

ROADMASTER INC.

WEIGHT LIMITS FOR TOWING WITHOUT AUXILIARY BRAKES

SOURCE: AMERICAN AUTOMOBILE ASSOCIATION
(WWW.AAA.COM)

SPECIFIC WEIGHT LIMITS

IF THE TOWED WEIGHT EXCEEDS THE FOLLOWING,
AN AUXILIARY BRAKING DEVICE IS REQUIRED.

- 1,000 POUNDS (NORTH CAROLINA)
- 1,500 POUNDS (CAL., ID, NV, NH)
- 2,000 POUNDS (MISS., OHIO, UTAH)
- 3,000 POUNDS (32 STATES & D.C.)
- 4,000 POUNDS (DEL., RHODE ISLAND)
- 4,500 POUNDS (TEXAS)
- 5,000 POUNDS (ALASKA)
- 10,000 POUNDS (MASSACHUSETTS)

OTHER CATEGORIES

- AUXILIARY BRAKES ALWAYS REQUIRED
- AUXILIARY BRAKES NOT REQUIRED
- NO WEIGHT STIPULATION

THIS SIMPLIFIED GUIDE IS INTENDED TO PROVIDE A QUICK,
VISUAL REFERENCE. FOR SPECIFIC STATE AND PROVINCE
INFORMATION, GO TO WWW.ROADMASTERINC.COM/LAWS.HTM.

IMPORTANT! EVERY REASONABLE EFFORT WAS MADE TO VERIFY THE ACCURACY OF THIS
INFORMATION. HOWEVER, ROADMASTER, INC. DOES NOT WARRANT ITS ACCURACY AND DISCLAIMS
ALL LIABILITY FOR ANY CLAIM OR DAMAGE WHICH MAY RESULT FROM ERRORS OR OMISSIONS.

2004 State and Provincial Guidelines for Towing Vehicles

See the Chart below to see if your state requires the use of a supplemental braking system from Roadmaster Inc. like the [Brakemaster™](#) or the [BrakePro™](#).

State	Towing Length	Braking Requirements For Towing
Alabama	Total length: not specified.	Independent braking system required over 3,000lbs. Connection between vehicles must not exceed 15' in length; bill of sale required. 1
Alaska	Total length: 75'.	Brake hookup required if over 3,000lbs. A breakaway system capable of applying all required brakes in the event of a separation from the towing vehicle is required. Vehicle towed upon a street or highway must be coupled by means of safety chains, cable, or other equivalent device, in addition to the regular hitch or coupling; the additional connecting safety devices must be connected to prevent the device from dropping to the ground. Drawbar permitted if car being towed is not occupied. Brake hookup required if over 3,000lbs. 2
Arizona	Total length: 65'.	Independent braking system required when the *GW is 3,000lbs. or more. Towed vehicle must be currently registered. Devices used for towing shall not exceed 15' from 1 vehicle to the other. If a chain, rope, or cable is being used, a white flag at least 12" square must be displayed on the device. 2,3
Arkansas	Total length: 65'.	Every trailer 3,000lbs. or more must have brakes adequate to control movement of and to stop and hold vehicle; and the brakes should automatically apply in the event of an accidental break-away. Special permit required if towed vehicle not registered. Proof of ownership is required. Drawbar required (max. length 15'). Connection must be sufficiently strong to pull all weight towed; in addition, a safety chain and 12" flag required on all connections consisting only of chains, ropes, or cables. 2,3

