

REAL Torque

June 2021

Contact maintenance for any questions on 0800 80 80 69

Pre-start vehicle inspection.

A pre-start check on a heavy vehicle is very important. As a driver, you have a responsibility to check that it is safe and compliant to be out on the road and the pre-start check goes a long way to meeting that responsibility. Any safety or compliance issues must be addressed before you take to the road.

The pre-start check will provide the info you need to plan any upcoming maintenance, such as servicing, COF expiry date, current RUC status, permit requirements, tyre replacements, etc. This is

where preventative maintenance starts and helps keep the vehicle safe, reliable, and compliant. The reasons for having a healthy vehicle should be obvious. It ensures the safety of not just the driver, but also everyone else on the road.

Did you know the TR Group logbook has excellent information on how best to do the pre-start check as shown below?

Driver Pre-trip Walk Around Inspection Guide



9 REFLECTORS, TAIL LIGHTS, AND INDICATORS

- ✓ All fitted, working correctly, clean and not damaged

10 IN CAB BEFORE MOVING OFF

- ✓ Hand brake applied, vehicle in neutral
- ✓ COF label is current and displayed on the windscreen
- ✓ Seat, mirrors and steering wheel adjusted correctly
- ✓ Current service label displayed
- ✓ Windscreen washers work correctly
- ✓ Check steering for excessive free movement
- ✓ No apparent air leaks from brakes, move forward and complete brake check
- ✓ All gauges and horn operational
- ✓ All switches and warning lights operate correctly
- ✓ Heating and ventilation system operate correctly
- ✓ Sufficient fuel to complete trip

8 TYRES, WHEELS AND SUSPENSION (This check must be carried out on both sides of the vehicle as you walk around)

- ✓ Tyres are correctly inflated and not damaged
- ✓ No cuts, bulges in tyre sidewalls
- ✓ Tyres -adequate tread depth (minimum 3mm)
- ✓ Tyres - no uneven wear or steel showing
- ✓ Wheel nut indicators, locking lugs are intact and not showing any movement (if fitted)
- ✓ Wheel nuts are tight
- ✓ Wheels not damaged
- ✓ Airbags, springs, ensure the vehicle is sitting level

1 ENGINE AND VEHICLE CAB (as you approach the vehicle visually inspect along the top vehicle body and load)

- ✓ Check fluid levels - oil, coolant, windscreen washers
- ✓ Visual inspection of cab, no loose panels, parts or hoses rubbing

7 HUBODMETER / EROAD ON TRAILER

- ✓ EROAD showing green light and visible, hubo reading correct, RUC expiry and RUC type current
- ✓ Fitted and not damaged, recording correctly

2 LICENSES (check the labels are for the correct vehicle)

- ✓ Registration label is current and displayed
- ✓ Certificate of loading is visible and displayed
- ✓ EROAD/hubodmeter to be compliant, display a legible mileage reading, correct RUC expiry and RUC type
- ✓ Correct Transport Service Licence (TSL) label displayed

6 CHECK TOW COUPLING, LOAD ANCHORAGES, CERTIFICATION PLATES

- ✓ Draw beam, drawbar, tow coupling, ensure locking pins and handles are in the correct position
- ✓ Certification plates, tail lights, reflectors, indicators, air, electrical and EBS leads

5 FLUID LEAKS (this check must be carried out on both sides of the vehicle as you walk around)

- ✓ No fluid or air leaks from engine, fuel system, air system or water tanks

4 WINDSCREEN, WIPERS, SUNVISOR, MIRROR

- ✓ Wipers work correctly
- ✓ Windscreen clean and not cracked
- ✓ Wiper blades not damaged
- ✓ Sunvisor is not cracked
- ✓ Rear-vision mirrors are intact, clean and correctly adjusted

3 LIGHTS AND INDICATORS

- ✓ All lights work correctly including hazard lights and indicators
- ✓ Lenses are clean and not cracked
- ✓ Registration plate legible

This 10 point walk around will only take about 5 minutes.

When checking lights, did you know that on some later model trucks the lights can be checked by using the door lock remote – that’s pretty cool!

A common thing to cause issues at roadside inspections is loose body mount bolts, so keeping an eye on them would be worthwhile.

Having a completed pre-start check sheet is helpful for roadside inspections to show you are doing what is required to ensure all is in order.

Taking the time to check rust marks, interference between panels, rub marks where there should not be any, items that appear misaligned are all indicators that things are not as they should be and are worth getting checked out. These are the things to look out for that will ultimately keep a vehicle reliable and on the road.

Checking the air system.

Before heading off, ensure the air system is fully charged and the air suspension is fully inflated. This is very important, especially on vehicles with air suspension dump valves. Driving with the air suspension deflated can easily damage the drive line components, tyres, Guards etc.

Be aware that bottom dumpers can take a long time to build up their air system as they have extra air tanks, so patience is required here.



Checking the wheel nuts.



If there is a red wheel nut indicator on the outside of the yellow indicator then a retorque is required. Any misalignment of the wheel nut indicators also mean wheel nuts are potentially loose and must be checked



A red indicator over the top of a yellow indicator, or even on its own, indicates a wheel requires a retorque.



Failure to check your wheel nuts may mean a failure such as this.

Tips and Tricks



TR Tips

- ▶ **Tow coupling condition and functionality is important – always visually inspect these are ‘locked’ in place.**
- ▶ **Use your instinct – if it doesn’t feel right, stop and take a look at it.**
- ▶ **Lights and wipers - it goes without saying but these are critical, especially in the rain and when driving at night.**
- ▶ **Oil and water coolant levels are critical components to ensure are at the right levels.**
- ▶ **Take the time to understand your vehicles maximum capabilities – understand load certificates, load anchorage and certification plates.**

REAL

June 2021

Torque

Contact maintenance for any questions
on 0800 80 80 69

TR TRUCKS & TRAILERS
RENTAL & LEASE
TR GROUP LTD

Making heavy vehicle fleet
management easy for you