



5th WHEEL SECUREMENT

FOCUS

Coupling is when the trucks 5th wheel locking jaws lock around the trailer's kingpin. This connection allows the truck to haul the trailer. Proper coupling techniques can prevent unnecessary damage to the equipment

ANTICIPATE

Look at the ground. Make sure the trailer and the truck are on a level surface. Look for potholes or dips under the tires. If the ground under the truck or trailer is not level, you run the risk of damaging the equipment if you continue to back up.

CORRECT

Please reference your CPC Logistics Driver's Policy & Safety Handbook PAGE 71

Once you are in front of the trailer, make sure you are directly in line with the trailer. You want to back in straight. Backing under the trailer at an angle can cause damage the equipment. When the rear drive axle is under the trailer, stop the truck, get out and look. You are verifying 3 things: alignment, the 5th wheel's position, and clearance.

Look at the 5th wheel. Your 5th wheel needs to be aligned with the kingpin and not in an elevated position. If the 5th wheel is propped up, you could damage it and the trailer if you continue to back up.

Visually verify the clearance. Make sure the trailer is at the proper clearance for the 5th wheel to back under the trailer. Remember to stay safe. If all these things are good, return to your truck to continue your coupling maneuver.

Once the 5th wheel locks around the kingpin, perform a tug-test. Release the tractor brakes, leave the trailer brakes engaged, and place the truck in drive. Slowly drive forward just enough to feel resistance on the 5th wheel. This ensures the trailer is indeed connected.

When you exit the tractor to hook up the airlines and electrical cord, perform a visual inspection of the 5th wheel. The 5th wheel release arm must be in to ensure the coupling is successful. Then, use a flashlight if necessary, and visually inspect the jaws of the 5th wheel. Make sure there is no space between the upper and lower 5th wheel. If there is space, something is wrong. (The kingpin may be on top of the closed 5th wheel jaws, and the trailer would come loose very easily).

TALK

Make it a habit to visually inspect the 5th wheel coupling. Share this information with your co-workers to help them avoid and incidents. If you see your co-workers NOT performing a visual inspection, please remind them of the importance of performing the visual inspection. An extra few seconds of inspection can save hours and dollars in the end.