California	Total length: 65'.	No passenger vehicle or any vehicle under 4,000lbs. unladen may tow more than 1 vehicle in combination unless an auxiliary or tow dolly may be used with towed vehicle; no vehicle under 4,000lbs. unladen may tow a vehicle more than 6,000lbs; the raised end of the motor vehicle being towed by another vehicle using tow dolly must be secured by 2 separate chains, cables, or equivalent devices; drawbar connection between 1 vehicle towing another may not exceed 15'. Max. speed for any vehicle towing another is 55mph. Advisable to carry bill of sale. Lights of towed vehicle must be operational. Brake lights and signal lamps must be operational. Brakes must be sufficient to stop within a specified distance, according to vehicle weight, at 20mph.
Colorado	Total length: 70'.	Every trailer of a *GW of 3,000lbs. or more must have brakes adequate to control the movement of and to stop and hold vehicles. Brakes shall also be designed and connected that in case of accidental breakaway of the towed vehicle, brakes shall automatically apply. Proof of ownership required. White cloth must be hung from towing device, if towing device is a chain, rope, or cable. Max. length of device is 15'. Lights must be mounted and displayed on the rear of the towed vehicle. Lights must be actuated by the driver of the towing vehicle. 2,3
Connecticut	Total length: 60'.	Each trailer having *GW of 3,000lbs. or more shall be equipped with a braking system operating on all wheels. Rigid tow bar required when traveling on a highway (max. length 20'). Every camp trailer is required to be attached by a hitch, and shall be occupied to the frame of the towing vehicle by means of a safety chain, chains, cables, or equivalent device which shall be of sufficient strength to control the trailer in the event of failure of the regular hitch or coupling. 2,3
Delaware	Total length: 65'.	Trailers carrying a *GW of load in combination with a vehicle in excess of 4,000lbs. must be equipped with suitable brakes controlled by the operator of the towing vehicle. 10mph limit without brakes. Permit required if towing vehicle not registered. No vehicle shall be driven upon any highway pulling more than 1 other vehicle; drawbar or other connection between any vehicle and the vehicle it is towing shall not exceed 15' in length; if there is a connection between 2 vehicles, 1 towing the other, consists of a chain, rope, or cable, there shall be a red flag or other cloth 12" square attached to the connection. If towed vehicle is over 4,000lbs., brakes must be connected to those of towing vehicle. 2,3
Dist. Columbia	Total length: 85'.	Each trailer in excess of 3,000lbs. shall be equipped with brakes acting on all wheels that will be applied automatically and promptly, and remain applied for at least 15 minutes upon breakaway from the towing vehicle. There shall be a manually controlled device for applying and releasing the brakes that is readily operable by a person in the driving seat. When towing is done by chain, rope or cable, driver is required in each vehicle and there should be a white flag or cloth connected to the chain, rope or cable. 2
Florida	Total length: 65'.	Every vehicle shall be equipped with brakes acting on all wheels except trailer of a *GW not exceeding 3,000lbs., provided that the total weight on and including the wheels of the trailer or trailers shall not exceed 40% of the *GW of the towing vehicle when connected to the trailer or trailers; and the combination of vehicles, consisting of the towing vehicle and its total towed load, is capable of complying with the performance requirements of the law. When 1 vehicle is towing another, the drawbar or other connection shall be of sufficient strength to pull all weight towed; drawbar connection shall not exceed 15' from 1 vehicle to the other. When 1 vehicle is towing another and connection consists of chain, rope, or cable, there shall be displayed a white flag or cloth not less than 12" square. If dolly is used, tow bar is not required. If weight of towed vehicle exceeds 3,000lbs., a brake hookup is required as well as breakaway system. 2
Georgia	Total length: 60'.	Every trailer over 3,000lbs. **GVWR must be equipped with brakes on all wheels. Tow bar is required. 2
Hawaii	Total length: 65'.	Independent braking system required over 3,000lbs. Registration not required for towed vehicle if car being towed between storage places. Brake hookup required. A 12" square white flag (requires when using chain, cable, strap or rope as a towing connection) must be hung from towing device. 2,3
Idaho	Total length: 75'.	When unladen weight is 1,500lbs., independent braking system required with breakaway. Must stop at any weigh station. Bill of sale or other proof of ownership required, if not registered. Drawbar/tow bar required. 2

