- Never assume they see you
- Stop if visibility disappears

**At truck stops: pedestrians always win.**

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## NOISE & COURTESY

- Minimal horn use
- Don't idle excessively near sleepers (when avoidable)
- Avoid slamming doors at night

Courtesy prevents confrontations.

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## TRASH & CLEANLINESS

- Use trash cans
- Don't dump bottles or bags
- Leave the space usable

Dirty drivers ruin access for everyone.

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## YARD & LOT MOVEMENT

- Follow arrows and signage
- No wrong-way shortcuts

- Yield to moving trucks
- Expect sudden stops

Truck stops are **shared space**, not race tracks.

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## Common Rookie Mistakes

- Parking at fuel islands
- Blocking entrances while checking GPS
- Backing aggressively
- Letting pressure rush you
- Forgetting people are sleeping

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## Pro-Level Habits

- Plan parking early
- Arrive off-peak when possible
- Park straight and centered
- Take your time backing
- Stay calm under pressure

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## One-Line Memory Hooks

- **Fuel fast, park later**
- **Slow in lots**
- **Lights down at night**
- **GOAL saves mirrors**
- **Courtesy saves careers**

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## Final Reality Check

Truck stops remember you.  
Good etiquette builds **respect**. Bad etiquette builds **reputation**.

And reputations travel faster than trucks.