

## The Braking System, Traction Control System

If the ABS indicator and the brake system indicator come on together, and the parking brake is fully released, the front-to-rear braking distribution system may also shut down.

Test your brakes as instructed on page 310. If the brakes feel normal, drive slowly and have your vehicle repaired by your dealer as soon as possible. Avoid sudden hard braking which could cause the rear wheels to lock up and possibly lead to a loss of control.

*On EX model*

The TCS indicator will come on along with the ABS indicator.

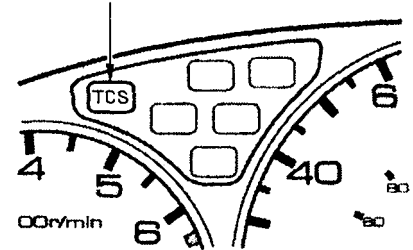
### Traction Control System

*On EX model*

Your Honda is equipped with a Traction Control System (TCS) to assist you in maintaining traction while driving slowly on loose or slippery surfaces. The TCS assists only in low-speed, low-traction conditions; up to approximately 18 mph (30km/h).

The TCS monitors the speed of all four wheels. When it senses a front wheel losing traction, it applies braking to that wheel. The TCS indicator flashes when this occurs.

TRACTION CONTROL SYSTEM INDICATOR



Driving with TCS requires no special skills or technique. The TCS does not control your vehicle's whole braking system and cannot prevent skidding if you enter a corner too fast. It is still your responsibility to drive at reasonable speeds and to leave a sufficient margin of safety.

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## Traction Control System

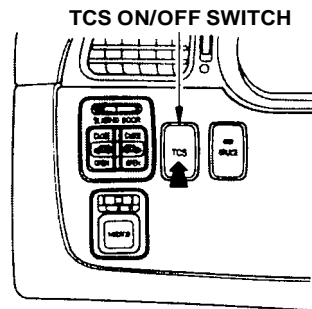
When starting out or driving at low speeds on a loose or slippery road surface, you may notice that the vehicle does not respond to the accelerator in the same way it does at other times. This is a sign the TCS is activating. You will see the TCS indicator light flash.

You should still install winter tires on your vehicle during the winter. Make sure to use the same size originally supplied with vehicle. Exercise the same caution in winter driving as you would if your vehicle was not equipped with TCS.

Driving with the compact spare tire installed (see page 292) may activate the TCS. You should turn off the system.

If the brakes overheat while the TCS is activating, the TCS indicator will stop flashing and stay on temporarily. This indicates that the TCS system has turned off. After the brakes have cooled down (usually for about 10 minutes), the TCS will turn back on and the indicator will turn off.

### **TCS ON/OFF Switch**



This switch is under the side vent. It lets you turn the Traction Control System on and off. You cannot turn off the TCS while the TCS indicator light is flashing.

Deactivate the system by pressing the TCS On/Off switch. The TCS indicator light comes on as a reminder. Pressing the switch again turns the system back on.

The Traction Control System turns on every time you start the engine, even if you turned it off the last time you drove the vehicle.

### **TCS Indicator**

The TCS indicator comes on or flashes under the following conditions:

- When you turn the ignition switch to ON (II).
- When you manually turn off the TCS.
- It flashes when the TCS is regulating wheelspin.
- If the system's diagnostics senses a problem in the TCS, the indicator will come on and stay on.
- If the brakes overheat, the indicator will come on.

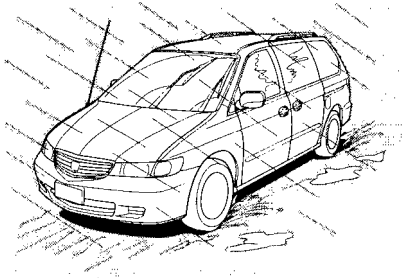
If the TCS indicator comes on and stays on for more than 10 minutes while driving, pull to the side of the road when it is safe and turn off the engine. Reset the system by restarting the engine, and watch the TCS indicator. If the indicator remains on, or comes back on while driving, have the system inspected by your Honda dealer. You can still drive the vehicle without TCS.

This indicator will come on along with the ABS indicator if there is a problem in the anti-lock brake system (see **ABS Indicator** on page [212](#)).

