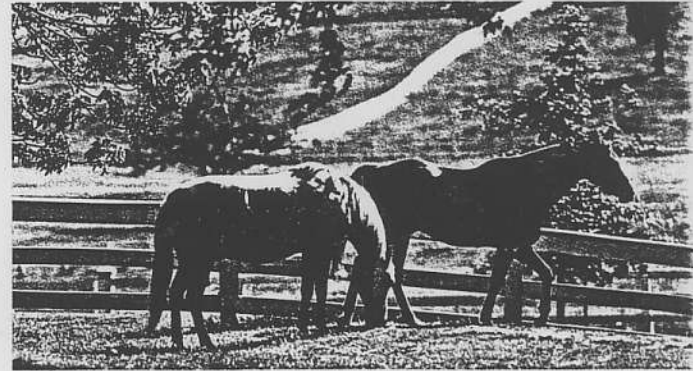


# Truck & Trailering Guide

Whether you will be transporting your horse down the road or across the country, you should know and do a number of things in order to make the trip safe and rewarding. Trouble free travel starts with good planning, and this guidebook has been designed to help you do that. Proper selection and maintenance of vehicles, routine safety checks, and skilled horse-traveling techniques will minimize the risks, and keep your precious cargo — horse and human alike — happy, healthy and comfortable as you begin your next adventure.

## Maintaining Horse Health

Even in the best of circumstances, trailering can be stressful for horses. Close confinement, constant movement, disruptions in eating, drinking and bowel habits, the excitement of different sights, sounds and smells, fluctuations in heat and cold, and



environmental stressors such as exhaust, dust and ammonia fumes can put your horse at greater risk for illness and injury, especially:

- Respiratory disease
- Colic
- Founder
- Traumatic injury

### Preparing Your Horse for Travel

It's important to prepare your horse physically and mentally before traveling an extended distance. Here are some things you can do:

- Train your horse to load, unload and stand quietly in the trailer. Allow enough time for the horse to become familiar with and comfortable in the confined space.
- Consult your veterinarian to make sure all vaccinations are up-to-date, especially tetanus, and those that ward off respiratory diseases such as influenza and rhinopneumonitis. Vaccines should be given 2-3 weeks prior to travel to assure effectiveness.
- Acquire and carry with you a current health certificate, including a negative Equine Infectious Anemia "Coggins" test, (required by most states). Become familiar with any travel restrictions imposed by state health agencies due to current disease outbreaks.
- Determine what ownership, registration and/or power of attorney documentation you will need for the states and/or events you are attending.

- Learn to properly wrap your horse's legs or apply shipping boots. Provide time for the horse to adjust to wearing them to prevent kicking due to the unfamiliar feel of the wraps.
- If you will be using a head bumper, allow the horse time to adjust to wearing it.
- Wrap the tail to prevent hair loss. Do not wrap it too tightly, and never use elastic or vet wrap as it could constrict blood flow. Remove the wrap immediately upon arrival.
- Adjust vents and windows to be sure there is adequate ventilation throughout the trailer.
- If you are traveling in hot weather, ask your veterinarian for his or her recommendation regarding the administration of electrolytes. Used appropriately, electrolytes can help maintain vital body chemistry and fluid balance.

- Prevent dehydration and reduce the risk of impaction colic by encouraging your horse to drink. Offer water at every rest stop and, if necessary, camouflage the taste of strange water. Begin using the flavoring at home a week before departure, so the horse has time to adjust to the taste.
- In hot weather, avoid traveling during the heat of the day as

the trailer may be 10-15 degrees warmer than the outside air.

- Blanket horses during extremely cold weather to keep them comfortable while maintaining adequate ventilation.
- Use rubber mats and ample bedding, such as wood shavings or straw, to cushion the ride on long trips. Bedding will also absorb the moisture from urine and manure and encourage your horse to urinate.
- Stop and let the horses rest for 20-30 minutes for every 3-4 hours of road time. You may want to consider unloading the horses during those stops, especially if the horses are reluctant or unable to stretch out to urinate. However, use good judgment. If unloading the horses will add to the stress or increase the chance of injury, it may be best to keep them loaded.
- Keep your feeding schedule as consistent as possible. Avoid any major dietary changes.