Illinois	Total length: 65'.	Every trailer of a *GW of over 3,000lbs. must be equipped with brakes when operated upon a highway. Such brakes must be so designed and connected that in case of an accidental breakaway of a towed vehicle over 5,000lbs., the brakes are automatically applied. Drawbar or other connection shall be of sufficient strength to pull all the weight towed and shall not exceed 15' in length. Outside a business, residential or suburban district, or highway, no vehicle shall be towed on a roadway except by a drawbar and each such vehicle so towed shall, in addition, be coupled with 2 safety chains or cables to the towing vehicle. Chains or cables shall be of sufficient size and strength to prevent towed vehicle parting from towing vehicle in case drawbar should break or become disengaged. Special permit required if combination exceed size limits. Brake hookup required if vehicle towed is over 3,000lbs.
Indiana	Total length: 65'.	A trailer at least 3,000lbs. must have brakes adequate to control the movement, stop and hold the towing vehicle and trailer. These brakes must be designed so that the driver of the towing vehicle can apply the brakes from the towing vehicle itself and adequately stop both the towing vehicle and the trailer. Max. length of 2 or more vehicles together, including cargo, is 60'. Max. load size in length is 3' beyond front and 4' beyond rear. Drawbar/tow bar required (max. length 15'). 2,3
Iowa	Total length: 70'.	Every trailer of a *GVW of 3,000lbs. or more must be equipped with a separate, auxiliary means of applying brakes on the trailer from the cab of the towing vehicle. Drawbar or other connection must not exceed 15'. Drawbar must be of sufficient strength to pull all weight towed and must be fastened to the frame of the towing vehicle in such a manner as to prevent side sway. In addition to the principal connection, there must be a safety chain which must be fastened as to be capable of holding towed vehicle should the principal connection fail for any reason. Registration required. Towing for hire outside incorporated city or town prohibited, except for disabled vehicles or while using a dealer or transporter plate. 2,3
Kansas	Total length: 65'.	Every combination of vehicles shall have a service braking system, which will stop such combination within 40' from an initial speed of 20mph on a level, dry, smooth, hard surface, and shall have a parking brake system adequate to hold such combination on any grade on which it is operated under all conditions of loading. Drawbar, tow bar, or other connection must be of sufficient strength to pull, stop, and hold all weight towed. When towing connection consists of rope, chain, or cable, a white flag or cloth 12" square shall be displayed on the towing connection. Also, not more than 2 vehicles shall be connected by a tow bar. 2
Kentucky	Total length: 63'.	Kentucky law does not specifically require brakes on many passenger car trailers, regardless of weight. However, vehicles singular or in combination must be able to stop within distance specified by statute. No vehicle may haul with a towline more than 1 other vehicle and the towline may not exceed 15' in length and must have a white cloth fastened at or near the center of the towline. No vehicle may haul more than 2 vehicles connected in such a manner to keep them evenly spaced, and any 1 time. 2,3
Louisiana	Total length: 70'.	A trailer that weighs at least 3,000lbs. must be equipped with brakes adequate to control the movement of and to stop and to hold the towing vehicle and trailer. These brakes must be designed so that the driver of the towing motor vehicle can apply the brakes from the towing vehicle itself and adequately stop both the towing vehicle and the trailer. Connection must be of sufficient strength to pull weight towed. Connection must not exceed 15'. When connection between vehicles is a chain, rope, or cable, a red flag or cloth at least 1' square must be displayed on the connection and a red light visible for a distance of at least 500' must be visible on the connection between sunrise and sunset. Bill of sale required. Brake hookup and light connection must be connected to primary towing vehicle lights. Speed limit is 45mph. 2,3
Maine	Total length: 65'.	A trailer that weighs at least 3,000lbs. or greater is required to have adequate brakes acting on all wheels of all axles. Special permit required if car not registered. Available from state police. Tow bar and safety chains required; tow dolly acceptable. Taillights, brakes, and turn signals of towed vehicle must be visible. Additional light required: red light in center rear or left rear of car being towed, visible from 100'; white light illuminating rear license plate visible from 50', not to exceed combined length of 65'. Vehicle being towed must be by tow truck or use of tow bar and safety chain.

Maryland	Total length: 55'.	Drawbar required; tow dolly acceptable. Tow bar or connection used shall be strong enough to pull the weight towed and shall not exceed 15' in length. When 1 vehicle is towing another and the connection is a chain, rope, or cable, a white, red or orange-fluorescent flag or cloth at least 18" square shall be displayed on the connection.
Massachusetts	Total length: 65'.	Towing vehicle must be able to stop trailer and towing vehicle within legal limits. Every trailer shall, in addition to a regular hitch, be fastened by safety chains to prevent it from breaking away from the towing vehicle. 2,3 Independent braking system required over 3,000lbs. Registration of towed vehicle not required if car inoperable. Bill of sale required. Drawbar or other connection between 2 vehicles, 1 of which is towing or pulling the other on a highway, shall not exceed 15' in length. If connection consists of a chain, rope, or cable, there shall be displayed upon the connection a red flag or other signal or cloth 12" square. A passenger vehicle or pickup truck shall not be driven upon a highway pulling or having attached to the passenger vehicle or pickup truck more than 1 vehicle or trailer. The hitch cannot exceed 15' in length from 1 vehicle to the other and may not allow either vehicle to deviate more than 3" from the other. If the connection consists of a chain, rope, or cable, there shall be displayed upon the connection a red flag or other signal or cloth no less than 12" square. 2,3
Michigan	Total length: 65'.	A trailer with a *GW of 3,000lbs. must be equipped with brakes that can adequately control the movement of and stop and hold the trailer. Drawbar or other connection between the 2 vehicles must not be more than 15'. When connection is a chain, rope or cable, the connection must display a white, red, yellow or orange flag that is at least 12" square. Every trailer must be hitched to the towing device approved by the Department. Every trailer must be equipped with safety chains or cables permanently attached to the trailer except in cases where the coupling device is a regulation 5th wheel and kingpin assembly approved by the Department. In towing, the chains, or cables must be attached to the vehicles near the points of bumper attachments to the chassis of each vehicle, and must be of sufficient strength to control the trailer in the event of failure of the towing device. The length of chain or cable must be no more than necessary to permit free turning of the vehicles. Brake hookup required except where brakes on towing vehicle are adequate to stop both vehicle within distance required by law. 4,5
Minnesota	Total length: 60'.	Brakes should be designed so that the driver of the towing vehicle from its cab may apply them. Brakes should be designed and connected so that in case of an accidental breakaway of the towed vehicle, the brakes should be automatically applied. Drawbar or other connection shall be of sufficient strength to pull all weight towed and shall not exceed 15', except for the connection between 2 vehicles carrying poles, pipes, machinery, or other objects of a structural nature which cannot be dismembered. When connection consists of a rope, chain, or cable, there shall be displayed upon such connection a 12" square white flag or cloth. Not more than 3 vehicles in combination shall be towed by saddle-mounts, provided the overall length of the towing vehicle shall not exceed 75' in length. Not more than 1 vehicle shall be towed by a tow bar. Every trailer which shall be towed on public highways at a speed greater than 20mph shall be coupled to the towing vehicle by means of a safety chain, cables or equivalent devices in addition to the regular trailer hitch or coupling. The safety chains, cables or equivalent device shall be so connected to the towed and towing vehicles and to the drawbar to prevent the drawbar from dropping to the ground if the drawbar fails, and shall be of sufficient strength to control the trailer in the event of failure of the regular trailer hitch or coupling. 2
Mississippi	Total length: 53'.	Connecting device shall not exceed 15'. Every towed vehicle shall be coupled to the towing vehicle by a safety chain, cable, or equivalent device in addition to the primary coupling device, except that such secondary coupling device shall not be necessary if the connecting device is connected to the towing vehicle by a center-locking ball located over or nearly over the rear axle and not supported by the rear bumper of the towing vehicle. Such secondary safety connecting devices shall be strong enough to control the towed vehicle in the event of failure of the primary coupling device. During the time that lights are required, both vehicles shall display the required lights. Safety chains or an equivalent device are required in addition to the primary coupling device except for 5th-wheel or gooseneck-type vehicles. Max. length 65' on interstate hwy's; 55' on others. 2
Missouri	Total length: 55' (65' vehicle combinations are allowed on certain roads).	

