

Texas:

Trailer Summary:

Dimensions: Dimensions shall not exceed: A total length of 65 feet; a width of 102 inches; and a total height of 13 feet 6 inches.

Brakes: A trailer or pole trailer is required to have brakes if its gross weight exceeds 4,500 lbs. A trailer with a gross weight between 4,500 lbs. and 15,000 lbs. is not required to have brakes if it is towed at a speed of not more than 30 mph.

Lighting/Reflectors: a trailer or semitrailer that is at least 80 inches wide shall be equipped with: 2 clearance lamps on the front, one at each side; 2 clearance lamps on the rear, one at each side; 4 side marker lamps, one on each side at or near the front and one on each side at or near the rear; 4 reflectors, one on each side at or near the front and one on each side at or near the rear; and hazard lamps.

A trailer or semitrailer that is at least 30 feet long shall be equipped with: 2 side marker lamps, one centrally mounted on each side with respect to the length of the vehicle; 2 reflectors, one centrally mounted on each side with respect to the length of the vehicle; and hazard lamps.

Hitch/Signals: The drawbar or other connection between a vehicle drawing another vehicle and the drawn vehicle must be strong enough to pull all weight drawn and may not exceed 15 feet between the vehicles.

Mirrors: A motor vehicle, including a motor vehicle used to tow another vehicle, shall be equipped with a mirror located to reflect to the operator a view of the highway for a distance of at least 200 feet from the rear of the vehicle.

Speed Limits: As posted.

Towing: An operator drawing another vehicle and using a chain, rope, or cable to connect the vehicles shall display on the connection a white flag or cloth not less than 12 inches square.

Other: N/A

Sec. 621.001. DEFINITIONS.

In this chapter:

(1) "Commercial motor vehicle" means a motor vehicle, other than a motorcycle, designed or used for:

(A) the transportation of property; or

(B) delivery purposes.

(2) "Commission" means the Texas Transportation Commission.

(3) "Department" means the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles.

(4) "Director" means:

(A) the executive director of the department; or

(B) an employee of the department who is:

(i) a division or special office director or holds a rank higher than division or special office director; and

(ii) designated by the executive director.

(5) "Motor vehicle" means a vehicle that is self-propelled.

(6) "Semitrailer" means a vehicle without motive power that is designed, or used with a motor vehicle, so that some of its weight and the weight of its load rests on or is carried by the motor vehicle.

(7) "Trailer" means a vehicle without motive power that is:

(A) designed or used to carry property or passengers on its own structure exclusively; and

(B) drawn by a motor vehicle.

(8) "Truck-tractor" means a motor vehicle designed or used primarily for drawing another vehicle:

(A) that is not constructed to carry a load other than a part of the weight of the vehicle and load being drawn; or

(B) that is engaged with a semitrailer in the transportation of automobiles or boats and that transports the automobiles or boats on part of the truck-tractor.

Sec. 621.201. MAXIMUM WIDTH.

(a) The total width of a vehicle operated on a public highway other than a vehicle to which Subsection (b) applies, including a load on the vehicle but excluding any safety device determined by the United States Department of Transportation or the Texas Department of Public Safety to be necessary for the safe and efficient operation of motor vehicles of that type, may not be greater than 102 inches.

(b) The total width of a passenger vehicle and its load may not be greater than eight feet. This subsection does not apply to a motor bus or trolley bus operated exclusively in the territory of a municipality, in suburbs contiguous to the municipality, or in the county in which the municipality is located.

(c) A passenger vehicle may not carry a load extending more than three inches beyond the left side line of its fenders or more than six inches beyond the right side line of its fenders.

Sec. 621.203. MAXIMUM LENGTH OF MOTOR VEHICLE.

(a) A motor vehicle, other than a truck-tractor, may not be longer than 45 feet.

(b) A motor bus as defined by Section 502.001 that is longer than 35 feet but not longer than 45 feet may be operated on a highway if the motor bus is equipped with air brakes and has either three or more axles or a minimum of four tires on the rear axle.

(c) The limitation prescribed by Subsection (a) does not apply to a house trailer or towable recreational vehicle or a combination of a house trailer or towable recreational vehicle and a motor vehicle. A house trailer or towable recreational vehicle and motor vehicle combination may not be longer than 65 feet.

(d) In this section, "house trailer" and "towable recreational vehicle" have the meanings assigned by Section 541.201.

Sec. 621.204. MAXIMUM LENGTH OF SEMITRAILER OR TRAILER.

