

# The Truck Driver's Checklist

Professionally driven trucks are involved in fewer road accidents per km travelled than other vehicles. However, when they are involved in a crash, regardless of who is to blame, the results can be more serious on account of their greater weight and larger dimensions. The nature of the goods carried may also increase the severity of an accident.

As a truck driver, you need to drive in a highly responsible manner at all times and show your professionalism by anticipating and forgiving unsafe behaviour by other road users.

You can help save lives, improve the image of your profession and help your industry to obtain a better legal framework.

## ARE YOU PREPARED?

Your life and the life of other road users depend on your alertness and reactions in an emergency!



Professional driving is very demanding, so you need to stay fit, physically and mentally. **Eating and drinking healthily and taking regular exercise** will help you to feel better, drive better and live longer!



**Respect the legal requirements related to driving and rest times.** Non-compliance or tampering with the tachograph is illegal and implies a lack of respect for human lives. Use your rest hours... to rest!



**Adjust your seat so you are sitting as comfortably as possible**, with all controls within easy reach. Ensure your head is positioned to benefit from the head restraint in case of an accident.



**Don't drink alcohol before driving or take any kind of drugs or medication which may impair your driving skills.** Avoid heavy meals before driving, as these can make you feel drowsy.

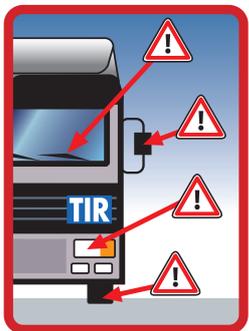


**Use your seat-belt if you have one** and don't forget your co-driver. Even truck drivers can die if they go through the windscreen! Anyone resting in a bunk should be secured when the vehicle is in motion.



**Don't continue driving if you feel drowsy – STOP!** Get out of your vehicle, stretch your legs and get some fresh air.

## ...AND IS EVERYTHING ELSE READY?



**Is everything in good working order?** Have you checked the brakes and brake lines (both tractor and trailer), tyres (pressure and tread depth), coolant and oil? What about the mirrors, windows (are they free of unnecessary stickers?), windscreen wipers, lights, indicators. How about special equipment like extinguishers and snow chains? Is there any visible damage and is the vehicle clean?



**Do you have the right documents?** Have you inserted the tachograph disk/card? Do you have the legally required disks on board?



**Is the load evenly distributed and properly secured?** Will you have to redistribute it and secure it again if you unload part of it before your final destination?



**Check your route.** Any bridges, tunnels, etc. where your vehicle might have a problem (dimensions, weight, dangerous goods)? Does it make best use of motorways and avoid residential areas? Where will you take your breaks? Check weather conditions!

## TAKE EXTRA CARE ON THE ROAD



**Remember your blind angle prevents you from seeing smaller road users** (cars, motorcyclists, cyclists, pedestrians) close to your vehicle.

Pay particular attention when:

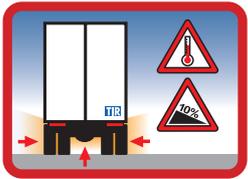
- Turning, in case a vehicle is overtaking in your blind angle
- Reversing, especially if the driving wheel is on the “wrong” side (GB-IRL/continental Europe)



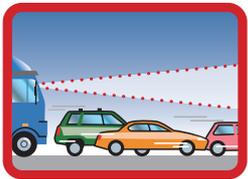
**Don't overtake** unless you are sure that you have enough room and will not force other vehicles to slow down.



**Keep a safe distance from the vehicle in front of you** – in any case, at least the minimum legal distance. The faster you drive, the greater the separation you need. The safe distance increases with rain, mud, ice and snow.



**Stop if your engine brakes or retarder becomes overheated.** Don't proceed until you are sure that there is no further risk of overheating or failure.



**Try to anticipate problems.** Avoid sudden braking and acceleration which may be dangerous to other road users, waste fuel and generate extra pollution.



**Respect traffic regulations at all times.** Don't adopt the bad habits of other road users. Driving safely protects your life, the lives of others and your job!



**In a breakdown, accident or other emergency,** inform your base and/or the local emergency services immediately. Programme emergency numbers into your mobile phone.



**At night, dip your headlights in good time** when traffic approaches from the opposite direction. Make sure your lights and reflectors are clean, so that your vehicle is visible.



**Adapt your driving to weather conditions.** When roads are slippery with rain, mud, ice or snow (remember your chains!), reduce your speed – the same goes for driving in fog, rain or in twilight, and in tunnels.



**Park only where permitted.** Take care not to obstruct traffic or the vision of other road users and avoid residential areas. Make sure the vehicle cannot move when unattended. Don't leave your engine running unnecessarily.



**Use secure parking areas wherever possible.** Don't park in isolated, unlit places, especially at night. Don't tell strangers about your load or itinerary. Drive in a convoy if possible. Inspect your vehicle and load for signs of unauthorised entry or tampering before resuming your journey.



**It is illegal to use a handheld mobile phone while driving.** If you need to talk on the move, get a proper “hands-free” system installed.



**After the trip,** report to your company any problems with your vehicle, the routes you used, or the deliveries you made, so that repairs or adjustments can be made before the next trip.

## Show you are a professional – and you will be respected!

The IRU and its Member Associations represent your business. They are working to obtain the best possible regulatory framework for the road transport industry.

As a professional driver, you are performing a role that is essential for the economy and society. Be proud of your job, be proud of your driving!