

TOWING ESSENTIALS FOR RECREATIONAL APPLICATIONS

Hitches



Ball Hitch

- Weight-carrying hitch ("bumper-pull") or drawbar
- Tongue weight of the trailer is carried by the hitch



Weight-Distributing Hitch

- Most of the trailer's tongue weight is transferred to the tow vehicle's frame (through the hitch receiver)
- Total load is distributed to all of the axles of the truck



5th-wheel or Gooseneck Hitch

- Typically designed for medium to heavy-duty towing
- Trailer mounts to 5th-wheel (pin) or gooseneck (ball) receiver located in bed of truck

Trailer Classifications

Class I—Light Duty

- 2,000-lb. maximum trailer weight
- 200-lb. tongue weight (300-lb. weight-distributing hitch)

Class III

- 5,000-lb. maximum trailer weight (7,500 lb. with weight-distributing hitch)
- 300–500-lb. tongue weight (750 lb. with weight-distributing hitch)

Class II

- 3,500-lb. maximum trailer weight
- 300-lb. tongue weight (500 lb. with weight-distributing hitch)

Class IV

- 10,000–12,000-lb. + a maximum trailer weight—varies by manufacturer
- 1,000-lb. tongue weight with weight-distributing hitch
- Class V receiver hitch can be more than 12,000 lb.

Camper Trailers



Pop-Up

- 16–20 ft.
- 2,100–4,000-lb. GVWR



Hi-Lo

- 19–30 ft.
- 2,100–6,000-lb. GVWR



Travel Trailer

- 12–35 ft. (bumper and 5th-wheel)
- Single axle: 2,500–4,000-lb. GVWR
- Double axle: up to 10,000-lb. GVWR
- Triple axle: up to 11,500-lb. GVWR



5th-Wheel/ Gooseneck

- 26–40 ft.
- 8,000–20,000-lb. GVWR

Power Boat Trailers



Personal Watercraft

- 500–2,000-lb. GVWR based on trailer (single, multiple)



Ski Boats

- Single axle: 2,500–4,000-lb. GVWR
- Double axle: 4,000–7,000-lb. GVWR



Sailboats

- Double axle: 3,000–15,000-lb. GVWR



Horse Trailer

- Double axle: 5,000–7,000-lb. GVWR
- Horse: 495–1,800 lb. (small pony to draft horse)

Popular Brands

Aero-lit, Airstream, Coachman, Coyote, Dutchman, Jayco, Keystone, Kodiak, Mallard, Prowler, Starcraft, Trail-Lite, Trail Runner

Popular Brands

Chaparral, Doral, Donzi, Kawasaki, Malibu, Mastercraft, Sea-Doo, Sea Ray, Yamaha

Recreational Trailers



Motorcycle/Quad

- Single, dual or quad trailer
- 775–2,000-lb. GVWR



Snowmobile

- 2-sled snowmobile enclosed trailer
- 2,000–3,500-lb. GVWR



Toy Hauler

- Single axle: 3,000–5,000-lb. GVWR
- Double axle: 5,000–15,000-lb. GVWR (bumper-pull, 5th-wheel)



Landscape

- Single axle: 1,500–2,500-lb. GVWR
- Double axle: 3,000–5,000-lb. GVWR



Open Car Hauler

- 7,000-lb. GVWR



Bass

- Single axle: 1,500–2,500-lb. GVWR
- Double axle: 3,000–6,000-lb. GVWR

Popular Brands

Tracker, Century, Luhrs, Ranger, Skeeter, Triton



Day Boat

- Varies by state
- Boats over 8 ft. 6 in. wide require wide load permit
- Example:

Largest towable Boston Whaler is 270 Outrage—9,500 lb. fully loaded

Popular Brands

Century, Luhrs, Boston Whaler, Tiara



Pontoon

- 16–27 ft.
- 2,000–5,000-lb. GVWR

Note: When towing, you need to consider many elements besides the trailer GVW and the maximum towing capacity of the tow vehicle, such as:

- Impact of tongue weight on tow vehicle payload
- Turning room of the tow vehicle
- Hitch capacity

Typical Payload Weights for Recreational Applications

ATV (Sport)		Outboard Motor	
Average	.400–500 lb.	25-horsepower	.225 lb.
Child-size	.200 lb.	50-horsepower	.250–300 lb.
Side-by-side	.1,000 lb.	100-horsepower	.300–350 lb.
Beverages		150-horsepower	.350–400 lb.
Beer—carton of 24 12-oz. bottles	.45 lb.	200-horsepower	.450–550 lb.
Soft drinks—carton of 12 32-oz. bottles	.60 lb.	275-horsepower	.600–650 lb.
Diesel fuel	.7 lb. per gal.	Portable Generator	
Furniture	.7 lb. per cu. ft.	Small camping-type	.50–75 lb.
Garbage		Large contractor-type	.200–300 lb.
Dry—paper wrapped	.15–30 lb. per cu. ft.	Propane	.4.24 lb. per gal.
Wet	.50 lb. per cu. ft.	PWC (Waverunner/Sea-Doo)	.650–850 lb.
Gasoline	.6.25 lb. per gal.	Snowmobile	
Groceries—misc. assorted	.30 lb. per cu. ft.	Average	.400–650 lb.
Horse	.1,350 lb. per head	Child-size	.200 lb.
Ice	.57 lb. per cu. ft.	Water	.8.34 lb. per gal.
JetSki—stand-up	.300–350 lb.		