

Towing a Trailer

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 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.

Safety Chains

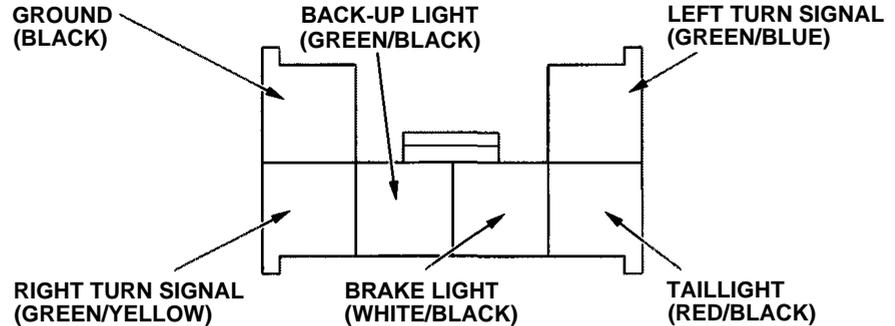
Always use safety chains. Make sure they are secured to both the trailer and hitch, and that they cross under the tongue so they can catch the trailer if it becomes unhitched. Leave enough slack to allow the trailer to turn corners easily, but do not let the chains drag on the ground.

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 car has a trailer lighting connector located in the trunk by the left taillight. To use the connector, undo the fastener and unscrew the cargo net mounting button on the left side of the trunk lining. Refer to the drawing in this page for the wiring color code and purpose of each pin.

If you use a converter, you can get the connector and pins that mate with the connector in your car from your Acura dealer.

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

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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 [184](#) and [185](#)).
 - The hitch, safety chains, 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 [233](#)), 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 discussed below.

Towing Speeds and Gears

Drive slower than normal in all driving situations, and obey posted speed limits for vehicles with trailers. Use the D5 or 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 following column for additional gear information.)

When towing a trailer in the Sequential SportShift mode, select Fourth, Third, Second, or First gear; depending on the vehicle speeds and road condition. Do not use Fifth gear. The recommended speed range for each gear position is shown in the table.

Gear position	Speed range
1	0-37 mph (0-60 km/h)
2	12 - 68 mph (20-110 km/h)
3, 4	over 25 mph (over 40 km/h)

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 (Hot) 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 transmission shifts frequently between 4th and 5th gears while going up a hill, shift to D4. And if the transmission shifts frequently between 3rd and 4th gears, shift to D3.

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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.

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.