

# Commercial Vehicle Pre-Trip Inspection Checklist

You are only required to inspect the items on the CDL Vehicle Inspection checklist. You may use the checklist provided in this section for your test and check off items as you have completed them, but NO additional markings or writing may be placed on this list prior to the test. You MUST name, point to and/or touch and fully explain to the examiner WHAT you are inspecting each safety critical item for. If you do not, you will not get credit for the item(s).

(Remember to latch the hood.)

## Class A Checklist Tractor Semi-Trailer or Truck & Trailer or Bus & Trailer

### In-Vehicle/Engine Start PG. 3

- \*air or \*hydraulic brake check
- parking & trailer brake check
- service brake check
- lighting indicators
- emergency equipment
- windshield & traffic monitoring devices
- wipers & washers
- heater & defroster
- horn(s)

### Lights Operations Check PG. 4

- all external lights

### Front of Vehicle/Engine Area PG. 4

- lenses
- fluid levels
- fluid & air leaks
- steering systems

### Steering Axle PG. 4 & 5

- tires
- rims
- lug nuts
- springs/mounts & air bags & shocks
- brake lines or hoses & leaks
- brake contaminates

### Side of Vehicle PG. 5

- lenses & reflectors
- traffic monitoring devices
- battery
- fuel tank(s)/DEF tank
- frame(s)

### Combination Vehicles Only PG. 6

- air & electric lines & connectors
- fifth wheel skid plate or pintle hook or tow hitch
- kingpin & apron & gap or drawbar ring & tongue or coupler & tongue
- locking & safety devices

### Trailer Only PG. 6

- landing gear & clearance
- reflective tape

### Rear of Trailer PG. 6

- lenses & reflectors

\* Automatic failure if not performed correctly

**READ MN CDL MANUAL SECTION 10M PAGES 189-200**

Department of Public Safety Driver and Vehicle Services - 445 Minnesota St., Saint Paul, MN 55101

Phone: (651) 201-7626 TTY: (651) 282-6555 Fax: (651) 296-5316

Rev. May 2024

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(Remember to latch the hood.)

## Class B or Class C Checklist Straight Truck or Other Straight Vehicle

### In-Vehicle/Engine Start

- \*air or \*hydraulic brake check
- parking & trailer brake check
- service brake check
- lighting indicators
- emergency equipment
- windshield & traffic monitoring devices
- wipers & washers
- heater & defroster
- horn(s)

### Lights Operations Check

- all external lights

### Front of Vehicle/Engine Area

- lenses
- fluid levels
- fluid & air leaks
- steering systems

### Steering Axle

- tires
- rims
- lug nuts
- springs/mounts & air bags & shocks
- brake lines or hoses & leaks
- brake contaminates

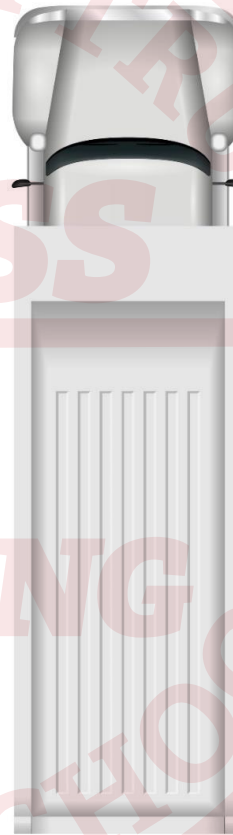
### Side of Vehicle

- lenses & reflectors
- traffic monitoring devices
- battery
- fuel tank(s)/DEF tank
- frame(s)

### Rear of Vehicle

- lenses & reflectors

\* Automatic failure if not performed correctly



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## **INSIDE VEHICLE**

### **Safe start:**

**SHOW:** Before starting the truck, buckle -up. Explain, I would Chock the wheels, Pull on the parking & trailer brake valves brakes and/or point to them and explained they are engaged. Then show the transmission is in neutral."

### **Start the truck.**

**AIR BRAKE CHECK\*:** **THINK: G A L E** \*If air gauges read above 120 psi, pump brake to release air to 100psi and reset the governor.

