

Towing a Trailer

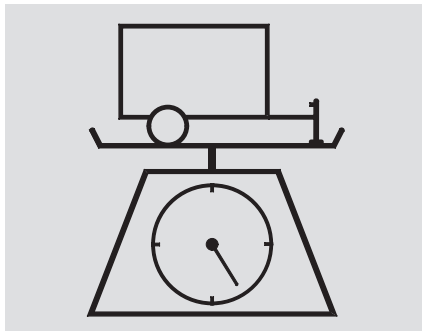
Your vehicle has been designed to primarily carry passengers and their cargo. You can also use it to tow a trailer if you carefully observe the load limits, use the proper equipment, and follow the guidelines in this section.

⚠ WARNING

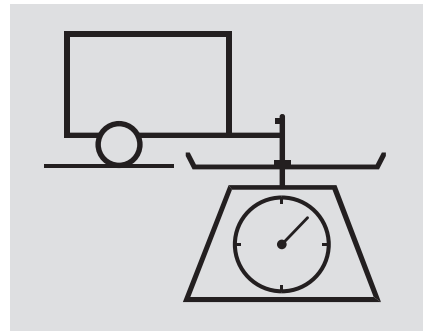
Exceeding any load limit or improperly loading your vehicle and trailer can cause a crash in which you can be seriously hurt or killed.

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

Load Limits



- **Total Trailer Weight:** The maximum allowable weight of the trailer and everything in or on it depends on several factors. See page 313 for the driving limits for your towing situation. Towing a load that is too heavy can seriously affect your vehicle's handling and performance. It can also damage the engine and drivetrain.



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

Maximum Total Trailer Weight

Number of Occupants*1	Equipped with transmission cooler and power steering fluid cooler*2
1	3,500 lbs (1,580 kg)
2	3,350 lbs (1,520 kg)
3	3,200 lbs (1,450 kg)
4	3,050 lbs (1,380 kg)
5	2,900 lbs (1,310 kg)
6	2,750 lbs (1,250 kg)
7	2,600 lbs (1,180 kg)*3 1,550 lbs (700 kg)*4
8*3	650 lbs (290 kg)

- * 1: Including driver. Based on 150 lbs (70 kg) per occupant.
- * 2: See page 315 for information about fluid coolers.
- * 3: LX, EX and EX-L models
- * 4: Touring model

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 re-adjust the load as needed.

• Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR):

The maximum allowable weight of the vehicle, all occupants, all cargo, and the tongue load is 5,952 lbs (2,700 kg).

• Gross Axle Weight Rating (GAWR):

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

On all models except U.S. Touring model

2,833 lbs (1,285 kg) on the front axle, and 3,197 lbs (1,450 kg) on the rear axle.

On U.S. Touring model

2,877 lbs (1,305 kg) on the front axle, and 3,197 lbs (1,450 kg) on the rear axle.

• Gross Combined Weight Rating (GCWR):

The maximum allowable weight of the fully loaded vehicle and trailer is 8,410 lbs (3,815 kg) (see page 392).

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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 Equipment and Accessories

Towing generally requires a variety of supplemental equipment, depending on the size of your trailer, how much load you are towing, and where you tow. To ensure the best quality, we recommend that you purchase Honda equipment whenever possible.

Discuss your needs with your trailer sales or rental agency, and follow the guidelines in this section. Also make sure that all equipment is properly installed and 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 and the required fluid coolers designed especially for your Odyssey can be obtained from your Honda dealer.

Weight Distributing Hitch

If the total trailer weight is more than 1,850 lbs (840 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 Chains

Always use safety chains when you tow a trailer. Make sure the chains are secured to the trailer and hitch, and that they cross under the tongue and can catch the trailer if it becomes unhitched. Leave enough slack to allow the trailer to turn corners easily, but do not let the chains 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 and Power Steering Fluid Cooler

To help prevent overheating, a transmission fluid cooler and a power steering fluid cooler are required for trailer towing. These coolers are available only 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 electrically 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.

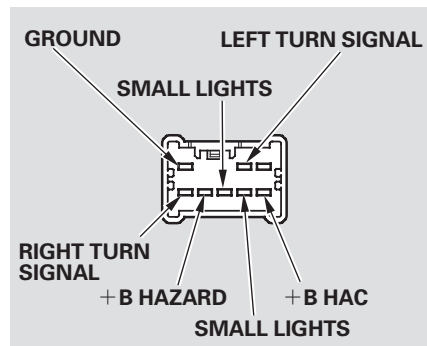
See your trailer dealer for more information on installing electric brakes.

Trailer Lights

Trailer lights and equipment must comply with federal, state, province, and local regulations. Check the requirements for the areas where you plan to tow, and use only equipment designed for your vehicle.

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Your vehicle has a trailer lighting connector behind the right side panel in the cargo area. Refer to the drawing above for the purpose of each pin.

Since lighting and wiring vary by trailer type and brand, you should have a qualified technician install a suitable connector between the vehicle and the trailer. Improper equipment or installation can cause damage to your vehicle's electrical system and affect your vehicle warranty.

Spare Tires

When towing a trailer, we recommend that you carry a full-size spare wheel and tire for your vehicle and trailer. If you use the compact spare tire that came with your vehicle, it could adversely affect vehicle handling. See page 356 for proper tire size, page 370 for how to store a full size wheel and tire, and page 366 for information on changing a flat tire.

Remember to unhitch the trailer before changing a flat. Ask your trailer sales or rental agency where and how to store the trailer's spare tire.

U.S. Touring model

Because of the Michelin PAX system, you must not change a flat tire, or use a compact spare tire on your vehicle.

Additional Towing Equipment

Many states and 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, cooling system, and lights are in good operating condition.
- The trailer has been properly serviced and is in good condition.
- All weights and loads are within limits.
- The hitch, safety chains, and any other attachments are secure.

- All items in or on the trailer are properly secured and cannot shift while you drive.
- Your vehicle tires and spare are properly inflated, and the trailer tires and spare are inflated as recommended by the trailer maker.

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 below.

Towing Speeds and Gears

Drive slower than normal in all driving situations, and obey posted speed limits for vehicles with trailers. Use the D position when towing a trailer on level roads. Do not exceed 55 mph (88 km/h). At higher speeds, the trailer may sway or affect vehicle handling.

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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 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 second gear. Do not “ride” the brakes, and remember, it will take longer to slow down and stop when towing a trailer.

Handling Crosswinds and Buffeting

Crosswinds and air turbulence caused by passing trucks can disrupt your steering and cause trailer to sway. 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.