



TRUCK/TRACTOR & TRAILER GLOSSARY OF TERMS



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Training Guide - Glossary Of Terms

ABS (Anti-lock Brake System)	an safety system that allows the wheels on a vehicle to maintain tractive contact with the road surface while braking, preventing the wheels from locking up (ceasing rotation) and avoiding uncontrolled skidding.
AERO SKIRTS	Aerodynamic panels attached to the bottom of trailer to assist in fuel efficiency. Also called side skirts.
AERODYNAMICS PACKAGE	A group of components consisting of the following: roof mount wind deflector, side fairings, front spoiler and fuel tank skirting. Also see individual listing for each item. This is also referred to as "Full Aero".
AFTER COOLER	A performance device found on diesel engines.
AIR BAGS	Pneumatic air bags serving as springs.
AIR BRAKES	A brake worked by air pressure.
AIR BRAKE DRYER	A device that removes moisture from air-operated brake systems.
AIR FOIL	see WIND DEFLECTOR.
AIR RIDE CAB	Suspension for the cab of a truck. Provides a smoother ride and reduces road shock.
AIR RIDE SUSPENSION	A series of air filled bags mounted on a tractor or trailer suspension that provide a softer, more controlled ride.
AIR SLIDE FIFTH WHEEL	A fifth wheel that can be positioned remotely through a control in the FIFTH WHEEL cab of a tractor. Also see FIFTH WHEEL.
ALUMINUM DISC WHEELS	see DISC WHEELS.
ANTEATER	A generic description of a low profile, high aerodynamic tractor.
ATTIC	The part of a van body which extends over the cab of the truck.
AUXILIARY POWER UNIT (APU)	An active alternative to engine idling. Increases fuel cost and decreases vehicle emissions. Commonly located near fuel tanks. Typical makes are Thermo King and Carrier.
AUXILIARY TRANSMISSION	Extra transmission mounted behind the main transmission to provide additional gear splits.
BANJO	Rear axle drive or differential housing.

BBC	Front bumper to back of cab dimension. Measured in inches.
BINDERS	Lever-type device used on trailers for securing cargo.
BLOWER	A turbo charger on diesel engines.
BOBTAIL	Tractor being driven without a trailer attached. Also a straight truck.
BOGIE	Tandem rear axle assembly (same as TANDEM AXLE and DUAL DRIVE TANDEM).
BOOM	A beam or spar pivoting at the foot of the mast of a derrick, controlling the distance from the mast at which a load is lifted or lowered
BROWNIE	Auxiliary transmission mounted behind the main transmission.
BUDD WHEELS	See DISC WHEELS.
BULKHEAD	A device which attaches to the front of a trailer, or behind cab of van, which protects the driver and passengers from moving cargo.
CAB	The part of the vehicle that encloses the driver and operating controls.
CAB OVER ENGINE	See COE. ENGINE
C A DIMENSION	The distance from the back of the truck cab to the centerline of the rear axle. Measured in inches.
CAMELBACK SUSPENSION	A type of heavy-duty rear spring suspension.
CAB PROTECTOR	A shield covering the rear of a cab, normally constructed of steel, aluminum or mesh.
CLEARANCE LIGHTS	The small lights found on each corner of a trailer and on top corners of trucks and tractors.
CLASS 1-8 TRUCK	Truck with the following Gross Vehicle Weight (GVW):
	CLASS 1: 6,000lbs or Less
	CLASS 2: 6,001lbs - 10,000lbs

