

PRE-TRIP INSPECTION STEPS

Tip the hood of the truck



- Check fluid levels: oil and coolant levels.
- For the pre trip, look for oil, fuel, coolant, power steering fluid leaks... leak is either a problem or a potential problem.
- Make sure caps are tight for the rad, oil filler, power steering fluid and the dip stick is seated properly.
- Observe at the engine block. Check for leaks, fluid running down the side of the engine. Look at the hoses. Check for wear, cracking or fraying. Inspect fan belts for proper tension and signs of wear.
- Take a look at the engine fan. Make sure there are no pieces out of any of the blades.
- Look for any exposed or bare wires, or wires which appear out of place.
- Check windshield wiper fluid level.

- Scan steering axle tires for uneven wear, nails, etc.
- Take a look at the shock absorbers, ball joints and king pins for wear and proper lubrication.

Leave the truck hood up – continue with pre-trip inspection



- Observe all [tires](#) on your rig as well as the trailer.
- Visually inspect the airlines and electrical cord, to ensure they are properly connected
- Visually check the [5th wheel](#) to make sure it's coupled to the trailer
- Ensure the landing gear is ok, legs are up and secure, and crank handle is secure
- Trailer suspension – air bags are up or no broken springs
- Brake pads. Look for good thickness.
- Brake adjustment indicators. Look for proper positioning.
- Look over the entire unit thoroughly for body damage.

Start the vehicle

- Depress the clutch and start the [engine](#). (in neutral)
- Observe gauges to be sure oil pressure is good and electrical system in charging

- Gently ease the [clutch](#) out slowly and carefully, just in case there's a problem (if you do this too quickly, you could launch yourself across the parking lot).
- Do not high idle the truck right away. Let it idle at 650 RPM
- Glance at the gauges again to ensure all is ok and air pressure is building.
- Turn on all lights and flashers and exit the vehicle.
- Do a visual of the [motor](#), looking for leaks
- Observe belts for proper tension and that they are turning properly
- Close the hood and lock it down.

Circle check the vehicle again



- Be certain all lights for proper function on truck and trailer.
- In the truck, use a piece of wood or find a way to depress the brake pedal, so the operation of the exterior lights can be checked
- Listen for air leaks as you walk around the unit.
- Remove the block of wood from the pedal, turn off lights not needed.

Back up a few feet

(Be sure you've already checked behind the trailer!)

- This helps ensure that all trailer wheels are turning.

Pull forward about 6 feet

- Pull the trailer brake, to ensure it's working properly and to make sure the [fifth wheel](#) is correctly coupled to the trailer

Pull ahead another 6 feet and stop the truck with the foot brake

- This is a good way to test the foot brake is operating correctly.



Then, and only then, complete required documentation on the [log books](#), for pre inspection report/circle check.