The TCS indicator may occasionally come on for one or two seconds and then go out. This is normal.

## Driving in Bad Weather

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Rain, fog, and snow conditions require a different driving technique because of reduced traction and visibility. Keep your vehicle well-maintained and exercise greater caution when you need to drive in bad weather. The cruise control should not be used in these conditions.

**Driving Technique** — Always drive slower than you would in dry weather. It takes your vehicle longer to react, even in conditions that may seem just barely damp. Apply smooth, even pressure to all the controls. Abrupt steering wheel movements or sudden, hard application of the brakes can cause loss of control in wet weather. Be extra cautious for the first few miles (kilometers) of driving while you adjust to the change in driving conditions. This is especially true in snow. A person can forget some snow-driving techniques during the summer months. Practice is needed to relearn those skills.

Exercise extra caution when driving in rain after a long dry spell. After months of dry weather, the first rains bring oil to the surface of the roadway, making it slippery.

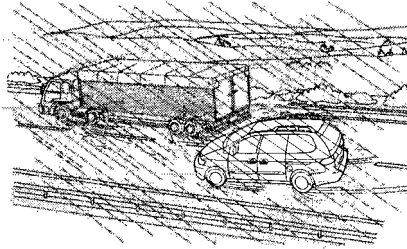
**Visibility** — Being able to see clearly in all directions and being visible to other drivers are important in all weather conditions. This is more difficult in bad weather. To be seen more clearly during daylight hours, turn on your headlights.

Inspect your windshield wipers and washers frequently. Keep the windshield washer reservoir full of the proper fluid. Have the windshield wiper blades replaced if they start to streak the windshield or leave parts unwiped. Use the defroster and air conditioning to keep the windows from fogging up on the inside (see pages [135](#) and [145/150](#)).

**Traction** — Check your tires frequently for wear and proper pressure. Both are important in preventing "hydroplaning" (loss of traction on a wet surface). In the winter, mount snow tires on all four wheels for the best handling.

Watch road conditions carefully, they can change from moment to moment. Wet leaves can be as slippery as ice. "Clear" roads can have patches of ice. Driving conditions can be very hazardous when the outside temperature is near freezing. The road surface can become covered with areas of water puddles mixed with areas of ice, so your traction can change without warning.

Be careful when downshifting. If traction is low, you can lock up the drive wheels for a moment and cause a skid.



Be very cautious when passing, or being passed by other vehicles. The spray from large vehicles reduces your visibility, and the wind buffeting can cause you to lose control.

## Towing a Trailer

Your Odyssey has been designed to tow a trailer, as well as for carrying passengers and their cargo.

To safely tow a trailer, you must observe the load limits, use the proper equipment, and follow the guidelines in this section.

### Load Limits

- **Total Trailer Weight:** As shown in the load limits table, how much weight you can tow is limited by the number of occupants in your vehicle and whether or not you have installed a transmission fluid cooler. (See page 220 for information about transmission fluid coolers.) Towing a load that is too heavy can seriously affect your vehicle's handling and performance. It can also damage the engine and drivetrain.

Number of Occupants*	Maximum Total Trailer Weight	
	With Transmission Fluid Cooler	Without Transmission Fluid Cooler
2	3,500 lbs (1,580 kg)	2,000 lbs (900 kg)
3	3,350 lbs (1,520 kg)	1,850 lbs (830 kg)
4	3,200 lbs (1,450 kg)	1,700 lbs (770 kg)
5	3,050 lbs (1,380 kg)	1,550 lbs (700 kg)
6	2,900 lbs (1,310 kg)	1,400 lbs (630 kg)
7	850 lbs (385 kg)**	850 lbs (385 kg)**

\*: Including driver. Based on 150 lbs (70 kg) per occupant.

\* \*: Weight limited to avoid exceeding rear GAWR (see page 219).

- **Tongue Load:** The weight that the tongue of a fully-loaded trailer puts on the hitch should be approximately 10 percent of the trailer weight. Too little tongue load can make the trailer unstable and cause it to sway. Too much tongue load reduces front-tire traction and steering control.

To achieve a proper tongue load, start by loading 60 percent of the load toward the front of the trailer and 40 percent toward the rear, then readjust the load as needed.

