



MISSION READY TRANSPORT

USDOT 4552953 • MC 1808432 • TxDMV 010313964C • missionreadyrv.com • Office (512) 593-1673

RV PRE-TRANSPORT INSPECTION CHECKLIST • OWNER'S GUIDE

v1.5

This guide walks you through checking your travel trailer or fifth wheel **before** your scheduled transport date, in plain language and assuming no experience with RV running gear. Most units are perfectly ready to go — but tires, wheel bearings, brakes, and lights are the things that cause roadside trouble, and they are far easier to sort out now than on pickup day.

What Mission Ready Transport does regardless. Before your unit is towed, our driver performs a full commercial pre-trip safety inspection and a road-test of the trailer brakes and breakaway. This handout does not replace that inspection — it helps you find and fix problems early. If a unit has a condition that makes it unsafe to tow, we cannot transport it until it is corrected, which can mean a delay or a re-trip charge. A few minutes with this list protects your RV and keeps your move on schedule.

CHECK THIS FIRST — LICENSE PLATE & REGISTRATION

Your RV must show a **current, valid license plate with unexpired registration** to travel. This is the item most likely to stop a pickup and the hardest to fix at the last minute — so check it today, not on transport day.

- ☐ A license plate is fitted to the trailer, matches your registration, and the sticker/tag is not expired
Some states issue permanent trailer plates; others require annual renewal. Check the expiration.
- ☐ The registration document (or a clear photo of it) is available to give the driver at pickup
- ☐ If the plate is missing or expired, you have told us with as much notice as possible

Expired or missing plate? For **Texas-registered** units only, the driver can obtain a **72-hour temporary permit for an added \$30**, but this needs **advance notice** — tell us as soon as you know. Units registered outside Texas, or moves that need longer than 72 hours of coverage, must have valid registration in place before pickup.

CHECK THIS FIRST — TIRE AGE & CONDITION

Trailer tires fail from **age** more than from worn tread — and a blowout at highway speed is the most common serious problem on a tow. It is also almost entirely preventable. Check this today, alongside the plate.

- ☐ The **DOT date code** on every tire's sidewall has been read — the last four digits are the build week and year ("3219" = week 32 of 2019)
Full detail, including the quarter tread test, is in Section 1.
- ☐ Any tire **more than 6 years old** (Mission Ready Transport's maximum, regardless of remaining tread), or showing sidewall cracks, dry rot, or bulges, should be replaced before transport
- ☐ Every tire, including the spare, is aired to the **cold pressure printed on its sidewall**

Not sure about your tires? Tell us with as much notice as possible — a set of trailer tires is not something to source on transport day.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

- ☐ Walk around your unit with this checklist a few days before pickup — not the morning of.
- ☐ Tick each box you can confirm. Leave anything you're unsure about blank and note it at the end.
- ☐ Call or text the driver at **(512) 289-0216** with any questions before your transport date.
- ☐ This sheet is yours to keep. You don't submit it — just bring the noted items to the driver's attention at pickup.

HAVE THESE READY FOR THE DRIVER AT PICKUP

- › Every key: entry door, storage compartments, wheel-lock key, hitch lock
- › Current vehicle registration document (or a clear photo of it)
- › Any service records you have for wheel bearings, brakes, tires, or suspension work
- › Wheel nut torque values from your owner's manual
- › A clear path to hitch up — vehicle moved, slides and awnings already in, chocks ready to pull

Work safely. Do this on firm, level ground with the wheels chocked. Never get under a trailer that is held up only by its stabilizer jacks or tongue jack — those are not designed to hold a person's safety. If a check requires lifting a wheel off the ground, have a tire shop or RV service center do it.

1 TIRES

Why it matters: trailer tires fail from **age and low air pressure** far more often than from worn-out tread. A tire that lets go at highway speed can tear off underbelly panels, wiring, plumbing, and bodywork before the rig even stops. Tires are the single most common cause of RV transport delays.

- ☐ **Every tire — including the spare — inflated to the cold pressure printed on the tire's sidewall**
Check before driving anywhere. Trailer ("ST") tires almost always run at that maximum number, not a lower one. An under-inflated trailer tire overheats and fails.
- ☐ **Tread worn evenly and still has usable depth**
Quarter test: stand a quarter in the tread groove with Washington's head pointing down. If the tread doesn't reach the top of his head, you're at about 4/32 inch or less — the tire should be replaced before transport.
- ☐ **No sidewall cracking or "dry rot"**
Look for a web of fine cracks in the rubber, especially in the sidewall and between tread blocks. Common on tires that sit in the sun.
- ☐ **No bulges, blisters, or bald flat spots**
A bulge means the internal belts have broken — that tire can blow at any moment and should be replaced before transport.