Montana	Total length: 65'.	All trailers with a *GVW of 3,000lbs. or greater must be equipped with brakes acting on wheels. All trailers with a *GVW less than 3,000lbs. must be equipped with brakes on all wheels if the total weight of the trailer does not exceed 40% of the *GVW of the towing vehicle. Trailer or pole trailer with a *GVW of 3,000lbs. must be equipped with a steel safety chain or cable with a minimum diameter of ¼" must be securely fastened to the towing unit. The safety chain or cable may not be connected to the ball but must be connected to the hitch or other frame member of the towing vehicle to prevent the drawbar from dropping to the ground if the ball, socket, or coupler fails. 2,3
Nebraska	Total length: 65'.	Breakaway required over 6,000lbs. Drawbar or other connection shall not exceed 15' in length. The connecting device between any 2 vehicles, 1 towing the other, shall have displayed at the halfway point between the towing vehicle and the towed vehicle red flag or other signal or cloth not less than 12" square. Whenever the load on any vehicle extends more than 4' beyond the rear of the bed or body and is being operated between sunset and sunrise, there shall be displayed a red light plainly visible under normal weather conditions at least 200' from the rear of the vehicle. 20,000lbs. per axle weight limit. The total length may not exceed 130' if the wrecker or tow truck is towing a combination of disabled vehicles. 2 Every towing vehicle used to tow another vehicle equipped with air-controlled brakes, shall be equipped with 2 means of emergency application of the trailer brakes. One means shall apply the brakes automatically in the event of a reduction of the towing vehicle air supply; the other means shall be a manually controlled device for applying and releasing the brakes, readily operable by a person seated in the driver seat. Every vehicle towing other vehicles equipped with vacuum brakes shall have a second control device that can be used to operate the brakes on towed vehicles in emergencies. The second controls shall be independent of brake air, hydraulic and other pressure, and independent of other controls, unless the braking system is so arranged that failure of the pressure upon which the second control depends will cause the brakes to be applied automatically. Drawbar advised, but not required. Light connections must be connected to towing vehicle. Braking system required when exceeds 3,000lbs.; 1,500lbs. if 1975 or newer model. 6
Nevada	Total length: 70'.	Every trailer shall have, in addition to the tow bar or coupling device, a safety chain or cable to prevent breakaway from the towing vehicle. Each chain or cable shall have an ultimate strength at least equal to the *GW of the trailer and the load being towed. Chains or cable shall be connected to the towed and towing vehicle to prevent the tow bar from dropping to the ground in the event the tow bar fails. No motor vehicle shall be used to tow another vehicle on any road unless the 2 vehicles are connected by a tow bar of sufficient strength to control the movements of the vehicle being towed without manual steering the towed vehicle. When vehicle is towed between ½ hour after sundown and ½ hours before sunrise, it must display at least 1 lighted tail lamp or auxiliary rear light to the extreme left of the rear axle 2,3
New Hampshire	Total length: not specified.	In any combination of motor vehicles, means shall be provided for applying the trailer brakes in approximate synchronism with the brakes on the towing vehicles and creating the required braking effort on the wheels of the rearmost vehicle at the fastest rate, or means shall be provided for applying the braking effort first on the rearmost vehicle equipped with brakes. Registration of towed vehicles required if required by home state. Bill of sale required. Brake hookup required. Trailers shall be connected to the towing vehicle by at least 1 chain or cable, in addition to the hitch bar, of sufficient strength to hold the trailer on the hill if the hitching bar becomes disconnected, or be provided with an adequate device to prevent its rolling backward. 2
New Jersey	Total length: 50'.	Trailers must be equipped with brakes if they have a *GVW of 3,000lbs. or greater. In any combination of motor-drawn vehicles, means shall be provided for applying the rearmost trailer brakes in approximate synchronism with the brakes on the towing vehicle. When connection consists of a chain, rope, or cable, a white flag or cloth not less than 12" square must be displayed. When a combination of vehicles are engaged in transporting poles, pipe, machinery, or other objects of structural nature which cannot readily be dismembered, the load shall be distributed so as to equalize the weights on the axle of each vehicle insofar as possible. Special permit required, available at ports of entry for \$5. Bill of sale, title or ownership document required. Brake hookup required. 7
New Mexico	Total length: 75'.	