### **1. Governor Cutoff Check & Air Gauge**

**Explain:** Air gauges read in the safe operating range (90-120 psi).

(leave both the parking and trailer brakes pulled out) inspect that the air gauge is working and builds the air pressure, mention governor cutoff (approximately 120 -140 psi) and **callout the cutoff pressure for your vehicle.**

### **2. Air Loss check**

(The parking and trailer brakes should be pushed in, and keep your foot on the brake pedal) keep the truck in neutral, **turn off the truck** but turn the key back to the ON position; note: parking and trailer brake valves should be pushed in "or released." **Explain:** "I should not lose more than 4 psi per minute." (3 psi for class B.) Wait the full minute while holding the service brake. Explain, "I did not lose 4 psi (Class A) or 3psi (if Class B)."

### **3. Low Air Alarm check:**

**Explain:** "The Low Air Alarm should come on **before 55 psi.**" Start to pump the brakes slowly until alarm sounds. **Explain:** "low air alarms work. Both hear and see the alarms" **Callout the PSI of your vehicle.**

### **4. Emergency Brake check:**

Both parking brake valves should be pushed in and released at this time. **Explain:** "Both brake valves should pop out and apply automatically between 45 - 20 psi." Start to pump the brakes until valve/s apply, "**pop out**" and **callout the PSI of your vehicle.** Immediately start the engine, put the truck in drive and try to pull against the brakes. **Explain:** "**Emergency brakes hold.**" Put the truck in neutral and build air pressure to roughly 100 psi, and explain to the examiner "**building air to the safe operating range of 90-120 psi / typically around a 100 psi.**"

## **Parking & Trailer Brake Check**

### **Step 1. Parking Brake:**

Release (push in) trailer brake (**red valve**) leaving **yellow valve** applied (out) and put the truck in drive or gear. Gently pull against the **parking brake**, truck should not move; **Explain:** "**Parking brake holds.**"

### **Step 2. Trailer Brake & connection**

Release (push in) parking brake (**yellow valve**) and pull out the trailer brake (**red valve**). Gently apply gas pedal or release the clutch to move the truck forward. Then **explain,**"**Trailer Brake holds the truck and the trailer is securely coupled.**"

### **Service brake:**

Release **parking & trailer brakes**, put the truck in drive, roll forward and stop with service brake (brake pedal); **Explain,** "**Service brake stops the truck and also brakes evenly without pulling to either side.**"

### **Lighting indicators:**

**Explain:** "**ABS & DEF warning lights are not (on), DEF is full and there is no check engine warning light visible. Indicating I don't have a problem requiring service.**"

Turn on lights and check right and left turn signal indicators and flashers (hazards). Check the high beam indicator. And **Explain,** "**dashlights work, I can read the gauges clearly.**"

### **Emergency Equip:**

Spare fuses, none missing. 3 reflective triangles not cracked or missing; fire extinguisher is fully charged, safety pin is not missing and its securely mounted to the floor.

**Windshield  
& Traffic Monitoring  
Devices (mirrors):**

*CCC = clean, clear  
not cracked*

Windshield is clean, clear, and not cracked. No illegal stickers and nothing blocking my view. The mirrors are clean, clear, and adjusted properly.

**Wipers & washers:**

The wiper blades and arms are not cracked or missing and operate smoothly. Test the washer fluid, explain, "washer fluid is full and cleans glass."

**Heater & defroster:**

Turn on the fan and test (twist) the heater/defroster controls to see if it works. Explain "heater and defrost work."

**Horn:**

Toot the horn/s, explain, "city horn works, and if equipped air/freeway horn works."

**Lights Operation Check:**

**(Leave lights on and truck idling, mention to examiner, now I will check all my lights. Note: exit the vehicle maintaining three points of contact, close the door.**

**All External Lights:**

Low Beams: Check front;  
High Beams: Check front;  
Clearance, marker & tail: Check all sides of truck and trailer and top of cab.  
Right turn signal: Get out and check front & back;  
Left turn signal: Check front & back;  
Hazard/Flashers: Check front & back;  
Brake Lights: Ask the examiner to help you check the brake lights.