- Providing clean, dust-free hay during transit can help keep the horse content and occupied. Good quality grass hay is usually safe to feed free-choice. However, do not supply hay if it is likely to blow around inside the trailer and cause eye and respiratory problems.
- Upon arrival, check your horse carefully. Look for signs of lameness, injury or illness.
- Carefully monitor your horse for several days after trailering. Be sure it is eating, drinking, passing manure, and behaving normally.



- Before leaving, contact your **American Association of Equine Practitioners (AAEP)** member veterinarian for health care information and recommendation of a qualified equine veterinarian at your destination.

Or, contact The Equine Connection<sup>®</sup>, a national AAEP locator service from **Bayer Corporation** and the AAEP. Just dial 1-800-GET-A-DVM (1-800-438-2386), Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-6 p.m. and Saturday 10 a.m.-2 p.m. (Central Time) for the names of participating AAEP members closest to you. Remember, this is not an emergency number.

## First Aid Kit

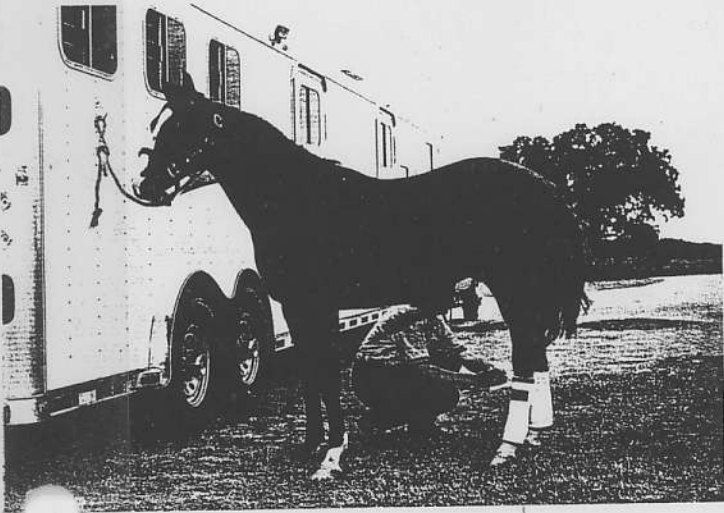
Your travel gear should include a well-stocked first aid kit. Consult with your equine veterinarian regarding supplies and any medications that should be included. Learn how to administer them properly. A basic kit may include:

- |                          |                       |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| • Thermometer            | • Stethoscope         |
| • Cleansing Solution     | • Antiseptic Ointment |
| • Non-Stick Wound Pads   | • Sterile Gauze       |
| • Adhesive Tape          | • Elastic Wrap        |
| • Quilts or Sheet Cotton | • Scissors            |
| • Hoof Pick              | • Fencing Tool        |
| • Compact Twitch         | • Flashlight          |
| • Knife                  | • Rope                |

## Protecting Head & Legs

Head and leg wounds are the most common trailering injuries, so it's important to take special precautions to prevent them. Preferably wrap all four legs, but always wrap the hind legs as they tend to be the most vulnerable to injury. You may have your own wrapping preferences based on your horse's use or event.

Leg wraps or shipping boots should extend from the knees and hocks down to cover the coronet band and heel bulbs. For horses inclined to kick or climb the walls, knee and hock wraps may also be needed.

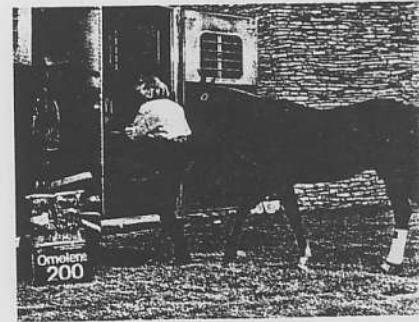


Track bandages generally provide more leg support than standard shipping boots. However, they should always be applied over padding, using firm, even wraps. Be careful not to apply them so snugly as to constrict blood flow to the limbs. It may also be necessary to use bell boots with the leg wraps to fully protect the coronet band and heel bulbs.