	CLASS 3: 10,001lbs - 14,000lbs
	CLASS 3: 10,001lbs - 14,000lbs
	Class 4: 14,001lbs - 16,000lbs
	Class 5: 16,001lbs - 19,500lbs
	Class 6: 19,501lbs - 26,000lbs
	Class 7: 26,001lbs - 33,000lbs
	Class 8: 33,001lbs - Over
COE	A truck or tractor designed with the engine under the cab and having the provisions for the cab to tilt forward on a pivot to allow access to the engine.
C O F C	Container on a (rail) flat car.
COMBINATIONVEHICLE	An equipment configuration which includes a separate power unit combined with a trailer. Also known as a TRACTOR-SEMI-TRAILER.
COMMERCIAL TRAILER	A trailer used to handle freight in the transportation of goods for TRAILER others: excludes house trailers, light farm trailers, car trailers, etc.
CONESTOGA	A heavy duty tarp system used with flatbed trailers. These are taller than side kits, with a tarp system that expands and contracts on a track system.
CONVENTIONAL CAB	Cab in which the engine is mounted forward of the driver compartment.
CROSS MEMBER	The portion of frame on tractors and trailers that runs at a right angle between the main and left and right frame rails.
DAY CAB	A non-sleeper tractor.
DAYTON WHEELS	see SPOKE WHEELS.
DEAD AXLE	An axle without any driving power. Also known as a TAG AXLE.
DISC WHEELS	A one-piece tire rim. Available in steel, chromed steel, and aluminum. Also known asBUDD WHEELS.

DOLLY	An auxiliary axle assembly having a fifth wheel. Used for converting a semitrailer to a full trailer. [2 pup Trailers]
DOUBLE	A combination of two trailers pulled by a power unit. Usually refers to a tractor pulling two 28' trailers. Also see ROCKY MOUNTAIN DOUBLE and TURNPIKE DOUBLE.
DOUBLE FRAME	A chassis which is supported by 2 frames as opposed to the traditional 1
DRAG AXLE	See TAG AXLE.
DRIVE AXLE	Front and/or rear axle connected to the power unit.
DROP DECK TRAILER	A flatbed type trailer with a belly section the same or lower than the TRAILER height of the axle(s).
DRY VAN	A trailer with an enclosed body; not refrigerated.
DUAL DRIVE TANDEM	Two axles having drive mechanisms connected to an engine power TANDEM unit. Also seeBOGIE and TANDEM AXLE.
Dump Trailer	A trailer consisting of a body and hoist. May either be with a frame or frameless.
DUMPER	A dump truck or dump body.
DUPLEX	A transmission having five speeds forward with a two-speed auxiliary; thus giving ten speeds forward. There are two shift levers on this transmission.
ENGINE BRAKE RETARDER	A device using engine compression to slow a vehicle down, saving the vehicle's air operated brake system. Available only with diesel engines. Also known as a JAKE BRAKE.
EROPS	Enclosed Roll Over Protection. This is an enclosure which protects the operator. Usually pertaining to construction or agriculture equipment. Sometimes referred to as an "Enclosed Cab".
EXTENDED HOOD	An option or model of a Class 8 conventional truck with a longer hood. The hood normally extends an additional 12". F. E. T. Federal Excise Tax. Applied to the purchase of all new medium (33,000 lb.) and heavy-duty trucks, trailers, and equipment.
FENDERS	The mudguard or area around the wheel well of a vehicle.
FET	The federal excise tax (FET) is a 12% sales tax imposed on the first retail sale of truck, trailer, and semitrailer chassis and bodies, and tractors (trucks over 33,000 lbs. GVWR, tractors with a GVWR over 19,500 lbs. and have a gross combined weight, in combination with a trailer or semitrailer, of 33,000 lbs. or less and trailers over 26,000 lbs)
FIFTH WHEEL	A device used to connect a semitrailer and a tractor. May be stationary (fixed) or sliding. Also see AIR SLIDE FIFTH WHEEL andMANUAL SLIDE FIFTH WHEEL.
FIFTH WHEELHITCH	A hitch mounted inside the bed of a pickup body and used for gooseneck trailers or RV's.

