

Load/Unload Lumber

Pickup Truck or Trailer



PURPOSE:

Hauling lumber in a pickup truck can be challenging. By following simple precautions, you can ensure your cargo stays secure and prevent accidents.

Step 1: Prepare Your Truck

1. **Clear the Bed:** Ensure the bed of your pickup truck or trailer is empty and clean.
2. **Inspect the Truck:** Check the tires, suspension, and load capacity of your truck. Refer to the owner's manual for the maximum payload.



Step 2: Gather Necessary Equipment

- **Straps:** Use ratchet straps or bungee cords to secure the load.
- **Red Flags or Reflective Tape:** To indicate an overhanging load.
- **Blankets or Padding:** To protect your truck and the lumber.
- **Tarp:** To cover the lumber if needed.



Step 3: Load the Lumber

1. **Distribute Weight Evenly:** Place the heaviest pieces of lumber at the bottom and evenly distribute the weight across the bed.
2. **Do Not Overload:** Check for payload capabilities. Overloading can lead to decreased maneuverability, longer stopping distances, and an increased risk of accidents, especially during emergency situations.
3. **Align Lumber:** Ensure all lumber is aligned parallel to the bed of the truck.
4. **Use a Tailgate:** If the lumber is longer than the bed, lower the tailgate. If necessary, extend the load support with a bed extender.



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Step 4: Secure the Lumber

- 1. Strap the Load:** Use ratchet straps or bungee cords to secure the lumber in place. Make sure to tie down both the front and back of the load.
- 2. Securing the Load**
 - Light Loads (under 250lbs):
 - Keep the tailgate up.
 - Place one end of the boards against the front of the bed and the other against the top of the tailgate.
 - Bundle the lumber with ratchet straps at both ends.
 - Heavy Loads (over 250lbs):
 - Lower the tailgate.
 - Place one ratchet strap about a foot behind the rear bed tie-down anchors and another behind the front anchor points.
 - Stack the lumber in the middle of the bed on top of the straps, wrap, and tension them.
- 3. Check for Movement:** Ensure the lumber is tightly secured and does not move when you push or pull it.



Step 5: Mark Overhanging Lumber

- 1. Red Flags:** Attach red flags or reflective tape to any lumber that extends beyond the bed of the truck to alert other drivers.
- 2. Legal Requirements:** Check local regulations for the required distance that triggers the need for marking overhanging loads.



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Step 6: Drive Safely

- 1. Check Your Load:** Periodically stop to check the security of your load.
- 2. Drive Cautiously:** Avoid sudden stops, sharp turns, and high speeds. Drive slowly, especially over bumps and rough terrain.
- 3. Monitor Tail Swing and Safety**
 - Be cautious of tail swing, especially in short wheelbase vehicles.
 - Always be aware when making right-angle turns to avoid hitting nearby vehicles.



UNLOADING/Deliver

Step 7: Unload the Lumber

- 1. Prepare the Unloading Area:** Ensure the unloading area is clear and has enough space to accommodate the lumber.
- 2. Wear Gloves:** Protect your hands by wearing gloves while handling the lumber.
- 3. Lift with Care:** Use proper lifting techniques to avoid injury. Lift with your legs, not your back.
- 4. Place Neatly:** Arrange the lumber neatly at the delivery location, ensuring it is stable and accessible to the recipient.

