

Hire truck – first-time drivers - FAQ

So, you're hiring a truck! Before you hit the road there are some rules you should familiarise yourself with first - especially if this is your first time operating a heavy vehicle. While this is not an exhaustive list, it will serve you well as a starting point to get your engine rewinding. If you have any questions, simply give us a call on 13 NHVR (13 64 87) or [contact us](#).

Have you planned the route?

It is important to ensure you have assessed the journey and are aware of any bridge and underpass height restrictions.

- [NHVR Route Planner](#) - Use this online mapping tool to plan and save your heavy vehicle journey routes. Find out which road networks have approved routes and which ones may require you to submit an access application. Our Route Planner's GIS mapping information uses government GIS data.
- [State road transport authority mapping sites](#) – For more help planning your journey, these sites display authorised heavy vehicle routes within each state and some additional route information. They provide the most up-to-date network access information regarding route descriptions and restrictions.
- [Third party approvals](#) - An operator may need to consult with a third party to seek approval for an access permit application. This is a requirement for some permits [under s157 of the Heavy Vehicle National Law](#) (HVNL).

General mass and dimension requirements

For all large trucks, General Mass Limits (GML) are in effect.

Unless the vehicle is operating under an [Accreditation](#) or an exemption under the (HVNL), GML specifies the allowable mass for all types of heavy vehicle axle groups.

For a list of typical heavy freight vehicle configurations and their associated mass constraints, see [General mass and dimension limits](#).

In addition to the mass and dimensions of the vehicle, familiarising yourself with [Loading](#) your vehicle is recommended. This page includes information on how you can ensure your load is properly restrained.

Need more help? You can have a friendly conversation with our in-house Contact Centre on 13 NHVR (13 64 87) or [contact us](#).

What are the allowable General Access Vehicle (GAV) dimensions and mass?

- 2.5 metres in width
- 4.3 metres in height
- 19 metres in length
- 42.5 tonnes - you cannot exceed your vehicle's Gross Vehicle Mass (GVM)

For more information, visit [General Access Vehicle](#).

If you fall outside these parameters, you are considered a Restricted Access Vehicle (RAV) and may require a permit to access the road. [Do I need a permit?](#)

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Did you know, vehicles over 4.5t GVM may be required or directed to enter a weighbridge?

What is a weighbridge?

A weighbridge is a stopping point for heavy vehicles to be assessed for compliance purposes. These can usually be found along major highways and are operated by either the NHVR or State Government.

Need more help? You can have a friendly conversation with our in-house Contact Centre on 13 NHVR (13 64 87) or [contact us](#).

What should I do when I see a weighbridge?

- Weighbridges are heavily signposted. You can't miss them!
- If you're not sure what the GVM (Gross Vehicle Mass) of your vehicle is, pull in, better safe than sorry! There are substantial penalties if non-compliant.
- Compliance officers can always wave you through if you're not required to stop!

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Are you aware of fatigue management?

What is work time?

Work time includes all tasks to do with operating a vehicle over 12 tonne GVM. Driving is work time, additionally work time also includes tasks such as:

- Loading and unloading the vehicle.
- Cleaning or refuelling the vehicle.
- Recording information or completing a document (for example your work diary).
- It doesn't matter if you're getting paid or not, if the tasks occur on private property, or on a road, they are still classified as work.
- Anything that isn't work time is considered rest time.

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What is a work diary?

A [National Driver Work Diary](#) or an [Electronic Work Diary](#) is how you record your hours and comply with the law.

If your vehicle or combination is over 12 tonne GVM you must use a work diary to record your work time and rest hours.

A work diary is required if you are planning on driving more than 100km+ "as the crow flies" from your driver's base. Your driver's base is the place from which you would normally work.

Watch this great video that goes through exactly [how to do it in a National Driver Work Diary!](#)

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Purchasing a Work Diary or an Electronic Work Diary

When purchasing a Work Diary, bring some ID with you!

You can find locations to purchase a Work Diary and additional information at [Locations to purchase a Written Work Diary](#).

You can find the Electronic Work Diary Providers at [Electronic Work Diaries](#).

Need more help? You can have a friendly conversation with our in-house Contact Centre on 13 NHVR (13 64 87) or [contact us](#).

Ensure you avoid any fines!

Defects and penalties

Do your own [due diligence](#) and check the vehicle prior to jumping in and getting on the road.

- If your vehicle isn't up to scratch, you may be issued with a [defect](#). These must be given to the hire company as soon as possible.
- If the vehicle defect is major or major dangerous, you may be grounded.
- You may be issued a penalty notice requiring that you pay a fine as you are driving a defective vehicle.

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Licensing?

Heavy vehicle licensing and procedures (e.g. training, tests and endorsements) are still administered by state and territory road authorities. For more information about licensing requirements in your state or territory, select the relevant jurisdiction listed below.

- [Australian Capital Territory](#)
- [New South Wales](#)
- [Northern Territory](#)
- [Queensland](#)
- [South Australia](#)
- [Tasmania](#)
- [Victoria](#)
- [Western Australia](#)

Who are the Authorised Officers able to pull you over while operating a heavy vehicle?

Who are they?

You may encounter [Safety Compliance Officers \(SCO's\)](#) wearing the NHVR uniform as well as [Police Officers](#). NHVR Safety Compliance Officers (SCO's) enforce the Heavy Vehicle National Law by performing compliance and enforcement duties on public roads. Vehicles with magenta flashing lights and the NHVR logo can be recognised as a Safety Compliance Officer (SCO).

For more information:

Visit: www.nhvr.gov.au
 Email: info@nhvr.gov.au
 Phone: 13 NHVR (13 64 87)*

*Standard 1300 call charges apply. Please check with your phone provider.
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