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# Friday Safety Brief

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### 1. Plot your route beforehand

Even before you load up your truck and hit the road, it's important that you become familiar with the route you'll be traveling.

There's usually more than one way to get to any particular destination. Take some time to evaluate different options and determine which one is most ideal for you, logistically.

By plotting out your route in advance, not only will you likely reach your destination quickly and efficiently but you also won't feel unsure of where you're headed while behind the wheel.

### 2. Pack your truck properly

As you're planning for your upcoming trip and plotting your route, be sure to also pack your truck properly.

Oftentimes, you may be under a time crunch to get everything loaded onto your truck quickly, but make sure it's not at the expense of other drivers. When the weight of your cargo is distributed unevenly, your truck is more susceptible to flipping.

There are also many **dangers of overloading cargo**. Of course, an overloaded truck could result in falling cargo that puts the lives of other drivers and passengers at risk. But it can also put excessive pressure on your truck's axles, tires, and braking system.

Pack your truck properly and make sure its total weight falls within federal and local limits.



### **3. Inspect your vehicle**

Like any vehicle, trucks are susceptible to breaking down—particularly when they have not been maintained or inspected.

Before you leave, inspect your vehicle thoroughly to make sure that all components are in working order and that nothing is going to inhibit safe driving, this includes your **semi truck bed**..

### **4. Get plenty of rest**

As a truck driver, it's vital that you get plenty of rest—not only in the days leading up to your trip but also in the moments throughout the journey when you choose to stop and rest up.

Getting an ample amount of rest each day (roughly 7 – 8 hours) will ensure that you are alert at all times.

Remember, the repercussions of a lack of sleep are potentially lethal. Don't risk the safety of others—make sleep a priority!

### **5. Make smart nutritional choices**

When it comes to alertness and peak performance, getting enough rest is only half of the battle. Nutrition plays a vital role in maintaining focus over a long period.

Naturally, limiting downtime and reaching your destination on time also means finding convenient places to eat—in which case, fast food might be your easiest option. After all, fast food is just that—*fast*. Unfortunately, it also contributes to a highly unhealthy diet.

Simply being conscious of what you're putting into your body and taking the extra 10 minutes to make a healthier food choice can go a long way toward keeping you more focused while driving. Not to mention, it will benefit your long-term health.

personal seatbelts at all times.

Your particular truck may even be equipped with bunks that passengers want to use to rest up while you're driving. However, unless these bunks are equipped with restraints, they should not be used unless the truck is



#### **6. Wear a seatbelt at all times**

**Wearing a seatbelt should be a non-negotiable when driving a truck, yet studies show that roughly one in every six truck drivers doesn't wear a seatbelt and that more than one in every three truck drivers killed in accidents doesn't wear a seatbelt. If you're traveling with others, make sure that they are also wearing their**

**7. Obey the speed limit Truck drivers should always adhere to the posted speed limit, driving even slower than the speed limit and the flow of traffic if need be. As trucks are much larger and heavier than most passenger cars, they are also more dangerous when traveling at high velocities. Truck drivers should also adjust their traveling speeds for the conditions.**

**8. Slow down for turns and curves Truck drivers should always be mindful of their traveling speed, but especially during turns and curves—including lane changes. More so than most other vehicles, trucks are prone to slipping, sliding, and flipping when turns are navigated at high speeds. Keep yourself and other drivers safe by taking your foot off the gas when you're preparing to make a turn!**

**9. Maintain safe traveling distances While all vehicles should practice maintaining safe traveling distances, it's especially important for trucks. Because trucks are larger and heavier than most vehicles, they take much longer to arrive at a complete stop. Not to mention, the ramifications of a collision are often significantly worse. Most deaths in accidents involving large trucks are passenger vehicle occupants. As a rule of thumb, keep roughly seven seconds between your truck and the vehicle in front of you. This will give you plenty of time to come to a complete halt if needed.**1

**0. Steer clear of distractions Drivers have their fair share of distractions while driving—texting, calling, looking around, and focusing on other objects. Truck drivers are no exception. Especially during a long journey, using a cell phone is a temptation for many truck drivers. However, truck drivers are more than 23 times likely to be involved in an accident when texting and driving than passenger car drivers. While you're behind the wheel, put the cell phone far out of reach and instead focus on the road. Someone else's life depends on it!**