**Front of Vehicle/Engine Area**

**Lenses**

*CCC = clean, clear  
not cracked*

Inspect that light lenses or covers are the proper color, clean, not broken and not missing.

**Fluid Levels**

**Oil level**

Check while engine is off, explain, "I would remove yellow dipstick. Level should be above the add mark, if below, point to where it should be added. Cap is not missing and securely mounted.

**Coolant level**

Check while engine is off, should be above the add mark. If below, point to where it should be added. The reservoir is not cracked or leaking, securely mounted.

**Power steering Fluid**

Should be above the minimum/add mark (checked while engine is running on automatic only.) Reservoir mounted securely, not cracked or leaking, not missing nuts or bolts, hoses are not loose, cracked or leaking, and are securely mounted.

**Automatic Transmission Fluid**

Automatic transmissions only, check yellow dipstick (passanger side) - should be above the add mark (while the engine is running), If low, add fluid where I check it with a funnel.

**Fluid & Air Leaks:**

Smell for burnt rubber or plastic. Look for leaks or puddles on top and under motor, near the radiator, under the engine compartment and transmission. Hoses should not be cracked, worn through, loose or leaking and missing hose clamps. I would listen for air leaks, all the fittings are tight not cracked or leaking and securely mounted.

**Steering Systems:**

*CDL = cracks, dents,  
or leaks*

*CBD = cracks, bent,  
or dents*

*ABC = abrasions, bulges,  
cracks (hoses)*

**Steering box** is not twisted, sagging, or loose; no missing nuts or bolts; not leaking.

**Hose;** they're no abrasions bulges or cuts; not leaking.

**Steering linkage:** point to the steering shaft, pitman arm and drag link are not cracked, bent, dented or loose; no missing nuts or bolts, bushings and joints are greased. Castle nuts and cotter keys are not missing, cracked or loose. Check for excessive play at the steering shaft not more than 10 degrees of play at the shaft or 2 inches at the steering wheel.

**(Remember to latch the hood.)**

## **Tires**

*ABC = abrasions, bulges, cracks*

**Tire** tread is virgin tread, not recapped, tread depth is not worn dangerously thin it's at least 4/32 deep, evenly worn, no flat spots, side walls, are not bulging, cracked, leaking or exposed tire beads between the rim and tire. I'd check for proper inflation at valve stem and with a tire gauge, valve stems are visible and accessible. Tires are properly inflated, no missing dust caps and are securely mounted.

## **Rims**

*CBD = cracks, bent, or dents*

**Rims** are not warped, cracked, bent or dented, no elongated holes behind the lug nuts or gaps, no shiny threads on the lugs, and not illegal welds. The rims are securely mounted.

## **Lugs & Lug Nuts**

*CBD = cracks, bent, or dents*

**Lugs and lug nuts** are not are lose, missing or cracked or bent, no gaps between lug nuts and rim, and no shiny threads and are securely mounted.

## **Springs/Mounts/Airbag & Shocks**

### **Springs**

*CBD = cracks, bent, or dents*

**Springs** The metal is not cracked, bent or dented, rusted through, not sagging or loose; Springs not scissoring, no missing nuts or bolts, Securely Mounted.

### **Mounts**

*CBD = cracks, bent, or dents*

**Spring mounts**, The metal is not bent, cracked, or dented; not twisted, sagging or loose, no gaps or missing bolts. No torn or missing bushings and are securely mounted. The spring **U-Bolt mounts** Not cracked, bent, or dented; not twisted, sagging or loose; no missing nuts and are Securely Mounted.

### **Shocks**

*CDL = cracks, dents, or leaks*

**Shocks** are not cracked, bent or dented, rusted through, twisted sagging or loose, they're not leaking. Bushings not torn or missing, no missing nuts or bolts, and securely mounted.

### **Brake hoses/Lines**

#### **/Leaks:**

**Brake hoses**, No abrasions, bulges or cuts; no leaks or missing hose clamps. ABS line they're no corroded, exposed or loose wires. Securely Mounted.

