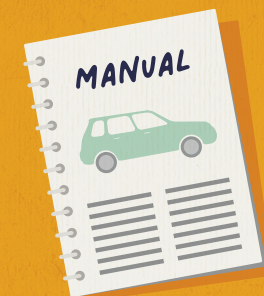


GOOD ADVICE

Before purchasing a boat, it's critical you give careful consideration to your vehicle's towing mass and construction. The towing mass (or towing rating) is found under the towing section in the vehicle manufacturer's handbook. The rating will include a trailer weight capacity and a trailer ball weight capacity, both of which must not be exceeded. Electronic brakes are most commonly used on trailers over 750kg and are legally required on all trailers where the GTM is more than 2000kg.



GIVE A 
Ship
LEARN TO PACK AND
TOW YOUR BOAT



TRAILER CHECKS AND MAINTENANCE

While your boat is in the water, take a moment to do the following:

- Check trailer frame (bends, joints and springs) for wear, cracks, and damage.
- Inspect the rollers to make sure they are rotating freely.
- Tyres should have plenty of tread and be in good condition.
- Ensure wheel nuts are properly tightened and check tyre pressures.
- Wheel bearings should be in good condition and well-packed with lubricating grease. Signs of wear or corrosion means they should be replaced.
- Check condition of towing hitch and safety chains.
- Check that the towing ball on the car hitch is secure.
- Check the winch cable or strap and the safety chain.
- If the trailer has a braking system, ensure it's in working order and top up fluids if required.
- Check the lights and view them for correct operation, including the brake lights and indicators.
- Flush trailer brakes with fresh water to prevent rusting brake rotors.

FOR MORE INFORMATION RSC.WA.GOV.AU/TOWING/BOAT

WEIGHT DISTRIBUTION AND LOADING

The best way to avoid your boat developing its sea legs while being towed is by correctly loading it. This means getting the centre of gravity as low as possible with weight evenly distributed.

As well as bow-to-stern weight distribution, you should also consider starboard-to-port load distribution.

Some vessels have side-mounted fuel and/or water tanks, so keep this in mind when filling them! Another way to keep your boat well-balanced is by storing any equipment at floor level – so make sure those scuba tanks (or priceless seafloor treasures) are on the floor inside the cabin between the bunks and NEVER on the rear bench seat.

A balanced trailer won't just provide the best on road handling – it'll also prolong the life of your trailer's tyres!



Department of Transport



ROAD SAFETY COMMISSION

THANK YOU FOR
GIVING A SHIP



BOATING SAFETY STARTS BEFORE YOU LEAVE HOME WITH THE BOAT IN TOW. REGARDLESS OF HOW LONG OR SHORT YOUR TRIP IS, TOWING A BOAT REQUIRES PREPARATION, PRACTICE, AND VIGILANCE (ESPECIALLY IF YOU WANT TO AVOID ENDING UP IN A "BOATING FAILS" VIDEO ON SOCIAL MEDIA!)

Naturally, the information in this guide is general and should not be used as a substitute for professional advice or training – which we very much recommend!

KNOW BEFORE YOU TOW

NAIL THE BASICS – Check that your mirrors give a clear view behind on both sides of the trailer and that your boat is properly secured to the trailer.

FOLLOWING DISTANCE – Remember year 10 physics? Because of the added weight of a boat and trailer, you'll need more road space to stop (that's inertia!) and keep at least 60 metres between you and heavy vehicles or other towing vehicles, unless overtaking.

OVERTAKING / BEING OVERTAKEN – If it's safe to overtake, give yourself plenty of room to do so. If being overtaken, pay attention as buffeting can cause your trailer to sway.

SWAY (NOT THE 1999 SMASH HIT) – Sudden lane changes and swerving aren't good at the best of times – and they're worse if your trailer begins to sway. So keep the vehicle straight, avoid erratic movements and if sway continues, pull over where safe and consider re-adjusting your load. Maintain a reduced speed until your equipment has been assessed by a professional.

DON'T BE THAT GUY – If a queue of three or more vehicles develops behind you, no biggie! Just pull over when safe and allow them to pass.

CABIN SAFETY – It should go without saying that people are never permitted to ride in the boat while it's being towed.

DON'T FIGHT FATIGUE – Fighting fatigue is a losing battle. Instead, make sure you're well rested, take regular breaks, share the driving and drink plenty of water.

DRIVE TO THE CONDITIONS – If it's windy, bumpy, wet or difficult to see, it's a good idea to travel 20 per cent slower than the speed limit and don't forget to increase your following distance.

ANIMALS ARE WILD – Animals don't care much for human laws, so slow down, allow time to brake and sound your horn. NEVER swerve around an animal at speed. And if it's an underwater animal, you've gone too far!

SPEED SMART –

Unless it's 1997 and you're a twin turbofan jet-powered car, you shouldn't be setting any land speed records. Your max speed is 100km/h – even when the signs say 110km/h, that's the law.

100

JUST LIKE THE BALLAST ON A SHIP, THE LOWER THE CENTRE OF GRAVITY, THE MORE STABLE YOUR TRAILER

Simply put, place most of the weight over the axles, followed by the front of the boat or trailer and finally the rear. Of course, there is much more to take into consideration such as securing loose items, and not exceeding the maximum load specified by the trailer manufacturer, so be sure to seek professional advice before hitting the road.

30 SECOND CHALLENGE

Your safety equipment isn't much good if you can't find it or quickly access it in an emergency. The 30 Second Challenge is an initiative from the Department of Transport to test your emergency response readiness while aboard a vessel. All you need is a stopwatch and a competitive attitude. Hit go on your stopwatch and see if you can successfully gather your flares and EPIRB, make a radio call and put on a lifejacket within 30 seconds. You're the skipper, you're responsible.

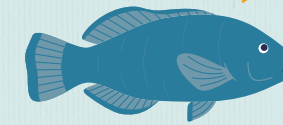
HEAVY ITEMS

Scuba tanks, 50L bottles of sunscreen and sunken treasure should be placed as low and centrally as possible. Keeping in mind you want the bulk of the weight over the centre axles.



MEDIUM ITEMS

Your wakeboard, Blue Gropo or esky full of snags should be stored low as possible and never on the rear bench seat.



LIGHTEST ITEMS

Fishing rods, life jackets, or your best friend who is a volleyball called 'Wilson', should also be kept low or securely inside available storage units.



GLOSSARY

ATM (Aggregate Trailer Mass)

The total laden weight of a trailer, including the tow ball mass and whatever you add as payload (e.g. water, gas, fishing gear, after-market accessories, etc). The ATM is specified by the trailer manufacturer and must not be exceeded.



TOW BALL DOWN WEIGHT

This is the weight the trailer places onto the towbar – it should never exceed the maximum values specified by the vehicle, towbar or trailer manufacturers.

GTM (Gross Trailer Mass)

The total permissible mass, which includes whatever you add as payload (e.g. water, gas, fishing gear) that can be supported by the wheels of a trailer. This does not include the mass supported by the tow ball or after-market accessories.