FLAPS	Large rubber or other flexible material mounted behind the rear wheels of tractors and trailers, to shield against rocks or other objects being kicked up from the tires.
FLAT BED	Either mounted on a cab & chassis or a type of semitrailer, this body has no sides and comes in various lengths. It is usually constructed of steel or aluminum with a wood plank base. These Mostly Have 3 Types (Steel, Combination, Aluminum)
FLAT TOP SLEEPER	A sleeper box whose height is flush with the top of the tractor's cab.
FLOATATION TIRES	Over-width tires with a cross-section greater than 14 inches. Applicable only to construction vehicles.
FLOAT	An extendable flat bed or lowboy trailer.
FRONT SPOILER	Aerodynamic aid attached to the lower front bumper
FUEL TANK SKIRTING	Aerodynamic aid attached over the fuel tanks creating a flush face surface between the cab and frame.
FULL AERODYNAMICS	Aerodynamic package includeing a wind deflector, Side Fairings, Tank Fairings, and any other aerodynamic device.
GLIDER KIT	A cab and chassis with all components except the complete drive train (engine, transmission, differential, and rear axles).
GOOSENECK TRAILER	A trailer pulled by a FIFTH WHEEL HITCH.
GROSS COMBINED VEHICLE WEIGHT (GCW)	The maximum allowable load for a tractor and trailer.
GROSS VEHICLE WEIGHT(GVW)	The maximum allowable fully laden weight of the vehicle and its payload The most common classification method used by manufacturers and states for trucks and tractors.
HEADACHE RACK	A protective device found behind the back window of a truck or tractor. Is either attached to the frame of a tractor or part of a truck's body. Also called a headboard.
HEAVY DUTY TRUCK	Truck or tractor with a gross vehicle weight in excess of 19,500 lb. (Class 6 - 8).
HIGH CUBE VAN	Combination of a van front section and a box-like cargo section.
HIGH RAIL	Car hauler trailer which does not include a car rack for the tractor. Can have a self-contained power unit, be controlled by the tractor.
HIGH TILT CAB	See COE.
HENDRICKSON SUSPENSION	A walking beam rear suspension. Used primarily on heavy duty construction type trucks.

HOT SHOT	A light or medium duty tractor equipped with an after-market sleeper.
IN-FRAME MAJOR OVERHAUL	Diesel engine overhaul performed in the vehicle. Includes the replacement of main and thrust bearings, rod bearings, cylinder liners pistons, and rings and reconditioning of the cylinder head.
ILS	In Lieu of Stock, i.e. a component or piece of equipment on the vehicle which differs from the standard factory equipment.
JAKE BRAKE	Jacobs Engine Brake. See ENGINE BRAKE RETARDER.
JIB	The hinged extension attached to the upper end of a cranes boom. Its purpose is to extend the reach of the crane or the height of the boom.
KING PIN	The pin on a trailer that connects it to the fifth wheel of the tractor.
KING PIN PLATE	The large flat plate surrounding the king pin on a trailer.
KIT	See GLIDER KIT.
LADDER RACK	Commonly found on light duty utility bed trucks. This rack allows open storage from the back of the truck to over the cab.
LANDING GEAR	The small wheels mounted underneath the front of a semitrailer to support the front when it is disconnected from the tractor.
LIFTABLE AXLE	An axle without any driving power. Also known as a TAG AXLE.
LIFT GATE	A mechanism found on the rear of a truck body that is used to load and unload heavy products. The gate is rated in pound capacity and powered either hydraulically or electrically.
LIGHT DUTY TRUCK	Truck with a Gross Vehicle Weight of 10,000 lb. or less (Class 1 & 2).
LINER	An apron or plastic sheet used to protect the floor of a body. Typically found on dump trailers or dump trucks.
LOCKING DIFFERENTIAL	may provide increased traction compared to a standard, or "open" differential by restricting each of the two wheels on an axle to the same rotational speed without regard to available traction or differences in resistance seen at each wheel.
LOGISTIC POSTS	Vertical tracks used with straps for anchoring down cargo.
LONG NOSE CONVENTIONAL	A truck or tractor with a front bumper to back of cab dimensions (BBC) of 112" or more.
LOW BOY	A trailer primarily used for hauling heavy machinery with a detachable tongue and capacity rating in tons.