- ☐ **Check the tire's age with the DOT code**
Find "DOT" on the sidewall followed by numbers. The last 4 digits are the build date: "3219" = week 32 of 2019. Mission Ready Transport uses a **6-year maximum** for trailer tire age, regardless of how much tread is left — older tires should be replaced before transport. Tell us if yours are close.
- ☐ **Valve stems and caps present; no slow leaks**
A tire noticeably lower than its partner on the same side has a leak. Air it up and see if it holds overnight.
- ☐ **Back of the wheel and tire is dry**
Grease or dark oily film sprayed on the inside of the wheel points to a leaking bearing seal — see Section 3.
- ☐ **Spare tire is present, inflated, and its carrier/winch is secure**
A spare hanging under the rear that isn't cranked up tight can drag or drop.



Dry rot / sidewall cracking — should be replaced



Bulge / blister — belts broken, should be replaced



Where an old or flat-run tire ends up

2 WHEELS & LUG NUTS

Why it matters: the lug nuts that hold each wheel on can work loose over time — especially if that wheel has been off recently for a tire or brake job. "Torque" simply means tightened to a specific firmness with the right tool. Over-tightening with an impact wrench can actually stretch and weaken the studs, so more is not better.

- ☐ Count the lug nuts — every one present on every wheel
A missing nut throws extra load onto the rest and they let go one by one.
- ☐ No nut sitting loose or proud of the others; no rust streak running down from a nut
A little "trail" of rust below a nut means it has been moving.
- ☐ No cracks in the wheel around the bolt holes or at the rim edge; wheel not bent
- ☐ Steel wheels not heavily rusted or flaking; aluminum wheels not corroded white around the studs
- ☐ If any wheel has been off in the last ~500 miles (tire repair, bearings, brakes), have it re-torqued to spec
Use a calibrated torque wrench set to the value in your owner's manual, in a star/criss-cross pattern.

No torque wrench? No problem. Just tell the driver at pickup — he carries a calibrated torque wrench and will check and torque every wheel to the manufacturer's specification before towing. The one thing we need from you: let us know if a wheel has recently been removed, so he checks that one first.

3 HUBS, BEARINGS & AXLES

Why it matters: inside each hub, the wheel spins on **bearings** packed with grease. If the grease runs low or a seal leaks, the bearing overheats, and a seized bearing is the classic trailer breakdown — it can lock a wheel or snap the spindle. The **axle** is the beam the hubs bolt to.

- ☐ Look behind each wheel: no grease, no dark oily streaks on the wheel, tire, brake backing plate, or ground
Any of that means a seal is leaking and the bearing needs to be serviced before the unit moves.
- ☐ If your hubs have clear oil-bath caps, the oil is up to the fill line and not milky, foamy, or empty
- ☐ When were the bearings last cleaned and repacked?
Typical interval is every 12 months or ~12,000 miles. Have the receipt or the date ready for the driver.
- ☐ Wheels don't wobble
If you can safely get a wheel off the ground (or ask a shop): grab it at 12 and 6 o'clock and rock it. A clunk or noticeable play means a loose or worn bearing.
- ☐ Axles look straight and the tires stand vertical
Sight down each side. Tires tilted in or out at the top, or a "crab walk" where the rear axle is cocked, points to a bent axle from a curb hit or overload.
- ☐ No uneven tire wear (worn on one edge only) — a sign of axle or alignment trouble

Mission Ready Transport checks this too. Our driver will feel each hub for heat at the first stops and watch for bearing noise. You can't fully judge a bearing's insides from outside — what helps us most is your **service records** and a heads-up on any hub that has run hot or noisy.

4 SUSPENSION

Why it matters: the suspension is the set of **leaf springs** and linkages between the axles and the frame. On tandem and triple-axle trailers these parts wear and crack, and a broken spring or a worn-through shackle can drop a corner of the RV down onto the tire.

- ☐ Leaf springs (the curved stacks of steel strips above each axle) are not cracked, collapsed flat, or missing a leaf
- ☐ On multi-axle units, the **equalizer** (the bar linking the front and rear springs on each side) is in place and its bolt holes are round, not egg-shaped from wear
- ☐ Shackle links and bolts are present and snug — no shiny worn spots, no sloppy side-to-side play
- ☐ U-bolts (the U-shaped clamps holding the axle to the spring) are tight and not rusted thin
- ☐ The trailer sits level side-to-side — both sides at the same height, no lean
- ☐ Air or independent suspension (if fitted): no leaks, holds ride height overnight, no cracked bags

5 BRAKES & THE BREAKAWAY SYSTEM

Why it matters: your trailer has its own brakes on the axles, operated by the tow vehicle. The **breakaway** is a safety device: a thin cable clips to the tow vehicle, and if the trailer ever comes off the hitch, the cable pulls a pin from a switch on the A-frame and the trailer's brakes are applied hard to stop it. On almost all trailers the power to do that comes from the **RV's own battery** — the same house/coach battery covered in Section 6. If that battery is flat, disconnected, or switched off, **the breakaway cannot stop the trailer**. A few units have a small separate battery on the A-frame instead; if yours does, it must hold a charge.

