

Pre and Post Vehicle Inspection

Many motor vehicle accidents can be prevented by simply performing a set of pre and post vehicle inspections. To ensure operator safety and prevent accidents due to mechanical failure, the Department of Transportation (DOT) mandates that every motor carrier, its officers, drivers, agent, representatives and employees directly concerned with the inspection of maintenance of motor vehicle shall comply and be conversant with the rules of this part.

Driver Pre-Trip Inspection

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulation (FMCSR) § 396.13 Driver Inspection requires that each driver perform a pre-trip visual and confirmation inspection prior to starting to driver a vehicle. The driver must ensure that the vehicle is in safe operating condition. The driver should review the last driver's vehicle inspection report for that vehicle and, if necessary, take steps to correct any deficiencies as defined in the regulation.

Driver Post Trip Inspection

FMCSR § 396.11 Driver Vehicle Inspection Report requires every commercial motor vehicle to be inspected daily. It goes on to state that each motor carrier shall require its drivers to submit a written report on each vehicle operated that day. In their reports, drivers must address specific parts and accessories, such as brakes, steering and lights. Each commercial motor vehicle in the fleet should carry a Driver Vehicle Inspection Report book where the drivers can record and submit this information.

The vehicle must be inspected prior to being operated. This does require that the power unit and trailer be inspected. A driver must be satisfied that both the power unit and trailer are in safe operating condition before operating the combination.

A pre and post trip inspection should cover at least the following parts and components on the vehicle:

- Service brakes, including trailer brake connections
- Parking brake
- Steering mechanism
- Lighting devices and reflectors
- Tires
- Horn
- Windshield wipers
- Rearview mirrors
- Coupling devices
- Wheels and rims
- Emergency equipment

Any findings noted on the inspection report that do not meet the minimum standards established in the regulation should be repaired prior to placing the vehicle in service. All maintenance and repairs should be documented and maintained in files at the operating location.

At the end of the shift, the driver shall perform a post-trip inspection and provide the original copy to the location office for documentation retention requirements (minimum 90 days). Location management is responsible for ensuring that the pre and post trip inspections are properly completed and documentation is maintained at the vehicle location.

If the DOT audits the company's operation, or if one of your vehicles is involved in a serious accident, the inspectors and investigators may want to look at the company's Driver Vehicle Inspection Reports (DVIR). It is important to make sure that all drivers understand the reasoning behind completing and documenting pre and post inspection reports that are required in § 396.11 and § 396.13.

Training Requirements

Although the regulations do not specify training requirements, drivers should be trained on pre-trip and post-trip vehicle inspection requirements and DVIR requirements in connection with DOT hazmat employee function specific training.

Maintenance and Review

Managers and supervisors can promote compliance efforts by conducting spot checks of driver vehicle inspections and routine reviews of DVIR's.

The attached Pre and Post Inspection checklist has been developed for your use and may be used to document vehicle inspection.

Driver Pre-Trip/Post-Trip Inspection Checklist

Vehicle (Make/Model/ Year): _____ **Odometer Reading:** _____

Trailer Number: _____ **Hubometer Reading:** _____

Inspection Date: _____ **Time:** _____ **A.M. P.M.**

Check any item that needs attention. Provide details under Comments section.

Tires		
OK	Needs Attention	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Proper inflation
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adequate tread
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Spare inflated
Leaks (look underneath)		
OK	Needs Attention	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Oil
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fuel tanks
Gauges		
OK	Needs Attention	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fuel
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Temperature
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dashboard warning light
Lighting System		
OK	Needs Attention	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Headlights
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Brake lights
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Turn signals
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hazard lights
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Reflectors
Safety Equipment		
OK	Needs Attention	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fire extinguisher
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Reflective triangles/flares
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Spare bulbs/fuses
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Emergency contact info
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cell phone/two-way radio

Trailers		
OK	Needs Attention	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Brake connections
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Coupling chains
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Coupling king pin
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Doors
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Landing gear
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tires/wheels
Other Equipment		
OK	Needs Attention	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Windshield wipers
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fans and defroster
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Brake system
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mirrors
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Horn
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Exhaust system
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Seat belts
Comments:		

- Condition of vehicle is acceptable
- Defects noted above have been repaired
- Defects noted above need not be repaired for safe operation of vehicle

Mechanic's Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Driver's Signature: _____ **Date:** _____