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Your Pre-Drive Safety Checklist

Before any kind of trailer travel, do a once over in these areas, checking that:

- ✓ All lights are working;
- ✓ Brakes are working, and brake maintenance is up-to-date;
- ✓ Trailer hitch is secure, and safety chains are on;
- ✓ Dirt and debris are swept out;
- ✓ Trailer mats are clean and dry;
- ✓ Dividers are securely fastened;
- ✓ Loose, rattling parts have been tightened or secured;
- ✓ Sharp edges or loose wires inside trailer are fixed;
- ✓ Trailer is loaded properly and within weight limits;
- ✓ Lug nuts on all wheels are tight; and
- ✓ Tire pressure is within recommended ranges when tires are cold.

Before any kind of trailer travel, do a once over in these areas, checking that:

- ✓ First aid kits for horses *and* humans;
- ✓ An emergency kit with flares or cones, a working jack, and extra halters and lead ropes;
- ✓ A fire extinguisher that is working and easily accessible;
- ✓ A lug wrench or tire iron, and a tire pressure gauge;
- ✓ Fully charged cell phone(s), and a charger on board;
- ✓ A list of emergency numbers, including physician and veterinarian;
- ✓ Equipment and gear that is secured in the trailer with bungee cords or rope to keep things in place in the event of a collision.

Once horses are loaded and before driving off, check that:

- ✓ Horses are tied securely and with proper length of lead rope or quick-release trailer tie;
- ✓ Hay nets are securely fastened;
- ✓ Butt chains or bars are fastened; and
- ✓ All doors, windows, and gates are securely latched.

Finally, drive with caution. Towing a trailer alters the way your

- ✓ Allow more time for stopping;
- ✓ Keep greater distance between you and the vehicle ahead;
- ✓ Signal for turns earlier;
- ✓ Stop every few hours to give your horses a break from the motion and noise, and to offer them water; and
- ✓ If you're driving more than 12 hours, break it up and plan to stay somewhere overnight.