- ☐ The breakaway switch — a small plastic box on the A-frame near the coupler with a pull-pin on a cable — is mounted solidly and the pin is fully seated
Not half pulled-out. If the pin or cable is missing, tell us.
- ☐ The breakaway cable is intact — not frayed, kinked, or rusted stiff — and long enough to reach the tow vehicle
- ☐ The battery that feeds the breakaway is charged and connected (see Section 6). If your unit has a separate A-frame breakaway battery, confirm it holds a charge
- ☐ The 7-pin trailer plug is clean — no bent, green, or corroded pins — and its cover closes
- ☐ Wiring along the frame is clipped up, not hanging down, dragging, or rubbed bare
- ☐ If you know it: brake magnets and shoes serviced within the last ~12 months / 12,000 miles — have the record ready
- ☐ After your last tow: nothing was dragging, no burning smell, wheels were not unusually hot

You don't need to test the brakes yourself. The driver tests trailer braking and the breakaway from the tow vehicle before leaving. Your job is to confirm the **trailer battery is charged and connected** (Section 6) and that the breakaway parts — switch, pin, cable, plug — are all there and sound.

6 HOUSE / COACH BATTERY

Why it matters: this is the RV's main 12-volt battery (or bank). It does **two** jobs in transit: it needs to be secured and corrosion-free so it isn't a fire risk on a long haul, and — on almost all trailers — **it is the battery the breakaway brakes rely on** (Section 5). So for transport it must be charged, connected, and left switched on.

- ☐ Battery is clamped or strapped down in its tray and cannot lift, tip, or slide
- ☐ Cable connections are tight and clean — no thick white or blue-green corrosion crust
- ☐ Battery box lid or compartment door latches closed
- ☐ Case is not cracked or swollen; no rotten-egg smell; flooded batteries not leaking
- ☐ Battery is charged
With a multimeter, resting (not charging, no big loads): a 12-volt lead-acid battery should read about **12.7 V or higher** when full. ~12.4 V is about three-quarters, ~12.2 V is half, and 12.0 V or below needs charging before transport. Lithium (LiFePO4) batteries sit near 13.2–13.4 V full and hold steady, so voltage tells you less — just be sure it isn't switched off or nearly empty.
- ☐ **Battery disconnect switch left ON** (battery connected)
Many RVs have a disconnect — a rotary knob or a switch near the battery or the entry door — that cuts the battery off from the coach to stop it draining in storage. On most trailers the breakaway brakes run through that same circuit, so if it's OFF the breakaway won't work. Leave it ON for transport unless you know your breakaway is wired straight to the battery. The driver will confirm at pickup.
- ☐ Tell us now if the battery is dead, disconnected, or has been removed — we may need to bring one to power the breakaway

7 LIGHTS & REFLECTORS

Why it matters: to be legally and safely towed on the highway, all of the RV's exterior lights and reflectors must work — running lights, brake lights, turn signals, side markers, and the clearance lights up high. A trailer with a dead lighting circuit cannot go, especially after dark.

To check lights you need the trailer plugged into a tow vehicle and a helper working the pedal and signals — or an inexpensive 7-pin tester from any auto parts store. If you can't do this, tell us and the driver will check at pickup.

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Left and right brake lights | ☐ All reflectors present and not cracked out — red at the rear, amber on the sides |
| ☐ Left and right turn signals | ☐ Reflective tape (red-and-white striped) still stuck down, not peeling off in strips |
| ☐ Tail / running lights (the dim glow when headlights are on) | ☐ Light lenses not broken or missing
A cracked lens lets water in and the light fails soon after — and often fails inspection now. |
| ☐ Side marker lights — amber toward the front, red toward the rear | ☐ Replace any burned-out bulbs before pickup
The driver does not carry spare bulbs. A light still out at pickup that isn't a quick fix can delay the move. If a whole circuit is dead (all lights out on one side), have it repaired before your transport date. |
| ☐ Clearance / identification lights (the row of small lights high on the back, and up front on tall units) | |
| ☐ License plate light | |

8 SLIDE-OUTS, AWNINGS & ANTENNAS

Why it matters: anything that extends past the body — slide rooms, awnings, TV antennas, satellite domes, tilt-up solar panels — has to be **fully in and locked**. Highway wind will shred an awning or rip off an antenna, and a slide that creeps open in transit can strike a bridge or another vehicle.