(a) A semitrailer that is operated in a truck-tractor and semitrailer combination may not be longer than 59 feet, excluding the length of the towing device.

(b) A semitrailer or trailer that is operated in a truck-tractor, semitrailer, and trailer combination may not be longer than 28-1/2 feet, excluding the length of the towing device.

(c) The limitations prescribed by this section do not include any safety device determined by regulation of the United States Department of Transportation or by rule of the Department of Public Safety to be necessary for the safe and efficient operation of motor vehicles.

(d) The limitations prescribed by this section do not apply to a semitrailer or trailer that has the dimensions of a semitrailer or trailer, as appropriate, that was being operated lawfully in this state on December 1, 1982.

Sec. 621.205. MAXIMUM LENGTH OF VEHICLE COMBINATIONS. (a) Except as provided by this section, a combination of not more than three vehicles, including a truck and semitrailer, truck and trailer, truck-tractor and semitrailer and trailer, or a truck-tractor and two trailers, may be coupled together if the combination of vehicles, other than a truck-tractor combination, is not longer than 65 feet.

(b) A passenger car or another motor vehicle that has an unloaded weight of less than 2,500 pounds may not be coupled with more than one other vehicle or towing device at one time. This subsection does not apply to the towing of a disabled vehicle to the nearest intake place for repair.

(c) A motor vehicle, including a passenger car, that has an unloaded weight of 2,500 pounds or more may be coupled with a towing device and one other vehicle.

(d) In this section:

(1) "Passenger car" means a motor vehicle designed to transport 10 or fewer persons simultaneously.

(2) "Towing device" means a device used to tow a vehicle behind a motor vehicle by supporting one end of the towed vehicle above the surface of the road and permitting the wheels at the other end of the towed vehicle to remain in contact with the road.

Sec. 621.207. MAXIMUM HEIGHT.

- (a) A vehicle and its load may not be higher than 14 feet.
- (b) The operator of a vehicle that is higher than 13 feet 6 inches shall ensure that the vehicle will pass through each vertical clearance of a structure in its path without touching the structure.
- (c) Any damage to a bridge, underpass, or similar structure that is caused by the height of a vehicle is the responsibility of the owner of the vehicle.

Sec. 547.405. Emergency Brakes Required.

- a) A vehicle used to tow another vehicle equipped with air-controlled brakes shall be equipped with the following means, together or separate, for applying the trailer brakes in an emergency:
 - (1) an automatic device that applies the brakes to a fixed pressure from 20 to 45 pounds per square inch if the towing vehicle's air supply is reduced; and
 - (2) a manual device to apply and release the brakes that is readily operable by a person seated in the operator's seat and arranged so that:
 - (A) its emergency position or method of operation is clearly indicated; and
 - (B) its use does not prevent operation of the automatic brakes.
- (b) In addition to the single control device required by Section 547.403, a vehicle used to tow another vehicle equipped with vacuum brakes shall be equipped with a second control device that:
 - (1) is used to operate the brakes on a towed vehicle in an emergency;
 - (2) is independent of brake air, hydraulic, or other pressure and independent of other controls, unless the braking system is arranged to automatically apply the towed vehicle's brakes if the pressure for the second control device on the towing vehicle fails; and
 - (3) is not required to provide modulated braking.
- (c) Subsections (a) and (b) do not apply to a vehicle that tows another vehicle as a commodity when at least one set of wheels of the towed vehicle is on the roadway.
- (d) A trailer, semitrailer, or pole trailer that is equipped with air or vacuum brakes or that has a gross weight heavier than 4,500 pounds shall be equipped with brakes that:
 - (1) operate on all wheels required to have brakes under Section 547.402; and

(2) are promptly applied automatically and remain applied for at least 15 minutes in case of a breakaway from the towing vehicle.

(e) A motor vehicle used to tow a trailer, semitrailer, or pole trailer equipped with brakes shall be equipped with service brakes arranged so that, in case of a breakaway of the towed vehicle, the towing vehicle is capable of stopping by use of its service brakes.

Sec. 547.302. Duty to Display Lights.

(a) A vehicle shall display each lighted lamp and illuminating device required by this chapter to be on the vehicle:

- (1) at nighttime; and
- (2) when light is insufficient or atmospheric conditions are unfavorable so that a person or vehicle on the highway is not clearly discernible at a distance of 1,000 feet ahead.

(b) A signaling device, including a stoplamp or a turn signal lamp, shall be lighted as prescribed by this chapter.