Halters equipped with head bumpers can be used to reduce head injuries, especially if horses are inclined to raise their heads when entering or exiting the trailer. Leather halters are generally safer than nylon halters for use during travel. If a horse should fall, a leather halter will likely break, freeing the horse so it does not strangle. Quick-release, or "panic" snaps, are another good safety precaution.

## Safe Loading Practices

- Double check that the trailer is hitched securely to the towing vehicle.
- Park on a smooth, level surface with good footing.
- Check the interior to make sure that it is clean and free of any rough edges, protruding objects, and insect nests.
- Remove any old feed from mangers.
- Clean the floor mats, and check beneath them to make sure the floorboards are sound and dry.
- Check that doors and loading ramps are fully open and properly secured so they will not shift, move, or interfere with loading.
- Make sure that all obstacles and distractions, including dogs and children, are out of the way.
- Provide ample interior lighting so the horse does not have to step into a dark enclosure.
- Utilize safety features such as escape doors or moveable panels so the handler is not in harm's way when loading a horse. (Never enter a trailer in front of a horse unless there is an escape route.)
- To prevent conflicts among horses, load stallions in front, mares and geldings behind.
- Load horses by size and age, with the larger horses to the front, smaller horses to the rear.
- Once a horse is safely loaded, secure the butt bar, close the door or partition, and then tie the horse's head.
- Always use the butt bar or chain as a safety precaution in case the trailer door should come open.
- Always tie using a rope or strap with an easy-release safety snap (sometimes called a "panic" snap), or use a quick-release knot.
- Allow just enough slack in the tie rope so the horse can move its head and neck from side to side to maintain balance but cannot turn its head to the rear.
- Be sure to untie the horse's head before releasing the butt bar or opening the door.



# Trailer Considerations

There are two basic types of horse trailers: bumper pull and gooseneck. In a gooseneck trailer, the front section extends over the truck bed and hitches to the vehicle directly above the truck's rear axles. This lends stability during towing and reduces the turning radius of the rig, making turning and backing easier. The space over the truck bed is ideal for storage or sleeping quarters.

Safety and comfort should be paramount when evaluating any trailer. Sooner Trailer, a leading trailer manufacturer, offers a wide range of ready made models or can custom-build to your specifications.

When selecting a trailer, features to consider are:

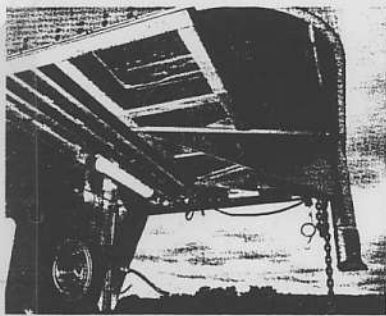
## Trailer Dimensions

The trailer should be of adequate height, width and length for the horse to enter, exit and stand comfortably. Allow at least 10 inches of clearance above the horse's head when it is standing at rest, and at least 3-6 inches side to side and front to back so the horse is not in constant contact with the walls, partitions and butt bar.

## Trailer Weight

Because your vehicle needs to pull the trailer and not vice versa, trailer weight is always a concern. Materials and construction

will have a great bearing on trailer weight. Utilizing technology employed in the aircraft industry, manufacturers such as Sooner Trailer, are able to make all aluminum trailers that are safer, roomier, and more



fuel efficient to tow than comparably built steel trailers. Ask your Sooner Trailer Dealer if you have further questions.

## Floor Construction

Floor strength is one of the most critical trailer features. Top grade lumber or aluminum of sufficient thickness should be used. Proper maintenance and routine inspection are essential.

## Partitions & Leg Room

The horse must be able to spread its legs to balance through stops, starts and turns. Half partitions rather than full partitions between stalls generally provide more leg room. If kicking is a problem, soft lower dividers can be used. Movable partitions also allow mares and foals more room to travel together in comfort and safety.

