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## Towing - DRIVE SLOWER. BRAKE SOONER. TURN LATER.

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The information detailed below contains extracts from the Queensland Transport and Main Roads *Safe Towing Guide* and other information and is not a full comprehensive towing guide.

### Towing is very different from everyday driving

Towing requires additional driving skills and safety precautions. As a driver, you have a legal responsibility to other road users when towing a trailer, caravan or another vehicle, to drive to suit the conditions

Towing will affect your vehicle with **decreased acceleration and braking performance** and **reduced vehicle control and manoeuvrability**. These effects become more pronounced on your vehicle as trailer size and the mass of the load increase.

### Hitching Trailers

#### Drivers must ensure:

- Ensure the coupling socket and ball are a matching size.
- Check the coupling is securely fastened and latched when the trailer is connected.
- Check safety chain/s are properly connected. If two chains are fitted, cross them under the drawbar before they are attached to the towing vehicle.
- Check trailer brake and light connections are secure and all lights work.
- Disengage any reversing catch fitted to the trailer coupling (as used with over-run brakes).

### Loading trailers

#### Drivers must ensure:

- The ATM specified by the trailer manufacturer is not exceeded
- The ball load specifications are not exceeded.
- The Gross Combination Vehicle Mass where given, is not exceeded.
- Lights, number plate and registration labels are not obscured in any way.
- The load is correctly positioned to give sufficient down weight on the coupling socket.
- Sufficiently strong load bindings such as webbing straps or chains secure your load.
- Ensure all doors, hatches, covers and any load or equipment are properly secured.

### When travelling

#### Drivers must ensure:

- That any trailer is safely controllable by the towing vehicle. (see *Loading Trailers*)
- Any speed restrictions displayed on the towed item or Hire Contract are observed.
- Make one or two test stops at low speed to confirm the trailer brakes operate properly.
- Allow for the trailer's tendency to 'cut-in' on corners and curves.
- Allow longer distances for braking, overtaking and joining a traffic stream.
- Avoid sudden lane changes or changes of direction.
- Allow for the increased effects of cross-winds, passing vehicles and uneven road surfaces.
- Use a low gear when travelling downhill to increase vehicle control and reduce strain on brakes.
- Slow down well before entering corners and curves.
- Accelerator, brake and steering must be operated smoothly when towing.
- Correct tyre pressure is maintained.
- People are not permitted to ride in trailers.

*Unnecessary steering wheel movement should be avoided because sway or "snaking" of the vehicle and trailer may result. If sway occurs a steady speed or slight acceleration should be maintained if possible, until the sway ceases. The tow vehicle's brakes should only be applied as a last resort.*

### Un-hitching Trailers

#### Drivers must ensure:

- Ground is firm and level.
- Handbrake if fitted is engaged.
- Wheels are chocked.
- Jockey Wheel is secured in the down position.
- It is preferable to have the trailer empty (without load).