#### **Brake contaminates:**

*ABC = abrasions, bulges, cracks*

Mention the drums and linings are dry -no grease or oil. No mud or rocks, signs of brake fade such as, warping and discoloration or debris and inside the drums and linings. They're securely mounted **(automatic only) must look through inspection holes keyholes.**

**(Remember to latch the hood.)**

### **Lenses & Reflectors**

*CCC = clean, clear not cracked*

#### **(FRONT & SIDE OF VEHICLE)**

Inspect that light lenses or covers are the proper color (amber =front), clean, not broken and not missin, securley mounted

**(REAR OF TRUCK)** DOT approved tape, Lenses clean and clear, not missing. Proper color (red = rear).

**(REAR OF TRAILER)** DOT approved tape, Lenses clean and clear, not missing. Proper color (red = rear).

### **Traffic Monitoring**

#### **Devices: (Mirrors)**

*CCC = clean, clear not cracked*

**Mirrors**, Metal frame is not cracked, bent or dented, mirrors are clean, clear not cracked, loose or missing, no missing nuts or bolts. Securely Mounted

#### **Battery:**

*CEL= Corroded, Exposed or loose wires*

**Battery** is not corroded, loose, cracked or leaking, wires are not cut, exposed, loose. Batteries and battery box are securely mounted within the box and on the truck.

#### **Fuel tank(s)/**

#### **DEF tanks:**

*CDL = cracks, dents, or leaks*

**Fuel Tank** is secured with the metal straps, needs at least two, they're not twisted or loose, rusted through, rubber bushings are not missing, metal is not rubbing on metal. Fuel cap seal is in place, not worn through, missing or leaking. I'd look for leaks at the top of fuel tank, at the cap and below the tank, and the tank is securely mounted.

#### **DEF tanks:**

*CDL = cracks, dents, or leaks*

**Def Tank** is not twisted or sagging secured to the truck, DEF cap and seal is not missing. not worn cracked or leaking. I'd look for leaks at the top of DEF tank, at the blue cap and below the tank, DEF Tank is securely mounted.

#### **Frame(s):**

*CBD = cracks, bent, or dents*

**Frame** • Inspect for cracks, illegal, broken missing welds, rust holes or other damage to the frame and cross-members, including the trailer and not missing tie downs. Inspect for cracks, breaks or holes in the cargo area or floor. We don't have tandem release lever.



## **Combination Vehicles (ONLY)**

**(TRACTOR) Air and Electric connectors and lines,** Electrical cord plugged in and secured w/safety latch, lines are not Cut, Exposed or Loose wires, and enough slack for the turn of trailer. Air lines connected at glad hands, rubber seal is not torn or leaking and the lines have enough slack for turns.

**(SEMI TRAILER) Air and electric connectors,** Electrical cord firmly plugged in and secured, not cut, no corroded exposed or Loose wires, not dragging below the trailer frame. Securely Mounted. Air lines properly connected, no air leaks, no tears or cuts and not dragging below the trailer frame. Securely Mounted.

### **Fifth Wheel Skid Plate**

**1. Fifth Wheel** 5th Wheel Skid Plate not greased, in place of grease is a (poly plate) mounted securely, no cracks. Not bent or warped and is securely mounted.

**2. MOUNTING BOLTS** Nuts and bolts are not loose or missing, no gaps between platform, bracket and frame, no loose, cracked bolts or missing nuts and bolts. All Securely Mounted

**3. PLATFORM** Secured to frame, not Cracked, Bent and Dented or rusted trough, no missing bolts and nuts are securely mounted to the platform.

### **King Pin & Apron & Gap**

**KINGPIN** Locked in locking jaws, not Cracked, Bent, or Dented. Head is visible under the locking jaws.

**APRON** Not cracked, bent or dented, secured to trailer frame. No missing or broken welds.

**GAP** Look for gaps between the apron and 5th wheel, should be no gap. If there was a gap it would indicate the kingpin is not properly locked or locking jaw is on the head of the kingpin where it cannot be.

The locking jaw is around the neck of kingpin exactly where it should be. The trailer is securely connected.