State Highways: Registration of towed auto not required. Safety chains required if tow bar connection was purchased after 11/17/72. No vehicle shall be towed by a rope or other non-rigid connection which is longer than 16'. A motor vehicle being towed by a rope or other non-rigid connection must have a licensed driver in such motor vehicle that shall steer it when it is being towed. Parkways: Auto towing is prohibited. N.Y.S. thruway: Registration and plated required for towed autos, which must be in operable condition. Towing with rope or non-rigid connection prohibited. Unlawful to operate any open truck or trailer transporting loose materials, unless the truck or trailer has a cover, tarpaulin, or other device that covers the opening on the truck or trailer to prevent the falling of any material; however, if the load is arranged so that no loose material can fall from or blow out of the truck or trailer, the covering is not necessary.

New York	Total length: 65'.	
North Carolina	Total length: 60'	Every trailer or separate vehicle attached by a drawbar or coupling to a towing vehicle of at least 4,000lbs., and every house trailer weighing at least 1,000lbs., shall be equipped with brakes controlled or operated by the driver of the towing vehicle. Tow bar or other rigid connection required. 2,3
North Dakota	Total length: 75'.	None. 2,8
Ohio	Total length: 65'	Brakes are required if trailer has an empty weight of over 2,000lbs. Drawbar or other connection may not exceed 15'. When connection consists only of a chain, rope, or cable, there shall be displayed upon such connection a white flag or cloth not less than 12" square. In addition to a drawbar or other connection, each trailer which is not connected to a commercial tractor by means of a 5th wheel shall be coupled with stay chains or cables to the vehicle by which it is being drawn. Every trailer shall be equipped with a coupling device, which shall be so designed and constructed that the trailer will follow substantially in the path of the vehicle drawing it, without whipping or swerving from side to side. Brake light and turn signal must be connected between vehicles. 2,3
Oklahoma	Total length: 65'.	Every trailer with a *GVWR of 3,000lbs. or more shall be equipped with an independent braking system adequate to control the movement of and to stop such a vehicle. Every trailer or manufactured home shall be equipped with a coupling device designed and constructed so that the trailer will follow substantially the same path as the towing vehicle without whipping or swerving from side to side. Bill of sale required. 2 taillights, 2 reflectors, brake lights if the vehicle obscures the brake lights of the towing vehicle, turn signals if the length of the 2 vehicles is more than 14' from the center of the steering wheel of the towing vehicle to the rear of the towed vehicle, and fenders or mud flaps on the rear wheels on the rear wheels of the towed vehicle are required. 2,3
Oregon	Total length: 65'.	Independent braking system not required, but combination of vehicles must be able to stop within legal limits. Every motor vehicle and combination of motor vehicles, except motorcycles and mopeds, shall at all times be equipped with a parking brake system. Unlawful to operate more than 2 vehicles in combination. If any vehicle is towing another and the connection between toe 2 is a rope, chain, cable, or any flexible material, a red flag or cloth not less the 12" square must be displayed upon the connection. Any vehicle being towed must be equipped with safety chains or cables. It is unlawful for a person to be a passenger in any towed vehicle; this provision does not apply to 5th wheel trailers if the trailer is equipped with safety glazing materials on the windows and doors, an auditory or visual signaling device that may be used to contact the driver, and at least 1 unobstructed exit capable of being opened from both the interior and exterior. Specials certificate required if vehicle is being towed for compensation. A trip permit is also required if the towed vehicle is not currently registered and is being towed by other than a licensed tower. 2,9