MANUAL SLIDEFIFTH WHEEL	A fifth wheel that can be adjusted manually forward or back along the frame of a tractor. Also see FIFTH WHEEL and AIR SLIDE FIFTH WHEEL.
MECHANICS TRUCK	A utility bed attached to a cab and chassis that also has other equipment attached. Other equipment may include any combination of the following: an air compressor, welder or small crane.
MEDIUM DUTY TRUCK (Class 3 - 5)	Truck or tractor with a gross vehicle weight of 10,001 to 19,500 lb.
MICHIGAN SPECIAL	A truck or tractor equipped with minimum front and rear axle ratings of 18,000 and 44,000 lb.
MIXER	A truck mounted cement mixer.
NOSE CONE	Found on the front of van bodies and dry van trailers, this piece is attached to increase aerodynamics.
OROPS	Open Roll Over Protection. This is an open cab which protects the operator. Usually pertaining to construction or agriculture equipment. Sometimes referred to as an "Enclosed Cab".
OWNER/OPERATOR PACKAGE	An Over The Road tractor with the following equipment: minimum 86" cab for COE's, 36" sleeper on conventionals, air conditioning, dual aluminum fuel tanks, am/fm stereo radio, and multicolored paint. Must also have eleven of the following: carpet, headliner, deluxe interior, power windows, high back seats, full instrument gauges, dual air horns, spot lights, visibility windows, step package, aluminum or chrome bumper, stainless quarter fenders, dual heated stainless steel mirrors, and/or chrome air inlets.
OUT-OF-FRAME MAJOR OVERHAUL	Diesel engine overhaul performed with the engine removed from the vehicle. Includes all In-Frame repairs with the addition of reconditioning the complete lower end, including the crankshaft.
OVER THE ROAD TRACTOR OR TRUCK	A vehicle equipped and in condition for long haul operations.
PENTHOUSE	A sleeper unit and least 78" high with skylight type windows.
PIGGYBACK	The transportation of highway trailers or containers trailer bodies on rail cars specifically equipped for the service.
PIG TAIL	The electrical cable that connects the tractor unit with the trailer.
PIPE RACK	Similar to a LADDER RACK but can have cylindrical tubes for enclosed storage.
PLATE DRY VAN	A dry van with composite or metal plate lining the interior.
POGO STICK	A metal pole with springs mounted behind the cab that support the air lines.
POWER TRAIN	The group of components used to transmit engine power to the wheels. Includes engine, clutch, transmission, universal joints, drive shafts and rear axle gears and shafts.

POWER UNIT	The control and pulling vehicle for trailers and semi-trailers. Also see TRACTOR.
PTO	Power Take Off - a device that harnesses engine power to operate mechanical accessories.
PUSHER AXLE	A non-powered truck or tractor axle set in front of powered axle. Also see TAG AXLE and TANDEM AXLE.
RECAPS	Tires that have had the tread replaced. Also known as Bandags.
REEFER	Refrigerated truck body, trailer or semitrailer.
ROCKY MOUNTAIN DOUBLE	A combination vehicle consisting of a tractor, a 40' - 48' trailer, and a shorter second trailer. Also see DOUBLE and TURNPIKE DOUBLE.
ROLLBACK	A type of tow truck which has a flatbed body which lifts up and down. These may also be equipped with or without a wheel lift, and may have a steel or aluminum body.
ROOF MOUNT WIND DEFLECTOR	See WIND DEFLECTOR.
SADDLE TANKS	Fuel tanks that are mounted along the frame just to the rear of the cab.
SEMI -TRAILER	Truck trailer equipped with one or more axles and constructed so that the front end rests upon a truck tractor.
SET BACK FRONT AXLE	Front axle located purposely toward the rear for increased load distribution.
SHORT NOSE CONVENTIONAL	A truck or tractor with front bumper to back of cab dimension (BBC) of 95" or less.
SIDE FAIRING	Also called "Cab Extenders". Aerodynamic aid attached to rear sides of a truck or tractor creating a flush surface from the vehicle to the trailer.
SIDE KIT	A removable tarp system used with flatbed trailers. Consists of side boards, headboard, and tarp.
SINGLE SCREW	A tractor with a single driven axle.
SIX BY SIX	(Written 6X6), a tractor having six wheels driving (3 axles), i.e. a tandem rear-end with driving front axle.
SLEEPER SIZE	The front to rear dimension in inches. Used on Conventional Cab Tractors.
SLIDING REAR AXLE	A trailer axle that can move forward or back along the frame rails.