### **Locking & Safety Devices**

**LOCKING JAWS:** Locking jaw is around the “shank”, and not the “head” of the kingpin, latched secured and visible. There is no excessive play between the locking jaw and the kingpin. It is not bent or cracked, properly greased and is securely mounted

**RELEASE ARM:** properly seated in drive position and safety latch/lock engaged and secured, no cracks or bent arm and has proper spring tension. **If equipped with a latch it has safety latch or arm -mention no missing safety pin or cotter key and is securely mounted.**

### **Trailer Only**

#### **Landing gear & Clearance:**

**CBD = cracks, bent, or dents**

Fully raised up off ground, raised enough to clear the road. The landing gear is positioned properly so the it will clear the rear of truck (fifth wheel) during turns. No missing welds, brackets are not cracked, bent, dented or rusted through. No loose or missing bolts, landing foot and handle in stowed in drive position. Securely Mounted and strong enough for the cargo.

#### **Lenses & Reflectors**

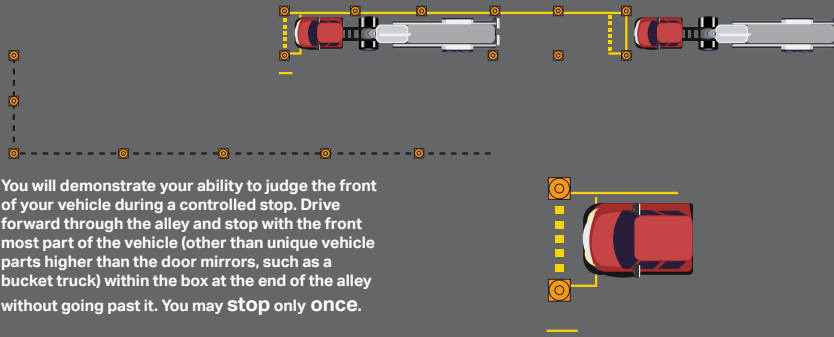
**CCC = clean, clear not cracked**

Lense covers on the sides of the vehicle and trailer (combination only) are the proper color (amber = front, red = rear), clean, not broken or missing. Reflectors on the sides of the truck and trailer (trailer) are the proper color (amber = front and red = rear), clean, not broken or missing.

#### **Reflective Tape:**

**Reflective tape,** DOT approved tape, Inspect that reflector tape on the sides and rear of the trailer are present and affixed securely to the vehicle.

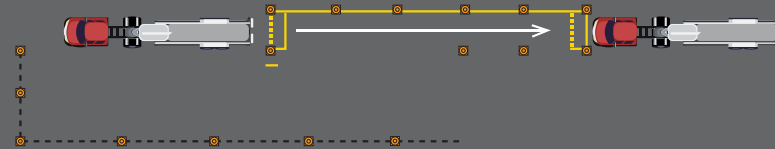
## Exercise 1 - Forward Stop



You will demonstrate your ability to judge the front of your vehicle during a controlled stop. Drive forward through the alley and stop with the front most part of the vehicle (other than unique vehicle parts higher than the door mirrors, such as a bucket truck) within the box at the end of the alley without going past it. You may **stop** only **once**.

No get out and looks, park the truck and sound the horn when you've completed the exercise.

## Exercise 2 - Straight Line Backing

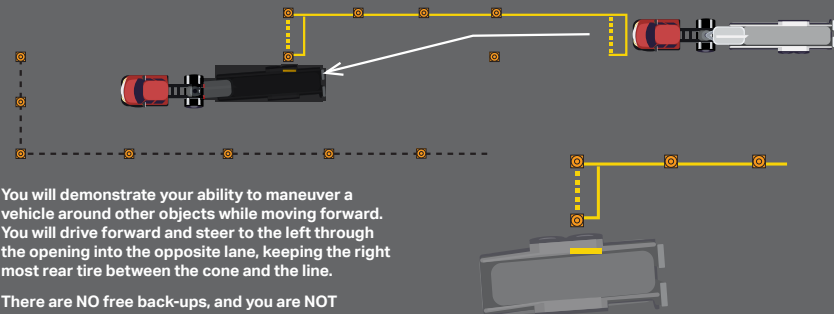


You will demonstrate your ability to back a vehicle in a straight line. From your stopped position from the previous exercise, the examiner will ask you to pull forward and stop when they raise their hand.

