

Before You Buy

If you are selecting a vehicle that will be used for towing, you should determine the approximate weight of the trailer you intend to tow, including the weight of any additional cargo and fluids that you will be carrying in the trailer. Also be sure the vehicle has the proper optional equipment (see page 18). Keep in mind that performance can be severely compromised in hilly terrain when minimum acceptable powertrain combination is selected. Consider purchasing a vehicle with a more powerful engine.

BRAKES

Many states require a separate braking system on trailers with a loaded weight of more than 1,500 pounds. For your safety, Ford Motor Company recommends that a separate functional brake system be used on any towed vehicle, including those dolly-towed or towbar-towed. There are several basic types of brake systems designed to activate trailer brakes:

- 1. Electronically Controlled Brakes** usually provide automatic and manual control of trailer brakes. They require that the tow vehicle be equipped with a controlling device and additional wiring for electrical power. These brakes typically have a control box installed within reach of the driver and can be applied manually or automatically.
- 2. Electric-Over-Hydraulic (EOH) Trailer Brakes** are operated by an electrically powered pump that pressurizes a hydraulic fluid reservoir built into the trailer's brake system. Many of the available EOH trailer brake models are compatible with Ford's factory installed, dash-integrated Trailer Brake Controller (TBC).
- 3. Surge Brakes** are independent hydraulic brakes activated by a master cylinder at the junction of the hitch and trailer tongue. They are not controlled by the hydraulic fluid in the tow vehicle's brake system, and the tow vehicle's hydraulic system should never be connected directly to the trailer's hydraulic system.

Be sure your trailer brakes conform to all applicable state regulations. See *Trailering Tips* on back cover for additional braking information.

After You Buy

Before heading out on a trip, check your vehicle's Owner Guide for break-in and severe-duty maintenance schedules (do not tow a trailer until your vehicle has been driven at least 500 miles). Be sure to have your fully-loaded vehicle (including passengers) and trailer weighed so as not to exceed critical weight limits (see page 30). If any of these limits are exceeded, cargo should be removed from the vehicle and/or trailer until all weights are within the specified limits.

TRAILER LAMPS

Make sure the trailer is equipped with lights that conform to all applicable government regulations. The trailer lighting system should not be connected directly to the lighting system of the vehicle. See a local recreational vehicle dealer or rental trailer agency for correct wiring and relays for the trailer and heavy-duty flashers.

SAFETY CHAINS

- Always use safety chains when towing. Safety chains are used to retain connection between the towing and towed vehicle in the event of separation of the trailer coupling or ball
- Use cross chains under the trailer tongue to prevent the tongue from contacting the ground if a separation occurs. Allow only enough slack to permit full turning – be sure they do not drag on the pavement
- When using a frame-mounted trailer hitch, attach the safety chains to the frame-mounted hitch using the recommendations supplied by the hitch manufacturer
- See your vehicle's Owner Guide for safety chain attachment information
- For rental trailers, follow rental agency instructions for hookup of safety chains

TRAILER WIRING HARNESS

- Some vehicles equipped with a factory-installed Trailer Tow Package include a trailer wiring harness and a wiring kit
- This kit includes one or more jumper harnesses (to connect to your trailer wiring connector) and installation instructions

Refer to chart on page 17 for standard and optional wiring harness usage.



Before You Get Hitched...

When towing, it is vital that you use the proper hitch. Here is the hitch information you should know:



Weight-Carrying (Non-Weight-Distributing) Hitch

A weight-carrying (non-weight-distributing) hitch is commonly used to tow small- and medium-sized trailers. Choose a proper hitch and ball, and make sure its location is compatible with that of the trailer. Use a good weight-carrying hitch that uniformly distributes the trailer tongue loads through the bumper and frame (through the body with Escape/Mariner; bumper hitch not available with Escape/Mariner, Explorer or Expedition/Navigator). Ford rear step bumpers and hitch receivers provide weight-carrying capacities as shown in the chart on the following page. (A label affixed to the hitch receiver provides both the weight-carrying and weight-distributing capacities for each receiver.) The vehicle owner is responsible for obtaining the proper hitch ball, ball mounting and other appropriate equipment to tow both the trailer and load that will be towed.



Weight-Distributing Hitch

A weight-distributing hitch is used in conjunction with a hitch platform (receiver) to distribute tongue load to all towing vehicle and trailer wheels. Required for certain Class III and all Class IV applications (see the chart on following page).

- Weight-distributing hitch platforms are welded or bolted to the vehicle frame. Bolt-on types are recommended because they can be removed
- A properly installed bolt-on weight-distributing hitch platform will not weaken the vehicle or underbody as heat of welding might
- Equalizing arms are connected from the hitch to the trailer's A-frame. They can be adjusted for best towing performance. Lengths of chain are pulled up and tightened to bend spring bars upward, which lifts some of the weight from the rear wheels and transfers weight to the other wheels of the vehicle and trailer



Gooseneck Hitch

A gooseneck hitch attaches in the truck bed using custom or universal rails. This hitch style provides great stability and is suitable for heavier loads, since the weight of the tongue rests directly on the truck bed over the rear axles. Goosenecks are commonly used for horse and other agricultural trailers. Other features include:

- Tight turning radius
- "Fold down" and "install under bed" models provide unobstructed bed area for carrying cargo
- Maximum weight capacity of 25,000 – 30,000 lbs.
- Attachment rails require no welding (sold separately)



Metric Conversion – To obtain information in kilograms, multiply pounds by .45; to obtain information in kilometers, multiply miles by 1.6.