Of every combination of vehicles operated on a highway, the towed vehicle which is equipped with brakes or which has a *GW in excess of 3,000lbs. shall be so equipped that, upon breakaway of the towed vehicle, the towed vehicle shall be stopped and held automatically, and the towing vehicle shall be capable of being stopped and held by use of its own service braking system. Connection must be of sufficient strength to pull all of the weight towed and the distance between the 2 vehicles and light must be not more than 15'. If the distance between the vehicles is more than 5', a red cloth or flag at least 12" square must be displayed on the connection. This flag must be centered between the 2 vehicles and light must shine on the flag. Every trailer must be attached to the towing vehicle so that the path of the trailer's wheels is no more than 6" from the path of the towing vehicle's wheels. Whenever 2 vehicles are connected by a ball and socket type hitch or pintle hook without a locking device, they must also be connected by 2 safety chains of equal length, each safety chain having an ultimate strength at least equal to the gross weight of the towed vehicles. The safety chains must be crossed and connected to the towed and towing vehicle and to the tow bar to prevent the tow bar from dropping to the ground in the event the tow bar fails or becomes disconnected. Safety chains (cross chains) required. 10,11

Pennsylvania

Total length: 60'.

Trailers with a *GVW of 4,000lbs. or more must have brakes that are adequate to slow, stop and hold the vehicle. Brakes must be designed so they can be applied from the driver of the towing vehicle's normal operating position and that they will be automatically applied in the case of an accidental breakaway. Drawbar or other connection must be of sufficient strength to pull the weight of towed and must not exceed 15' in its span from 1 vehicle to the other. A tow truck or any vehicle towing another, except when designed to be in combination, when on any public highway divided into multiple lanes for travel in the same direction, may travel only in the right lane of a 2-lane highway, or the right 2 lanes of a 3 or more lane highway. 2,3

Rhode Island

Total length: 60'.

Every motor vehicle or trailer must be equipped with brakes that have a braking system arranged so that one control device can be used to operate all service brakes. Drawbar or other connection must be of sufficient strength to pull the weight towed, and must not exceed 15'.

South Carolina

Total length: not specified.

When a vehicle is towing another vehicle on a public road or highway, the towing vehicle must be attached to the towed vehicle by a safety chain, cable or equivalent device in addition to the regular drawbar, tongue, trailer hitch, or other connection. The safety connection or attachments must be of sufficient strength to maintain connection of the towed vehicle to the pulling vehicle under all conditions while the towed vehicle is being pulled by the towing vehicle. The provisions of this section do not apply to vehicles using a hitch known as a 5th-wheel and kingpin assembly. 2

South Dakota

Total length: not specified.

For passenger car trailers, in addition to the regular trailer hitch or coupling device, every trailer that is towed on the public highways at a speed of more than 20mph must be coupled to the towing vehicle with a safety chain, chains, cables, or an equivalent device. The requirement does not apply to a semi trailer having a connecting device composed of a 5th-wheel and kingpin assembly that meets the requirements of the interstate commerce commission. Valid license required on towed vehicle except implements of husbandry. Safety cables required. Drawbar required. Brakes, turn signals, and rear lights required. Towed vehicle cannot exceed 53'. 2,3

Tennessee

Total length: not specified.

Every trailer of a *GW of 3,000lbs. or more must be equipped with brakes that may be applied by the driver of the towing vehicle from the cab and must be of a design such that in case of an accidental breakaway of the towed vehicle, the brakes will automatically applied. Safety chains required. Max. length cannot exceed 48'. Lights, turn signals, and brakes must be connected. Registration of towed vehicle required plus owner's identification card, if home state issues one. Brake hookups required. 2,3