- **Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR):**

The total weight of the vehicle, all occupants, all cargo, *and* the tongue load must not exceed: 5,565 lbs (2,525 kg)

- **Gross Axle Weight Rating (GAWR):**

The total weight of the vehicle, all occupants, all cargo, and the tongue load must not exceed:

2,775 lbs (1,260 kg)  
on the front axle

2,840 lbs (1,290 kg)  
on the rear axle

- **Gross Combined Weight Rating (GCWR):**

The total weight of the vehicle, all occupants and cargo, and the trailer and everything in or on it, must not exceed:

8,160 lbs (3,700 kg)  
with transmission fluid cooler

6,660 lbs (3,025 kg)  
without transmission fluid cooler

**⚠ WARNING**

Exceeding load limits or improperly loading your vehicle and trailer can cause a crash in which you can be seriously injured or killed.

Check the loading of your vehicle and trailer carefully before starting to drive.

### Checking Loads

The best way to confirm that vehicle and trailer weights are within limits is to have them checked at a public scale.

Using a suitable scale or a special tongue load gauge, check the tongue load the first time you set up a towing combination (a fully-loaded vehicle and trailer), then recheck the tongue load whenever the conditions change.

## Towing a Trailer

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### **Towing Equipment and Accessories**

Towing can require a variety of equipment, depending on the size of your trailer, how it will be used, and how much load you are towing.

Discuss your needs with your trailer sales or rental agency, and follow the guidelines in the rest of this section. Also make sure that all equipment is properly installed and that it meets federal, state, province, and local regulations.

### ***Hitches***

Any hitch used on your vehicle must be properly bolted to the underbody, using the six threaded holes provided. A hitch designed especially for your Odyssey can be obtained from your Honda dealer.

### ***Weight Distributing Hitch***

If the total trailer weight is more than 2,000 lbs (900 kg), you must also use a weight distributing hitch. This device transfers weight from the vehicle's rear wheels to the front wheels, and to the trailer's wheels. Carefully follow the hitch maker's instructions for proper installation and adjustment.

### ***Safety Chain***

Always use a safety chain. Make sure that it is secured to both the trailer and hitch, and that it crosses under the tongue so it can catch the trailer if it becomes unhitched. Leave enough slack to allow the trailer to turn corners easily, but do not let the chain drag on the ground.

### ***Sway Control***

If the total trailer weight exceeds 2,000 lbs (900 kg), you should install a sway control device to minimize swaying that can occur in crosswinds and in normal and emergency driving maneuvers. Your trailer maker can tell you what kind of sway control you need and how to install it.

### ***Transmission Fluid Cooler***

If the total trailer weight is more than 2,000 lbs (900 kg), you must also have a transmission fluid cooler installed. This device will help prevent transmission overheating, which could cause serious damage. A transmission fluid cooler designed for your Odyssey can be obtained from your Honda dealer.

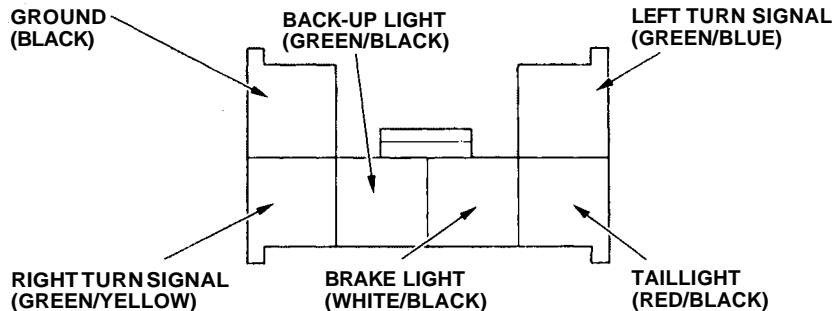


### Trailer Brakes

Honda recommends that any trailer having a total weight of 1,000 lbs (450 kg) or more be equipped with its own electric or surge-type brakes.

If you choose electric brakes, be sure they are electronically actuated. Do not attempt to tap into your vehicle's hydraulic system. No matter how successful it may seem, any attempt to attach trailer brakes to your vehicle's hydraulic system will lower braking effectiveness and create a potential hazard.