SPOKE WHEELS	Two-piece cast iron and steel tire rims. Also known as DAYTON WHEELS. .
STACKS	Vertical exhaust pipes on a tractor.
STAKE BED	A flat bed with vertical posts and horizontal slates, usually made of wood or steel.
STAND UP SLEEPER	A tall sleeper box similar to a PENTHOUSE SLEEPER without the skylight windows.
STEEL DISC WHEELS	See DISC WHEELS.
STEP TANKS	Fuel tanks that integrate a step for access to the cab.
STEP VAN	A complete body built on a forward control chassis, referred to as a bread truck or a UPS type vehicle.
STINGER	A car hauler trailer that connects at the bottom of a tractor with a car rack.
STRAIGHT TRUCK	A vehicle with the cargo body and cab mounted on the same chassis.
SUPER SINGLES	Very wide tires that take the place of dual wheels on each axle. A rear tandem axle truck normally has 8 tires, however, if equipped with super singles it will have only 4. Usually found on mixers or dumps.
TAG AXLE	A non-powered truck or tractor axle set behind a powered axle. Also known as TRAILING TANDEM.
TANDEM AXLE	Two axles operated from a single suspension. Also see BOGIE and DUAL DRIVE TANDEM AXLE.
T O F C	Trailer On (rail) Flat Car.
TIRE INFLATION SYSTEMEM	Also called PSI Tire Inflation, This system allows for automatic tire inflation when tire pressure gets low.
TRACTOR	A truck cab and chassis without a body and equipped with a fifth wheel. Used for pulling a semitrailer.
TRACTOR SEMITRAILER	A combination vehicle consisting of a power unit (tractor) and semitrailer.
TRAILER	A vehicle designed without motive power to be drawn by anther vehicle.
TRAILER GRAIN BED	An open top, high-sided body used for transporting grain. These normally are equipped with a lift or bottom dump.

TRAILING TANDEM AXLE	See DUAL DRIVE TANDEM AXLE, TAG AXLE, and TANDEM AXLE.
TRI-AXLE TANDEM	Three axles operated from a single suspension.
TRUCK	A motor vehicle designed to carry an entire load. It may consist of a chassis and body, a chassis, cab and body, or be of integrated construction so that the body and chassis form a single unit.
TURNPIKE DOUBLE	A combination vehicle consisting of a power unit (tractor) and two trailers DOUBLE of at least 40' in length. See also DOUBLE and ROCKY MTN. DOUBLE.
TWIN SCREW	A double rear axle drive unit.
TWIN TRAILER	A short semitrailer under 29' designed to be operated as part of a combination vehicle with a tandem trailer of similar length.
TWO SPEED REAR AXLE	A rear axle with two ratios and a mechanism for selection.
UTILITY BED	A truck bed attached to the cab and chassis that has compartments and toolboxes accessible from the exterior of the bed. The interior is normally open but can be equipped with an optional enclosure.
VISIBILITY WINDOW	A window in the lower portion of the door, which enables the operator to look down on traffic.
WEST COAST MIRRORS	Large rear view mirrors on both sides of the cab.
WEST COAST RIG	A special light weight truck or tractor.
WET LINE KIT	A hydraulic pump and reservoir assembly used to operate a dump trailer.
WHEEL BASE	The distance between the centerlines of the front and rear axles. For trucks or trailers with tandem or tri-axles, the centerline is midway between the rear axles.
WHEEL POWER	The total number of axles of a power unit (X) the number of wheels powered and multiplied by 2. Example is 3 axles, 2 of which are power is listed as 6x4.
WINCH	hauling or lifting device consisting of a rope, cable, or chain winding around a horizontal rotating drum, turned by a crank or by motor or other power source; a windlass.
WIND DEFLECTOR	Aerodynamic aid attached to the roof of a truck, or tractor creating an air stream over the trailer. Also see AIR FOIL.
WRECKER	A tow truck which has a Boom and wheel lift, or "T-Bar" Self loading style body.