Texas	Total length: 65'.	<p>A trailer is required to have brakes if its *GW exceed 4,500lbs. A trailer with a *GW between 4,500lbs. and 15,000lbs. is not required to have brakes if it is towed at a speed of not more than 30mph. Vehicle with unloaded weight of less than 2,500lbs. may not be coupled with more than 1 other vehicle or towing device at 1 time. A motor vehicle, including a passenger car that has an unloaded weight of 2,500lbs. or more may be coupled with a towing device and 1 other vehicle. For passenger cars trailers, the drawbar or other connection between a vehicle towing another vehicle and the towed vehicle must be strong enough to pull all the weight towed and must not exceed 15' except for the connection between 2 vehicles transporting poles, pipe machinery, or other objects of a structural nature that cannot be readily dismembered. A driver towing another vehicle and using a chain, rope, or cable to connect the vehicles must display on the connection a white flag or cloth not less than 12" square. A driver of a passenger car or light truck may not tow a trailer, semi trailer, house trailer, or another motor vehicle unless safety chains of a type approved by the DPS are attached in an approved manner from trailer, semi trailer, house trailer, or towed motor vehicle to the towing vehicle. Political subdivisions cannot regulate or restrict the use of lighting equipment more than the extent allowed by state and federal law. Requires non-consent towers to maintain at least \$50,000 of on-hook cargo insurance per truck. 2</p>
Utah	Total length: 65'.	<p>Towed vehicle shall be coupled by means of a safety chain, cable, or equivalent device, in addition to the regular trailer hitch or coupling. The safety chain or cable shall be securely connected with the chassis of the towing vehicle, the towed vehicle, and the drawbar. The safety chain or cable shall be attached to the trailer drawbar so as to prevent it from dropping to the ground and to ensure that the towed vehicle follows in the course of the towing vehicle in case the vehicles become separated. The requirement for chains or a cable does not apply to a semi trailer having a connecting device composed of a 5th wheel and kingpin assembly, or to a pole trailer. Whenever the load upon any vehicle extends to the rear 4' or more beyond the bed or body of the vehicle there shall be displayed at the extreme rear end of the load, between ½ hour after sunset and ½ hour before sunrise, 2 red lamps and 2 red reflectors located so as to indicate maximum width and maximum overhang. At all other times, there shall be displayed red flags 12" square. A person may not occupy a trailer or semi trailer while it is being drawn by a motor vehicle on a public highway; this does not apply to livestock trailers, a trailer used in a parade, or a trailer or semi trailer used in an agricultural operation. Registration or proof of ownership of towed vehicle required. 2</p>
Vermont	Total length: 65'.	<p>Rigid connection required. 3,12</p>
Virginia	Total length: 65'.	<p>Trailers must be equipped with brakes if the *GW exceeds 3,000lbs. Connection between any 2 vehicles must consist of a 5th-wheel drawbar, or other similar device not to exceed 15' in length. A safety chain/cable is required. Taillights and brake lights required. Exempts tow trucks towing vehicles by means of a wheel lift apparatus from requirements to have a drawbar and safety chain. 2,13</p>
Washington	Total length: 60'.	<p>Every trailer must be equipped with brakes acting on wheels except for those not exceeding a *GW of 3,000lbs. if the total weight on and including the wheels of the trailer does not exceed 40% of the *GW of the towing vehicle when connected to the trailer. No vehicle towing a trailer may be driven in the left-hand lane of a limited access roadway having 3 or more lanes for traffic moving in 1 direction except when preparing for a left-hand turn. No person may occupy any trailer when it is being moved on a highway, except a person occupying a proper position for steering a trailer to be steered from a rear-end position. A vehicle towing a trailer must use safety chains. The drawbar or other connection between the vehicles in combination must be of sufficient strength to hold the weight of the towed vehicle on any grade where operated. No trailer may whip, weave or oscillate or fail to follow substantially in the course of the towing vehicle. Special permit required if towed vehicle is not registered. Proof of ownership is required. Towbar required. While flag in the center of a towing chain if chain is over 15' long. Not required otherwise. Light hookup required. 20,000lbs. limit per axle. 2</p>

Every trailer with a *GW of 3,000lbs. or more when operated on a highway must be equipped with brakes adequate to control the vehicle, and designed to be applied by the driver of the towing vehicle. A motor vehicle or combination of motor-drawn vehicles must be capable of stopping at the following rates as if on a dry, smooth, level free road: 1) vehicles or combinations of vehicles with brakes must be able to decelerate at a speed of 14' per second; and 2) vehicles or combinations of vehicles not having brakes on all wheels must be able to decelerate at a speed on 10.7' per second. A vehicle towing a trailer must use safety chains. The drawbar or other connection between vehicles in combination must be of sufficient strength to hold the weight of the towed vehicle on any grad where operated. No trailer may whip, weave, or oscillate or fail to follow substantially in the course of the towing vehicle. White flag in the center of a towing chain is over 15' long. Not required otherwise. Light hookup required. 2

A motor vehicle may be towed without being equipped with brakes if the *GVW of the towed vehicles not more than 40% of the *GVW of the towing vehicle and the towing vehicle has brakes adequate enough to stop the combination of vehicles. The drawbar or other connection between the 2 vehicles may not exceed 12' in length. In addition to the hitch, every towed vehicle must be coupled to the towing vehicle by means of safety chains, leveling bars, or cables. The provision does not apply to a vehicle equipped with a 5th-wheel and kingpin assembly. 2,3

None. 14

Canadian Provinces

Private trailers weighing more than 910kg (2,000lbs.) and more than ½ or the actual weight of the towing vehicle need to be equipped with a braking device that can stop and control the trailer. No breakaway device required. Registration of towed vehicle required; proof of ownership required; drawbar required. 2,15

