

Driver

You are responsible for your vehicle on the road. This means you must be sure of the safety and roadworthiness of both the tractor unit and the trailer.

Depending on the policy of the loading site, you may or may not be required to witness the loading of the trailer. If it is necessary for you to witness vehicle loading, this should be from a safe position, away from vehicle movements. You should, in any case, check the load when loading has been completed. Check that:

- The load is placed against the headboard if possible or, if there is a gap, that an intermediate bulkhead is fitted or blocking or dunnage is used to fill the gap to prevent the load sliding forward;
- The load should be loaded so its weight is distributed evenly across the trailer; If the load is stacked, or if you are driving a double-deck trailer, the heaviest items should be at the bottom with the lighter items at the top;
- The load should be secured to prevent it sliding or toppling. The curtain of a curtain-sided vehicle is not normally strong enough to secure the load;
- If the trailer is to be transported by sea the load may require extra securing;
- Load restraints such as bars, chains and straps should be in good condition;

You should be aware of any particular conditions at the delivery site/s you are travelling to, such as restricted access or a sloping site.

On a curtain-sided trailer it may be obvious that a load has shifted because a bulge in the curtain can be seen but on box-sided vehicles it may not be as obvious. If you become aware that the load has shifted in transit pull up in a safe place and, if possible, contact your fleet manager for advice. Do not open the curtain on the side with the bulge.

If you are close to either the site you departed from or your destination, you or your fleet manager may decide it is safer for you to continue your journey at low speed so that the load can be unloaded safely. If the shifted load is significantly affecting the stability of the vehicle or your control of it you should not continue.

Accessing the trailer should be carried out with caution if the load has shifted. On a curtain-sided trailer consider opening the curtain on the opposite side or using the rear doors.

Always report load shifts to your manager, even if no one is injured, so that remedial action can be taken to prevent further problems.