## Hardware

All interior and exterior features such as lights, windows, latches, knobs, vents and hardware must be sturdy, smooth, protected and/or recessed, and absolutely "horse proof."

## Bumpers and Loading Ramps

To reduce the risk of leg injuries, trailers should have rubber rear bumpers and/or a well-designed loading ramp. Trailers which allow a horse to turn and walk out rather than back out also reduce the chance of injury.

## Quiet Ride

To reduce stress and fatigue, the trailer should be engineered to give a smooth, quiet ride. Insulated roofs and walls help reduce noise. A good suspension system will absorb much of the road concussion and vibration. Doors and windows should seal snugly. Nothing on the trailer should shake, rattle or whistle.

## Stall Configuration

There are several options for the way horses ride: forward facing, rear facing or at an angle. Research has shown that horses ride more comfortably when positioned diagonally rather than facing directly to the front. For this reason many new trailers offer slanted stalls.

## Doors & Windows

The size, shape and position of doors and windows play an important role in loading convenience, safety, light and ventilation. Entryways and emergency doors should be strategically placed and wide enough to accommodate horses or people. They should operate smoothly and close securely. Special feed windows make it easy to feed, water and provide extra ventilation to horses without entering the trailer.

## Carrying Capacity

Two-, three-, four- and six-horse trailers are the most common, although manufacturers like Sooner Trailer can customize the capacity to suit your needs. Also consider space requirements for tack, feed, storage, dressing room or living space.

## Is Your Vehicle Up to the Task?

Because you are pulling live, moving cargo, the demands placed on your vehicle will be far greater than if you were towing a comparably sized fixed load. To provide maximum stability, power, safety and control in the most demanding of situations, your truck and trailer must be compatible in terms of size, weight and towing class. Vehicles that are too light or too narrow, or don't have sufficient horsepower are a hazard on the road. When it comes to towing horses, it's always better to exceed the need.

There are many factors to consider when determining towing capabilities. Today's trucks are more luxurious and more versatile than ever. You can choose among two-wheel or four-wheel drive transmissions; standard, quad or club cabs; and single or dual rear wheels (commonly called a "dually"). Your local Dodge Truck Dealer can help you with exact specifications for each make and model based on your needs.

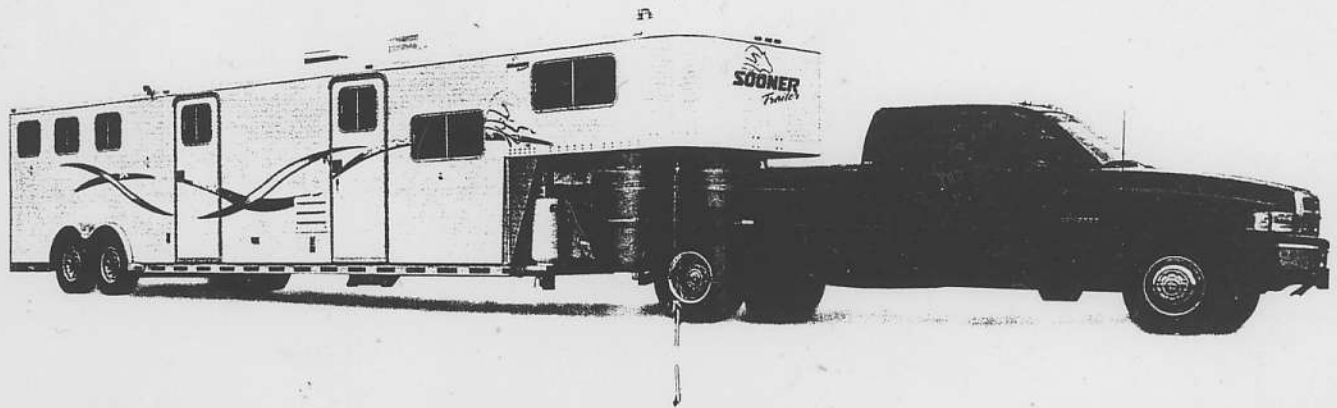
## Identifying Needs

Some things to think about before you invest are:

- Extent of Use
- Distances to be Traveled
- Number of Passengers, Horses & Cargo
- Temperatures, Climatic Conditions and Terrain
- How Often You Will Be Towing
- Road Conditions (gravel, highway, off-road)
- Future Requirements

## The Important Mechanics of Towing

To prevent damage to the truck or trailer and provide optimum towing capability for many years, special equipment is generally recommended for loads over 2,000 pounds — the case for nearly all horse trailering applications. Dodge's optional Heavy Duty Service and Trailer Tow Groups are equipped with enhanced engine and transmission cooling systems as well as a 750 amp battery, 136 amp alternator, heavy duty flashers, seven-lead wiring harness with fifth-wheel take-out, and a Class IV trailer hitch receiver. For hauling dynamic or shifting loads such as horses, the auxiliary rear suspension group and dual-rear wheels are highly recommended.



A checklist of features to consider when choosing your vehicle include:

- Horsepower
- Cooling Systems
- Suspension
- Power Train/Axle Ratios
- Tow Rating
- Gross Vehicle Weight Rating
- Torque Rating
- Electrical Systems
- Transmission
- Brakes
- Gross Axle Weight Rating
- Gross Combination Weight Rating (GCWR)

### Understanding Gross Combination Weight Rating

One of the most important figures to compute is the Gross Combination Weight (GCW) for your rig. In other words, you need to know how much your vehicle can safely handle. This number will include the total weight of your towing vehicle, passengers, equipment, trailer, hitch, horses, tack and any other cargo you have on board. To get an accurate figure, you will need to weigh your fully loaded trailer and vehicle on a commercial scale.

Your vehicle has been rated for its maximum Gross Combination Weight Rating (GCWR). To avoid overtaxing the mechanical abilities of your vehicle, which would put you at greater risk of an accident, your fully loaded rig must not exceed the truck's GCWR. (See sample calculation.) By hauling within the specified limits, you won't compromise your ability to accelerate, steer and stop with a trailer in tow—and you'll prolong the life of your vehicle.

### Truck/Trailer Compatibility Work Sheet

To determine whether a truck and trailer will work well together, it's essential to compute the Gross Combination Weight (GCW) and compare it to how the truck is rated (GCWR). To compute the GCW you will need to tally:

1. Truck Payload (weight of cargo including passengers)
2. Truck Curb Weight (weight of empty vehicle)
3. Loaded Trailer Weight (trailer plus all contents)
4. Subtract Tongue Weight
5. Compare total GCW to the tow vehicle's GCWR (rating)

\*It's also important to know the tow vehicle's rating for Maximum Trailer Weight and Tongue Weight.

### Example #1:

	Wt. in lbs
Two adults . . . . .	310
1 dog . . . . .	40
Personal items . . . . .	100
1 horse . . . . .	1,100
Tack, feed & supplies . . . . .	400
Sooner Two-Horse PC Plus . . . . .	3,896
Tongue Weight . . . . .	679
Dodge Dakota/ Regular Cab/4x2 5.2L V-8 /Automatic . . . . .	3,585
The total weight for this fully loaded rig is . . . . .	10,110
Subtract the tongue weight . . . . .	-679
Total Gross Combination Weight . . . . .	9,431
The GCWR for this truck is . . . . .	10,500 lbs
The Maximum Trailer Weight for this vehicle is . . . . .	6,900 lbs
This trailer carrying 1 horse, tack and accessories weighs approx. . . . .	5,396 lbs

### Example #2

	Wt. in lbs
3 Adults . . . . .	500
Personal items . . . . .	200
6 horses . . . . .	6,000
Tack, feed & supplies . . . . .	500
Sooner 6-Horse PC Plus . . . . .	5,460
Tongue Weight . . . . .	1,130
Dodge Ram 3500/Club Cab/4x2 Dual Rear Wheels, 8.0L Magnum V-10 Automatic . . . . .	5,710
The total weight for this fully loaded rig is . . . . .	18,500
Subtract the tongue weight . . . . .	-1,130
Total Gross Combination Weight . . . . .	17,370
The GCWR for this truck is . . . . .	19,000 lbs
The Maximum Trailer Weight for this vehicle is . . . . .	13,300 lbs
This trailer carrying 6 horses, tack & accessories weighs approx. . . . .	11,960 lbs

Chrysler Corporation requires that vehicles with Maximum Trailer Weight Ratings of 10,000 lbs. or greater be equipped with a fifth wheel hitch.