Tow bar or other connection: max. length 5m/16'. Brake hookup not required when trailer weight less than 1400kg/3100lbs. when the in-tow vehicle weight more than 1,909kg/4,200lbs., the unit must have a functional safety breakaway brake on the attachment. 2

Every trailer with a *GW in excess of 910kg/2,000lbs. that is attached to a motor vehicle must be equipped with brakes that are capable of stopping movement when traveling at a speed of 30km/h (19mph) at a distance of: 1) 7.6m/25' for passenger car type vehicles; 2) 9m/29' for a single-unit vehicle or combination of vehicles if the weight is less than 4,540kg/10,000lbs.; 3) 12.2m/40' for a single-unit 2-axle vehicle that weighs 4,540kg/10,000lbs. or greater; and 4) 15.3m/50' for all other vehicle and combinations thereof if the weight is 4,540kg/10,000lbs. or greater. Towed vehicle must have a driver or be equipped with an adequate towing device (tow dolly, drawbar, lift arm) which compels it to remain in the course of the towing vehicle. Distance shall not exceed 5m/16'. Towed vehicle must have functional brakes when not connected to tow bar. 2

Drawbar required (max. length 4.5m/15'). Where connection consists of chain, rope, or cable, white flag 30cm/12" square must be displayed. 2

The service brakes on a combination of vehicles must be capable of bringing the motor vehicle and a fully loaded combination of vehicles to a standstill at 30km/h (19mph) under the following conditions: 1) in straight line; 2) within 10m/33' from the point at which the brakes were applied; and 3) on a dry and level paved surface made of eight asphalt or concrete that is free from loose materials. Special permit required if towed vehicle not registered. 2

None.2

All trailers with a *GW of load and vehicle of more than 4,000lbs./1,814kg must have properly functioning brakes controlled by the operator or the motor vehicle. Drawbar/tow bar not required, but when used max. length of 4.6m/15'. Where connection consists of chain, rope, or cable, safety chains are required. All lights must function on rear towed vehicles. Tow dollies require trailer plates unless towed by vehicle plated in jurisdiction exempting dollies from registration.

None.

Prince Edward Island	25m/80'.	Every trailer weight 1,500kg (3,300lbs) or more must be equipped with brakes that can control the movement and stop and hold the towing vehicle, and the vehicles being towed. The brakes must be designed and connected so that the brakes are automatically applied if 1 of the vehicles being towed breaks away. Registration of towed vehicle not required. Safety chains required. Tow bar required (max. length 3.66m (12')). Light hookup required. Towing behind pickup camper/motor home is permitted. Every trailer that is part of a combination of road vehicles and that has a mass, once loaded, of 1,300kg (3,000 lbs.) or more that has a mass, once loaded, of over ½ the net mass of the motor vehicle by which it is being towed, must be equipped with an independent braking system allowing application of a braking force on each weight bearing wheel. The towing vehicle must carry the necessary equipment for operating the braking system of any trailer being towed. Drawbar or other connections required towing not recommended. 16
Quebec	23m/75'.	The brake system must automatically activate the brakes in the case of a breakaway from the towing vehicle without affecting the brakes of the towing vehicle. Drawbar, tow bar, safety chains not required. Registration not required. 2
Saskatchewan	23m/75'.	Independent braking system required if *GW exceed 910kg (2,000lbs.) or ½ licensed weight of towing vehicle. Must be secured in a manner that if tow hitch breaks, chains must keep towed vehicle tracking. Tow bar and safety chains required. Length must not exceed Highway Regulation Limits. Brake lights and turn signals required.
Yukon Territory	22m/71'.	

* Terms

GW = Gross Weight

GVW = Gross Vehicle Weight

GVWR = Gross Vehicle Weight Rating

**** Basic Requirements:** Lights, safety cables or chains, and a valid license plate: Lights, safety cables or chains, and a valid license plate are required in most States and Provinces

NOTES KEY:

1. Tow dollies/lift arms permitted with license plate.
2. Tow dollies/lift arms permitted.
3. Reciprocity granted.
4. Tow dollies/lift arms permitted, but must comply with trailer requirements.
5. Reciprocity granted for registration purposes only.
6. Tow dollies/lift arms permitted. Lift arms must have a rigid connection.
7. Tow dollies/lift arms permitted; drawbar or other connection required.
8. Reciprocity granted with Minnesota and Canada.
9. Reciprocity granted on trip permits to border states.
10. Tow dollies/lift arms permitted provided the combination meets the safety requirements established under Section 4905 of the vehicle code.
11. Reciprocity granted except for size limits.
12. Tow dollies/lift arms permitted, but registration required.
13. Reciprocity granted, except as to towbar, chain, and cable regulations.
14. Tow dollies/lift arms permitted. Lights required.
15. Reciprocity granted, if motor vehicle insurance is required by the home state.
16. Tow dollies/lift arm permitted if meeting regulations and is registered.

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