Then back straight through the alley until the front of your vehicle has cleared the last set of cones at the far end of the alley.

1 free pull-up and 1 get out and look are allowed

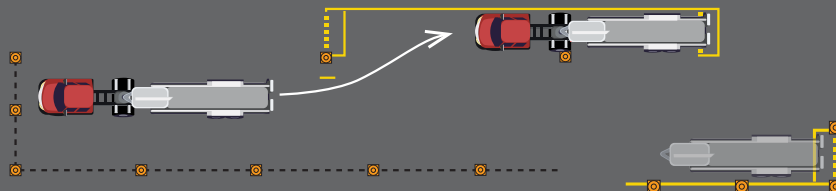
## Exercise 3 - Forward Offset tracking



You will demonstrate your ability to maneuver a vehicle around other objects while moving forward. You will drive forward and steer to the left through the opening into the opposite lane, keeping the right most rear tire between the cone and the line.

There are **NO** free back-ups, and you are **NOT** permitted to exit the vehicle during this exercise.

## Exercise 4 - Reverse Offset tracking



You will demonstrate your ability to offset back and park a vehicle at the end of an alley. Starting parallel with the outer boundary, offset back into the alley, bringing the rear most part of your vehicle within three (3) feet of the rear of the alley. Stop with the rear most part of the vehicle in the three (3) foot box at the end of the alley. Your examiner will point out the rear most part of your vehicle when giving instructions for this exercise.

Your vehicle must be straight within the alley when completed. Your vehicle must be completely within the defined exercise boundaries when completed. You may not go beyond the outer boundary line.

2 Pull-ups and 2 get out and looks are allowed during this exercise

## **MENTALLY PREPARE FOR YOUR ROAD TEST**

**Proper Turns:** During turns, remember to stay straight and turn late, to make wide enough turns and to ensure either the drive tire wheels (if class B) and/or trailer wheels do not get too close, rub or hit a curb. Remember these steps: The closer you are to the right-hand curb the further straight you have to travel forward to avoid hitting the curb. Be aware of the left and right-hand sides of your vehicle/s while making turns. Allowing too much space between you and the curb will also create enough space for drivers to attempt to pass your commercial vehicle, putting you and other drivers at risk of an accident. Close this gap, meaning; do not make turns too wide so as to create enough space for dangerous/risky drivers to pass your vehicle on either right and/or left while completing turns.

**Right turns:** The truck and trailer tires should be 3-4 feet from the curb, when you start the turn. And then return to the curb about 3-4 feet to complete the right turn. It's okay to enter into the opposing lane of traffic as long as it's safe to do so. It's also okay to cross over the center of road, center-line/s on right hand turn. Watch your rear wheel / rear trailer wheels in passenger side mirror, wait for the furthest rear wheel on your commercial vehicle/s setup to enter into the round portion of the curb and then come back to the curb on your right. DO NOT hit a curb with the drive tires (if Class B) and trailer tires (if Class A) on any right turn.

**Left turns:** The truck and trailer must remain in the left most lane, tires must go around the center line and/or painted yellow center lines. Always finish the turn in the same lane you started from. DO NOT let the trailer or class B vehicle rears tires cut or cross the yellow the center line/s on a left turn.

**Double Left turns:** As a commercial driver you need to turn from the outside lane whenever 2 turn lanes are available. Thus, leaving the inside lane for other traffic. Remember to return to the same lane you started your left turn from i.e. outside lane to outside lane.

**Proper Stops:** Come to a complete stop, behind the stop sign 2-3 feet, cross-walks and stop bars. You should be able to see the bottom edge of the road marking. Remember to stop, look in both directions and then move when it is safe to do so. You do not want to stop or slow other drivers down while you proceed through the intersection and/or to complete any turns.

