

“Truck Talk” Glossary of Frequently Encountered Terms in Trucking

accident register	log of accidents required by DOT regulations
AMSA	American Moving & Storage Association
ATA	American Trucking Associations
baffles	pieces of metal to separate pots, and minimize slosh factor in a tanker trailer
base plate	base license plate for state of registration
belly dump	device enabling you to unload dry bulk from a trailer
bill of lading	contract which governs carriage of load
bobtailing	driving tractor without a trailer attached
bogie/dolly	detachable wheel and axle device used to connect trailers
broker	one who arranges for the transportation of freight by others
cabover (COE)	cab over engine tractor (flat front)
Carmack	Federal regulation which limits liability for freight damage
CDL	commercial drivers license
chicken sticks	trim poles on corners of tractor to help driver spot distances
CMV	commercial motor vehicle
COGSA	Carriage of Goods by Sea Act
consignee	party to whom the goods are being shipped
conspicuity	reflective tape and markings to make trailer visible
container/pig	intermodal shipping box which holds goods (loads on chassis)
conventional cab	tractor with hood in front of windshield
CSA	Compliance, Safety, Accountability program of FMCSA
day cab	smaller tractor, with no sleeping compartment, and usually one back axle
deadhead	pulling an empty trailer
demurrage	maritime/intermodal version of detention
detention	surcharge when driver is held up/exceeds free time
dock plate	covers gap between trailer and dock
doubles	set of two of trailers pulled by same tractor
DQ file	driver qualification file (required by DOT)
dry bulk	freight like grains, cement, corn (triangle shaped pots)
dry van	regular box trailer
EOBR	electronic on-board recorder (e.g. Qualcomm)
fifth wheel	disc on tractor to which trailer is attached
FMCSA	Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration
FMCSR	Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (49 C.F.R.)
full truck load	all cargo in trailer goes to one consignee
gator	pieces of retread on road
Georgia overdrive	going downhill in neutral to exceed governor's speed limit
glad hands	lines running air from the tractor to the trailer
governor	device on engine which limits the vehicle's maximum speed
GVW	gross vehicle weight
hazmat	hazardous materials
headache rack	part of trailer that extends over cab; aka granny's attic
header board	front part of flatbed trailer that stands up



hours of service	regulations restricting driving time
household goods	the moving industry
CC bar/Mansfield bar	horizontal bar on back of trailer to prevent underride
IFTA	Interstate Fuel Tax Act
intermodal	multiple modes of transportation (train, sea, truck)
jake brake	engine retarder brake - slows down rpms
king pin	pin on trailer, connects into the fifth wheel on tractor
landing gear	trailer rests on these legs when unhitched from tractor
LCVs	long combination vehicles (tractor pulling more than one trailer)
load lock	extendable pole used to hold loads in place in trailer
lowboy	low flatbed trailer - used to carry construction items (clearance)
LTL	“less than truckload” - loads for multiple customers in same trailer
lumper	person who helps load and unload trailer
MCS 90	endorsement required in certain commercial auto insurance policies
MRO	medical review officer; doctor who reviews drug and alcohol test results
NTL	non-trucking liability insurance (aka “bobtail” insurance)
NTTC	National Tank Truck Carriers
OOIDA	Owner Operator Independent Driver Association
operating authority	licensed as a motor carrier with DOT
owner operator	owns tractor and leases it to an authorized motor carrier
P&D	local pick up and delivery runs; aka peddle runs
peddle run	local runs
pig	shipping container used in intermodal transportation
piggyback	shipping container (with or without chassis) being moved on a flatbed rail car
pigtail	lines running electricity from tractor to trailer
placards	signage on vehicle identifying authorized motor carrier
PM	preventative maintenance
power unit	another term for a truck tractor
private fleet operator	company that hauls only its own cargo
pup	each trailer in set of doubles is called a pup (smaller size)
reefer	refrigerated trailer
RFID	radio frequency identification device; used to track cargo
saddle tank	cylindrical shaped gas tank on lower side of tractor
SAFER/SAFEDAT	safety database websites maintained by federal government
safety fitness rating	assigned by DOT (e.g. conditional or satisfactory)
SAP	substance abuse professional; doctor who evaluates drug & alcohol violations
shipper	party who owns goods being shipped
slack adjuster	device on brake for adjusting brake
sleeper berth	sleeping area in back of certain tractors
slip seating	practice of having more than one driver share same truck
slosh factor	force of liquid flowing to front of tanker trailer after braking
straight truck	one piece truck (i.e. no separate trailer)
tandems	set of wheels together
tank wagon	straight truck with tanker back; often used to carry home heating oil