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Every slide-out fully retracted and sitting flush; travel locks/braces installed if your unit has them | ☐ Over-the-air TV antenna cranked all the way down / the "batwing" folded flat |
| ☐ Slide seals sit flat, not folded under or torn; nothing inside is blocking a slide from closing all the way | ☐ Satellite dome or dish stowed; portable tripod dishes packed inside |
| ☐ Awnings rolled up tight with the travel latch or lock engaged — no straps or fabric left to flap | ☐ Roof-mounted solar panels lying flat (not tilted up on their props) |
| ☐ Slide-topper awnings (the small ones over each slide) rolled up and secure | ☐ Electric and manual steps retracted / folded; entry step in |

9 DOORS, WINDOWS & EXTERIOR

Why it matters: a compartment door or window that pops open at 65 mph tears its hinges off and can hit traffic behind you. The roof is where wind gets under loose material.

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ All exterior storage / compartment doors closed, latched, and locked | ☐ Fifth wheel / gooseneck: front window covers and front cap trim secure |
| ☐ Main entry door locked; screen/security door latched so it can't swing open | ☐ Roof looks sound from the ground or a ladder — no lifting seams, loose flashing, or peeling membrane a gust could catch
Tell us if you see any — don't try to re-seal it yourself the day before. |
| ☐ Windows and roof vents closed and latched; skylight covers intact | ☐ Rear ladder bolted tight top and bottom |
| ☐ Fuel fill door, outside kitchen, and outside shower doors latched | ☐ Nothing left on the roof — no chairs, tools, or loose vent lids |

10 WEIGHT, TANKS & LOOSE ITEMS

Why it matters: water and loose cargo shift in transit, changing how the unit tows and overloading tires and axles. Getting the weight down and the inside secured makes the whole trip safer.

- ☐ Fresh, grey, and black water tanks emptied
Water weighs about 8 lb per gallon — a full fresh tank can be 300 lb sloshing around. Empty tanks also can't freeze on a winter move.
- ☐ Water heater drained if the route may see freezing temperatures
- ☐ All dump valves closed and capped; sewer hose and city-water hose stowed
- ☐ **LP gas turned OFF at the tank valve(s);** regulator cover on. We transport with the gas off.
- ☐ Refrigerator and freezer doors latched shut (travel latch or tape)
- ☐ Heavy loose items inside secured or removed — toolboxes, cast iron, the TV on its swing mount, anything on a countertop or open shelf
- ☐ Cabinet and closet doors latched; drawers can't slide open
- ☐ TV on a lift lowered and locked down
- ☐ Tongue jack / landing gear / stabilizer jacks all raise, lower, and hold
The driver has to raise them to hitch. If a power jack is dead, leave the manual crank handle where he can find it.
- ☐ Bumper pull: coupler latch works, safety-chain hooks not bent or seized, no heavy rust on the A-frame

Personal property. Our cargo coverage is on the RV as a unit — the personal belongings inside it are not covered. Please remove anything valuable or irreplaceable before transport: electronics, jewelry, cash, important documents, firearms, and medications.

11 FIFTH WHEEL & GOOSENECK HITCH CONNECTION

Why it matters: our truck uses a standard fifth-wheel / gooseneck hitch. Anything on your pin box that isn't a plain kingpin can jam or damage it. Bumper-pull trailers can skip this section.

- ☐ Kingpin is straight — no bends, deep gouges, or heavy wear — and the plate around it is clean, with no rust flakes or debris
- ☐ Pin box bolts are tight, with no cracked welds or cracks in the pin box plate
- ☐ **Nothing is attached to the pin box that isn't part of a standard kingpin — no wedge, slider, capture plate, or brand-specific hitch adapter.**
Remove before pickup — they are built for one brand of hitch and can stop the kingpin turning freely. Not sure what's on yours? Send us a photo of the pin box from underneath.
- ☐ Gooseneck trailer: coupler is not cracked, the latch works, and the surface it sits on is clean and undamaged
- ☐ I've told Mission Ready Transport which hitch my trailer has — kingpin (fifth wheel) or gooseneck coupler
If it isn't what was on your quote request, please let us know.
- ☐ **Andersen-style (ball-to-kingpin) hitch? Tell us before pickup.**
We can't tow these. Tell us early so we can cancel your move, rather than finding out on pickup day.

BEFORE PICKUP — OWNER SIGN-OFF

Items I'm not sure about or want the driver to look at:

I have walked around my unit and completed this pre-inspection to the best of my ability. I understand that Mission Ready Transport will perform its own safety inspection before towing and may decline to transport a unit with a condition that makes it unsafe to move until that condition is corrected.

Owner signature

Date

Unit (year / make / model)