Tongue Weight Ratings, Axle Ratios, and Wheel Bases also play a significant role in a truck's suitability for specific towing needs. For answers to additional questions, see your local Dodge Truck Dealer. Ask for the complete "Magnum Towing" guide.

## Hitch Selection

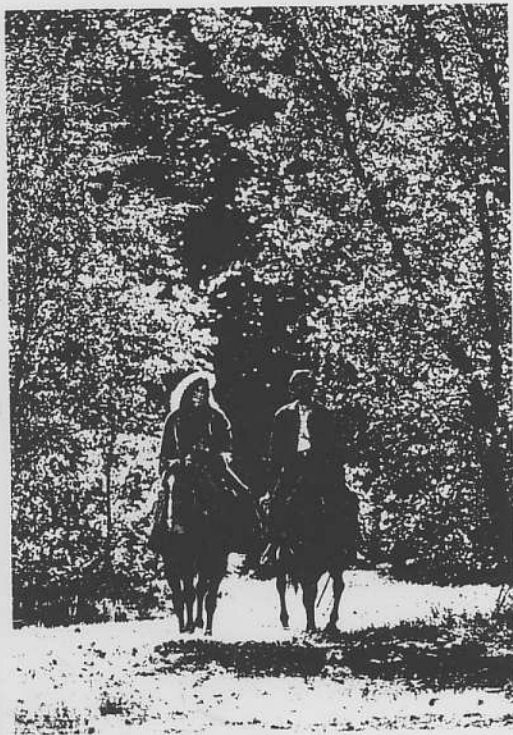
Selecting and installing the proper hitch is as important to safety as your choice of truck and trailer. Trailers are classified by weight which affects the type of hitch assembly required.

Hitches are rated for the loaded trailer and tongue weights.

While there are basically two types of trailers, bumper pull and gooseneck, there are 4 types of hitches:

- Weight Carrying
- Weight Distributing
- Fifth Wheel
- Gooseneck Ball

Your local Dodge Truck and Sooner Trailer Dealers can help you determine the safest hitch and accessories for your set-up.



## Be a Considerate Driver

Once your horse steps into the trailer, how quietly it rides will depend a lot on how you drive. Considerate driving will help reduce injuries and prevent horses from becoming reluctant, fearful loaders and haulers. Here are some tips.

- 1) Accelerate and brake slowly so your horse can adjust to the changes in speed.
- 2) Execute turns with special care to allow the horse to maintain its footing. Do not accelerate until the trailer has completely rounded the corner.
- 3) Be aware that you do not have as tight of a turning radius when pulling a trailer and accommodate it.
- 4) Allow for double or more the stopping distance when hauling a load.
- 5) Pass only on level terrain where you have a clear view of oncoming traffic. Allow extra distance for acceleration.
- 6) Even after routine maintenance, test drive your truck and trailer prior to hauling to make sure that everything is in proper working order.
- 7) If you are just learning how to tow a trailer, take time to practice without the horses. Use an empty parking lot to improve your backing and turning skills.
- 8) Never load or tie a horse to a trailer that is improperly hitched to a towing vehicle. Even a trailer with chocked wheels may not provide security if a horse becomes frightened.



