

## Towing advice

Whenever you are towing a trailer, caravan, boat trailer or horse float, it is important to remember that your rates of acceleration and braking can be affected. Likewise, manoeuvres that may be straightforward in normal circumstances may be more challenging to undertake when you are towing a trailer.

### **Laws and rules covering towing in South Australia**

- ✓ In South Australia, a Class C licence only enables you to drive a vehicle with a total weight or GVM (Gross Vehicle Mass) of 4.5 tonnes or less. If you are driving a large 4WD with a GVM of more than 4.5 tonnes, a LR licence is required.
- ✓ Check the owner manual of your vehicle to see if the manufacturer lists a recommended speed for towing. If so, this guidance should always be followed.
- ✓ Your vehicle will respond differently when performing normal manoeuvres such as braking, accelerating and turning when you are towing a trailer. You should always take this into account in your driving.
- ✓ It is important to remember that you are driving a significantly longer and possibly wider vehicle when you are towing a trailer. It's especially important to bear this in mind when turning, as a wider path will be required.
- ✓ Different states have different maximum speed limits in place for towing a trailer, horse float, boat trailer or caravan, so if you're travelling interstate make sure you are familiar with local restrictions before you cross the border.
- ✓ Your vehicle and trailer can start to sway when being overtaken. Therefore, if you are being overtaken, particularly by a large or heavy vehicle, take care to give them as much room as possible. If the opportunity presents itself, use slow vehicle lanes and turnouts that make it easier for faster vehicles to overtake.
- ✓ When you're towing a trailer over long distances, it is important to ensure that you take appropriate rest breaks. It is advisable to stop driving and take a break of at least 20 minutes after every 2 hours behind the wheel.

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## Make sure you're towing safely

- ✓ It is important to ensure that the total weight of a loaded trailer that you intend to tow is within your vehicle's capabilities. This can usually be found in the owner manual, while your towbar should have a plaque where the maximum weight is specified.
- ✓ It is essential that any trailer you tow is both roadworthy and safe. This means, for instance, that tail lights, brake lights and indicators are all in good working order.
- ✓ Safety chains are also an essential part of being able to tow in safety. Any trailer being towed that weighs less than 2.5 tonnes requires one safety chain, while two chains are required on a trailer that weighs between 2.5 and 3.5 tonnes. It is also important that the D shackle that attaches the safety chain(s) to the towbar has an appropriate load rating.
- ✓ Likewise, take time before you tow to give your vehicle a once over to ensure that you are set up and prepared for any eventuality. For instance, check that your tyres are inflated to the correct pressure, your oil and coolant are at appropriate levels, and that you have a jack and a wheel brace in case you need to change a tyre.
- ✓ If you are towing a large trailer, caravan, car trailer, horse float or boat trailer, it is highly advisable to get extensions for your side mirrors so that you can see around your trailer.
- ✓ In South Australia, there are laws in place regarding the dimensions of any load being towed. The total width of a load cannot exceed 2.5 m and it cannot protrude more than 15 cm from the side of a trailer. Your vehicle and trailer cannot exceed a total of 19 m in length. If you have items that protrude more than 1.2 m from the rear of a trailer, they need to have a brightly coloured flag attached both day and night.
- ✓ When loading a trailer, it is advisable to place the heaviest items as low down in the trailer and as close to the axle(s) as possible.