### Trailer Lights



Your vehicle has a trailer lighting connector located behind the left side panel in the cargo area. Refer to the drawing above for the wiring color code and purpose of each pin.

To use the trailer lighting connector, you will need a wiring harness and converter. This comes with the Honda hitch (see page 220), or it may be obtained separately from your dealer.

If you use a non-Honda trailer lighting harness and converter, you can get the connector and pins that mate with the connector in your vehicle from your Honda dealer.

Since lighting and wiring vary with trailer type and brand, you should also have a qualified technician install a suitable connector between the vehicle and the trailer.

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## Towing a Trailer

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### **Spare Vehicle Tire**

When towing a trailer, you should carry a full-size wheel and tire as a spare in case you have a flat. If you use the compact spare tire that came with the vehicle, it may adversely affect vehicle handling. See page [317](#) for information on proper tire size, and page [299](#) for information on how to store a full-size tire. When storing a full-size spare tire in the trailer, follow the trailer maker's instructions.

### **Additional Trailer Equipment**

Many states and Canadian provinces require special outside mirrors when towing a trailer. Even if they don't, you should install special mirrors if you cannot clearly see behind you, or if the trailer creates a blind spot.

Ask your trailer sales or rental agency if any other items are recommended or required for your towing situation.

### **Pre-Tow Checklist**

When preparing to tow, and before driving away, be sure to check the following:

- The vehicle has been properly serviced, and the tires, brakes, suspension, and cooling system are in good operating condition.
  - All weights and loads are within limits (see pages [218](#) and [219](#)).
  - The hitch, safety chain, and any other attachments are secure.
  - All items on and in the trailer are properly secured and cannot shift while you drive.
  - The lights and brakes on your vehicle and the trailer are working properly.
- Your vehicle tires and spare are properly inflated (see page [323](#)), and the trailer tires and spare are inflated as recommended by the trailer maker.
  - You may want to fill the fuel tank with premium fuel. Premium fuel provides improved performance.

### **Driving Safely With a Trailer**

The added weight, length, and height of a trailer will affect your vehicle's handling and performance, so driving with a trailer requires some special driving skills and techniques.

For your safety and the safety of others, take time to practice driving maneuvers before heading for the open road, and follow the guidelines discussed below.

### ***Towing Speeds and Gears***

Driving slower than normal in all driving situations, and obey posted speed limits for vehicles with trailers. Use the D4 position when towing a trailer on level roads. D3 is the proper shift lever position to use when towing a trailer in hilly terrain. (See "***Driving on Hills***" in the next column for additional gear information.)

### ***Making Turns and Braking***

Make turns more slowly and wider than normal. The trailer tracks a smaller arc than your vehicle, and it can hit or run over something the vehicle misses. Allow more time and distance for braking. Do not brake or turn suddenly as this could cause the trailer to jackknife or turn over.

### ***Driving on Hills***

When climbing hills, closely watch your temperature gauge. If it nears the red mark, turn the air conditioning off, reduce speed and, if necessary, pull to the side of the road to let the engine cool.

If the automatic transmission shifts frequently between 3rd and 4th gears while going up a hill, shift to D3.

If you must stop when facing uphill, use the foot brake or parking brake. Do not try to hold the vehicle in place by pressing on the accelerator, as this can cause the automatic transmission to overheat.

When driving down hills, reduce your speed and shift down to 2nd gear. Do not "ride" the brakes, and remember it will take longer to slow down and stop when towing a trailer.

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## Towing a Trailer

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### ***Handling Crosswinds and Buffeting***

Crosswinds and air turbulence caused by passing trucks can disrupt your steering and cause trailer swaying. When being passed by a large vehicle, keep a constant speed and steer straight ahead. Do not try to make quick steering or braking corrections.

### ***Backing Up***

Always drive slowly and have someone guide you when backing up. Grip the *bottom* of the steering wheel; then turn the wheel to the left to get the trailer to move to the left, and turn the wheel right to move the trailer to the right.

### ***Parking***

Follow all normal precautions when parking, including putting the transmission in Park and firmly setting the parking brake. Also, place wheel chocks at each of the trailer's tires.