

WARNING

Improperly loading your car and trailer can seriously affect its steering and braking performance, causing a crash in which you can be seriously injured.

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

The best way to confirm that your total towing package is within these specifications is to get it weighed. Load the car and trailer as you normally would while towing, and take them to a public scale. Have them check the total weight and the weight at each axle, then compare the weights to the specifications.

Trailer Hitches

The trailer hitch must be the proper size and construction for your car and the trailer you intend to tow. Consult with an expert before you purchase a trailer hitch, and have it installed by a qualified mechanic.

The hitch should bolt to the underbody of the car, and distribute the load over a wide area. Never use a hitch that mounts only to the rear bumper. The bumper is not designed to handle that type of load.

NOTICE

A trailer hitch that is not adequate for the size of the trailer, or a hitch that is improperly installed, can cause damage to the underside of your car.

Towing a Trailer

Mirrors

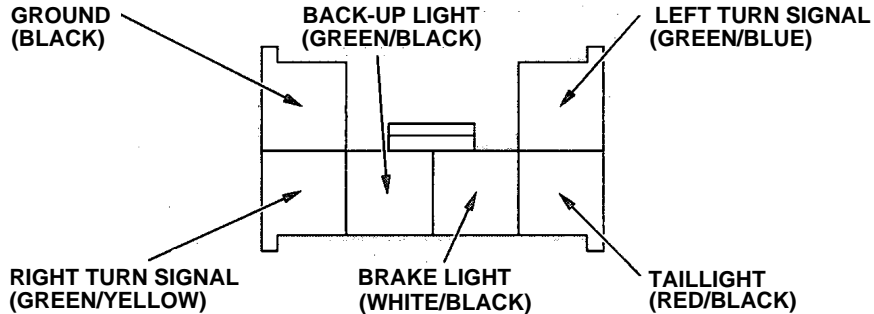
Many states and provinces have laws requiring special outside mirrors when you are towing a trailer. Check the laws in your area. You may want to install mirrors, even if they are not required. Hook up the trailer and see how much it obscures your ability to see behind you with the standard mirrors. If you cannot see directly behind you, or have a large blind spot next to the trailer or the car, you should install mirrors intended for towing.

Connecting the Trailer

Most trailers that have a gross weight of 1,000 lbs (450 kg) do not have their own braking system. If you are thinking of getting a trailer that does have brakes, make sure they are electrically-operated. There are no provisions in your car to tap into its hydraulic braking system. Any attempt to attach the trailer's brakes to your car's hydraulic system, no matter how successful it may seem, will lower braking effectiveness and create a potential hazard.

Always use a safety chain when towing a trailer. Connect the safety chain securely at both ends. Make sure the chain crosses under the tongue so it will catch the trailer if it becomes unhitched. Leave enough slack in the chain so it can't bind in a sharp turn. Do not let it drag on the ground.

Towing a Trailer



Your car has a trailer lighting connector in the trunk. To use the connector, remove the fastener on the side of the trunk and pull the lining back (see page 232). Refer to the drawing above for the wiring color code and purpose of each connector pin.

The connector and pins that mate with this connector are available at your Acura dealer.

Since the lighting and wiring can be different for various brands of trailers, have a technician who is familiar with your trailer modify its lighting plug. A converter may be required between the car and trailer for the lights to work correctly.

Before Starting Out

As you are preparing to tow your trailer, do the following:

- Measure the trailer's tongue load. You can do this with a bathroom scale.
- Verify that the hitch and safety chain are securely fastened.
- Check the condition and air pressure of all tires on the trailer and your car. Low tire pressure can seriously affect the handling. Also check the spare tire.
- With everything loaded and the trailer connected, check that the rear of the car is not sagging. If so, redistribute the load in the car.
- Check that all lights on the car and trailer are working properly.

Towing a Trailer

Towing Safety

Your car will not stop as quickly with a trailer in tow. Leave extra distance between your car and other cars. Avoid braking or turning suddenly. This could cause the trailer to jackknife or possibly turn over.

Keep in mind that your total car is now much longer. Leave more room when making turns. The trailer tracks a smaller arc than the car and can hit or run over something that the car misses. When passing another car, make sure the trailer is clear before changing lanes.

The car/trailer combination is more affected by crosswinds and buffeting. When being passed by a large car, keep a constant speed and steer straight ahead. If there is too much wind buffeting, slow down to get out of the other car's air turbulence.

Towing a trailer puts an extra load on your car. You should have your car serviced according to the "Maintenance Schedule under severe driving conditions" on page [188](#).

This extra load is magnified when you are driving in hilly terrain. Watch the temperature gauge closely when climbing hills. If it gets near the hot area, turn off the air conditioning (if it is on). If this does not reduce the heat, it may be necessary to pull to the side of the road and wait for the engine to cool. If the automatic transmission shifts frequently between 3rd and 4th gears, put it in D3. This will help prevent the transmission from overheating. Help keep the brakes from overheating by shifting to a lower gear when going downhill.

If you have to stop while going uphill, do not hold the car in place by pressing on the accelerator. This can cause the automatic transmission to overheat. Use the parking brake or footbrake.

When parking your vehicle and trailer, especially on a hill, be sure to follow all the normal precautions. Turn your front wheels into the curb, set the parking brake firmly, and put the transmission in Park. In addition, place wheel chocks at each of the trailer's tires.

Backing up with a trailer is difficult and takes practice. Drive slowly, make small movements with the steering wheel, and have someone stand outside to guide you. Grip the steering wheel on the bottom (rather than the usual position near the top). Move your hand to the left to get the trailer to move to the left, and right to move the trailer right.