## Safe Towing Checklist

- Check that all engine fluids are at the proper levels: brake fluid, transmission fluid, antifreeze/coolant; windshield washing solution, etc.
- Make sure the trailer hitch and all connections are properly secured every time you tow. Recheck them at every stop.
- Cross the safety chains under then over the trailer tongue with just enough slack to permit full turning. Should the trailer come unhitched, the chain will help support the tongue.
- Double check that the trailer brakes are working.
- Check that all the lights are working, including turn signals, brake lights and running lights.
- Adjust rearview and sideview mirrors for maximum visibility.
- Make sure the tires are in excellent condition and are properly inflated. Carry a jack, spare, tire irons and wheel chocks. Know how to use them.
- Double check that trailer doors, windows and latches are secure every time you're ready to get underway — even after fueling and short rest breaks.
- Trailers should never be occupied by human passengers while in tow.
- Plan ahead. Check routes prior to beginning your journey. Consult maps at rest and fueling stops. Do not try to read maps and drive at the same time.
- Allow extra time and distance for passing, changing lanes and stopping. The extra weight of the trailer will affect acceleration and braking.
- Never park on a hill or grade. In an emergency, apply the foot brake and chock the trailer's wheels, then apply the parking brake and shift into "park" (or "reverse" with a manual transmission). Then release the foot brake.
- Always wear your seat belt and use child safety seats.
- Stay tuned to local weather and road conditions. Adjust plans and schedules accordingly.
- If you will be traveling in mountainous terrain, have your tow vehicle tuned-up for the elevation.

## A Road Kit

Sometimes minor repairs are needed to keep you underway. If you have the right supplies, you can often solve small inconveniences yourself. Talk to your mechanic about what to include in your "road kit" and know how to use the contents. Here are some basics:

- Flashlights and extra batteries
- Emergency flares & warning triangles
- Basic tool kit • Oil
- Extra fuses • Tire sealant for flats
- Anti-freeze • Brake fluid
- Hose clamps • Jack and tire iron
- WD-40 Lubricating Oil



## In Case of Emergency

- If you have to make an emergency stop, place flares and warning triangles at a safe distance ahead and behind your rig to warn other motorists.
- If possible, travel with a cellular phone or CB Radio so you can call for help.
- Keep an "Emergency Information" folder or envelope in your vehicle. Include:
  - Your name, address & telephone number
  - Who to contact in case you are incapacitated
  - The name and phone number of your veterinarian
  - The name, address and phone number of someone who could be responsible for your horses in case you are injured
  - Any pertinent health information
- Equip your horse's travel halter with a dogtag which has emergency information just in case your horse gets loose.
- Carry an extra halter and lead rope, and keep them easily accessible, along with a bucket of grain as an enticement.
- If you are in a trailering accident, assess the damage and determine whether you can safely unload your horses. Often, the trailer will be the safest place to leave them until help arrives.
- When you call for help, tell the dispatcher that horses are involved, and that you may need a veterinarian and a horse trailer.
- Recommend that the emergency vehicles approach the accident without the sirens going to prevent panicking your horses.



## 10-Point Checklist

- Don't put yourself in a dangerous situation by entering the trailer if your horses are panicked. A tranquilizer may need to be given.
- Don't allow emergency workers or a police officer to destroy a horse just because there appears to be a large volume of blood lost. Injuries often appear worse than they are. Leave that recommendation to a veterinarian.
- Stay calm, and whatever actions you take, always consider your safety first and your horse's second.

## Enjoy the Journey

By choosing the right truck and trailering equipment, doing your homework, and preparing both you and your horse for your journey well in advance, traveling with horses should be an enjoyable adventure. For more information on the best transportation options for you and your horse, call 1-800-4-A-Dodge for a dealer near you, or Sooner Trailers, (405) 255-6979.

### Just before you get underway

1. Make sure the horse is safely loaded with the butt bar in place and the horse's head tied.
2. Check all trailer doors and windows to be sure they are securely latched.
3. Make sure the vents are adjusted for proper ventilation.
4. Doublecheck your trailer hitch. Make sure ball and tongue are locked into place.
5. Make sure your safety chains are connected and that they cross under the trailer tongue.
6. Check that all electrical connections are secure and that your trailer lights and brakes are working.
7. Check that all your tires are properly inflated.
8. Check that your windshield wiper, brake, radiator, transmission and other fluids are filled to the proper levels.
9. Adjust your side and rearview mirrors.
10. Buckle up.