(c) At least one lighted lamp shall be displayed on each side of the front of a motor vehicle.

(d) Not more than four of the following may be lighted at one time on the front of a motor vehicle:

- (1) a headlamp required by this chapter; or
- (2) a lamp, including an auxiliary lamp or spotlamp, that projects a beam with an intensity brighter than 300 candlepower.

Sec. 547.352. Additional Lighting Equipment Requirements.

In addition to other equipment required by this chapter:

(1) a bus, truck, trailer, or semitrailer that is at least 80 inches wide shall be equipped with:

- (A) two clearance lamps on the front, one at each side;
- (B) two clearance lamps on the rear, one at each side;
- (C) four side marker lamps, one on each side at or near the front and one on each side at or near the rear;
- (D) four reflectors, one on each side at or near the front and one on each side at or near the rear; and
- (E) hazard lamps that meet the requirements of Section 547.331;

- (2) a bus or truck that is at least 30 feet long shall be equipped with hazard lamps that meet the requirements of Section 547.331;
- (3) a trailer or semitrailer that is at least 30 feet long shall be equipped with:
 - (A) two side marker lamps, one centrally mounted on each side with respect to the length of the vehicle;
 - (B) two reflectors, one centrally mounted on each side with respect to the length of the vehicle; and
 - (C) hazard lamps that meet the requirements of Section 547.331;
- (4) a pole trailer shall be equipped with:
 - (A) two side marker lamps, one at each side at or near the front of the load;
 - (B) one reflector at or near the front of the load;
 - (C) one combination marker lamp that:
 - (i) emits an amber light to the front and a red light to the rear and side; and
 - (ii) is mounted on the rearmost support for the load to indicate the maximum width of the trailer; and
 - (D) hazard lamps that meet the requirements of Section 547.331, if the pole trailer is at least 30 feet long or at least 80 inches wide;
- (5) a truck-tractor shall be equipped with:
 - (A) two clearance lamps, one at each side on the front of the cab; and
 - (B) hazard lamps that meet the requirements of Section 547.331, if the truck-tractor is at least 30 feet long or at least 80 inches wide; and
- (6) a vehicle at least 80 inches wide may be equipped with:
 - (A) not more than three front identification lamps without glare; and
 - (B) not more than three rear identification lamps without glare.

Sec. 547.602. Mirrors Required.

A motor vehicle, including a motor vehicle used to tow another vehicle, shall be equipped with a mirror located to reflect to the operator a view of the highway for a distance of at least 200 feet from the rear of the vehicle.

§ 545.409. Drawbars and Trailer Hitches; Saddle-Mount Towing

- (a) The drawbar or other connection between a vehicle drawing another vehicle and the drawn vehicle:

- (1) must be strong enough to pull all weight drawn; and
- (2) may not exceed 15 feet between the vehicles except for a connection between two vehicles transporting poles, pipe, machinery, or other objects of structural nature that cannot readily be dismembered.

(b) An operator drawing another vehicle and using a chain, rope, or cable to connect the vehicles shall display on the connection a white flag or cloth not less than 12 inches square.

(c) A motor vehicle may not draw more than three motor vehicles attached to it by the triple saddle-mount method. In this subsection, "triple saddle-mount method" means the mounting of the front wheels of trailing vehicles on the bed of another vehicle while leaving the rear wheels only of the trailing vehicles in contact with the roadway.

§ 547.402. Operation and Maintenance of Brakes

(a) Required brakes shall operate on each wheel of a vehicle except:

- (1) special mobile equipment;
- (2) a vehicle that is towed as a commodity when at least one set of the towed vehicle's wheels is on the roadway, if the combination of vehicles complies with the performance requirements of this chapter; and
- (3) a trailer, semitrailer, or pole trailer with a gross weight heavier than 4,500 pounds but not heavier than 15,000 pounds drawn at a speed of more than 30 miles per hour, if the brakes operate on both wheels of the rear axle.

(b) A truck or truck-tractor that has at least three axles is not required to have brakes on the front wheels, but must have brakes that:

- (1) operate on the wheels of one steerable axle if the vehicle is equipped with at least two steerable axles; and
- (2) comply with the performance requirements of this chapter.

(c) A trailer or semitrailer that has a gross weight of 15,000 pounds or less may use surge or inertia brake systems to satisfy the requirements of Subsection (a).

(d) Brakes shall be maintained in good working order and adjusted to operate on wheels on each side of the vehicle as equally as practicable.