**Proper Observation:** Be alert and aware of all sides of your commercial vehicle and trailer. Establish a cushion of space around you and other drivers. Don't allow your mind to drift into thought, be present and focused on driving. Keep your head moving during the road test, you can never look too-much but you can look too-little. Remain focused and observant at all controlled and uncontrolled intersections, backing & performing lane changes. Move head shoulder to shoulder. Learn to turn your head and use the windows on the doors not just the window in front of you.

**Proper Hill Park:** Always signal to the curb. The truck and trailer if equipped with a trailer must be parallel to the curb and also 1 foot or less from the curb. Try not to rub the curb with either the truck or trailer tires. When parking uphill move the tires to the left or away from the curb. Whenever parking down hill move the tires right or into the curb.



**Proper Highway Driving:** Remember to signal early, often and continuous when entering the highway/freeway. Proper lane changes require you signal early, look, assess and then move into the lane when it is safe to do so. Commercial drivers should allow a cushion of space around their vehicle/s. Always have an out or escape plan. Do not follow too close provide a minimum of 150 feet in the front of the truck. Observe all speed limits, do not speed.

**Backing:** Once Truck is in the reverse gear be sure and check both mirrors at least 2-3 times before moving on any of the backing exercises.

Class A Drivers: Should remember the following. Always steer the steering wheel at “a problem” to avoid “the problem.”

Class B Drivers steer away from the problem to avoid the problem.

Backing exercises are considered extremely risky and potentially dangerous. Always proceed with caution. Failure to observed both sides of your vehicle is perceived as a risk to you and others. Always proceed with caution, and look-look, and look again to avoid risk, issues and failure.

**While Driving outside the course the Examiner May Ask Questions:** Be prepared to answer questions about driving scenarios such as, Road signs, Rail Road Crossings, and bridge Clearances.

**READ MN CDL MANUAL SECTION 12 PAGES 214 - 216**



**Class A Leasing  
Office Address**  
8899 Hastings St. NE  
Blaine, MN 55449

**Arden Hills  
Exam Station Address**  
5400 Old Highway 8  
Arden Hills, MN 55112

**Plymouth  
Exam Station Address**  
2455 Fernbrook Lane N  
Plymouth, MN 55442

**Contacts: Main Line (612)723-4398**

**Eric / Owner (612)618-1812 | Sabrina (763)344-3113**

**Brannon (651)802-5063**

**CDL Appointments for Plymouth and Arden Hills: 651-297-5029**

## REMINDERS & HELPFUL TIPS

1. You're not actually checking fluid levels, landing gear pins, glad-hands, gas cap & seals, removing oil and automatic transmission fluid dip sticks, coupling and uncoupling of trailer, crawling under the trailer, pulling release arm so as to unlock the locking jaw of the trailer. But rather mention this is what I "WOULD DO."

2. Make sure you point at the part and give a detailed description/explanation about every item listed! MENTION 3-4 things about it, Check it off and move on.

BE detailed try to give a 3 - 4 point description about nearly every item listed.

Examples" - "not cracked, broken, or loose"  
- "no missing bolts; mounted securely"  
- "not bent, twisted, or warped; not rusted through"  
- "not leaking" etc.

Follow the list, and Be mindful of what you are saying and Your time.

3. Study your Pre-Trip. In addition to the presentations, reading this document and watching the pre-trip videos. You'll also need to practice, rehearse and study the Pre-Trip on your own to establish knowledge, confidence and passable results.

4. Arrive at the Driver's Exam Station at least 30-45 minutes, before your scheduled road test. And dress and prepare for the inclement weather, cold, rain, snow and ice.

Check in at the Outside Dispatch Window. DO NOT check in at the front door. Instead walk around the DMV building to the dispatch window.

Wait in or by your CDL Test Truck.

### HELPFUL ACRONYMS:

**CBD** = No **C**racks, **B**ends, **D**ented

**ABC** = No **A**brasions, **B**ulges, **C**racks/Cuts

**CDL** = No **C**racks/Cuts, **D**ents, **L**eaks/Loose

**PMS** = **P**roperly **M**ounted, **S**ecure

**CEL** = No **C**orroded, **E**xposed or **L**oose wires

**CCC** = **C**lean, **C**lear, not **C**racked