

Carrying out a walk around check of your vehicle is an important part of your daily routine. Checks should be thorough and your findings should be recorded and reported. Effective walk around checks can help ensure:

- the safety of any drivers, passengers and other road users
- a reduced risk of obtaining Graduated Fixed Penalty fines
- a reduced risk of gaining Operator Compliance Risk Score (OCRS) points
- defects are detected early, therefore reducing the need for extensive and costly repairs
- less disruption due to less chance of being stopped at the roadside
- peace of mind that your vehicle is safe and compliant

HGV Drivers' Walk Around Check



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BRAKE LINES

Check that

- couplings are free from debris and located properly and that the safety locking devices are present, and the coupling is secure
- there are no leaks from the lines themselves
- there is no bulging, kinking, corrosion, stretching, chafing or general damage to any brake lines

If the engine is left running until pressure has built up after the initial brake test, it will be easier to hear leaks as the rest of the walk around test is carried out

ELECTRICAL CONNECTIONS

Check that

- all visible wiring is insulated and is not in a position where it is likely to get chafed
- all electric switches operate their components correctly
- electrical plugs are correctly located and secured in the sockets

MIRRORS AND GLASS

Check that all mirrors that should be there are aligned properly and are secure

Check that your view of the road (especially in the swept area viewed from the driver's seat) is not obscured by

- damaged/discoloured glass
- obstructions (stickers, etc)

Check that the side windows are not damaged or discoloured in a way that obscures the view to a mirror

STEERING

Check that

- Check for excessive play
- When checking for leaks underneath vehicle, visually check the major steering components to ensure that they are present, secure and undamaged

HORN

Check that

- the unit works correctly when control is operated

SECURITY OF LOAD

Check that

- any load is secured adequately
- any container has an effective secondary locking device fitted

SECURITY OF BODY/WINGS

Check that

- all fastening devices are present, complete, secure and in working order
- cab doors and trailer doors are secure when closed
- no body parts on tractor unit or trailer are loose and in danger of falling off
- no landing leg component, where fitted, is likely to fall from the vehicle

MARKERS

Check that marker boards/conspicuity markings are

- present if the type of vehicle requires them
- not obscured by dirt or other objects
- securely fastened
- of the correct type
- clearly visible

REFLECTORS

Check they are not

- obscured
- missing
- broken
- of the wrong colour

TYRE AND WHEEL FIXING

Check as much of each tyre/wheel as you can see. There must be

- minimum tread depth of 1mm
- sufficient inflation of each tyre
- no deep cuts or bulges in the sidewall
- no cord visible anywhere on tyre
- no missing or insecure wheel nuts

SPRAY SUPPRESSION

Check that flaps are

- fitted (where required)
- fastened and secure
- undamaged
- not clogged with mud or debris

BATTERY SECURITY/CONDITION

Check that it

- is held securely in place by the correct means, not by its cables
- is not leaking

The battery must be replaced if it is leaking

COUPLING SECURITY

Check that

- the trailer (if applicable) is located correctly in the fifth wheel
- the security bar is in the correct position for its use and any locking devices are in good condition and correctly deployed

FUEL/OIL LEVELS AND LEAKS

Check

- fuel, engine oil, coolant, windscreen washer and (if fitted) urea levels
- fuel filler cap and seal are properly located

With the engine on, check

- underneath vehicle for any leaks of fuel/oil
- if leaks are detected that are not fuel or oil, trace the cause (ie power steering fluid, water etc)

REGISTRATION PLATES (FRONT AND REAR)

Check they are

- visible
- of the correct mark
- secure and clean

EXCESSIVE ENGINE EXHAUST SMOKE

Check that

- the exhaust does not emit excessive amounts of smoke

WINDSCREEN WIPERS AND WASHERS

Check that

- wipers work correctly when switched on, and cover the full swept area of the screen
- wiper blades are not so deteriorated that they do not clear the screen effectively when used with washers
- washers point at screen and are operational

LIGHTS AND INDICATORS

Check that

- all lights and indicators work correctly
- all lenses are present, clean and are of the correct colour
- stop lamps come on when the service brake is applied and go out when released
- marker lights are present and work (where applicable)
- all dashboard warning lamps work correctly (eg the ABS warning lamp, headlamp main beam warning lamp, parking brake warning lamp, etc)

BRAKES

Check that

- the service brake operates both the tractor and trailer (where applicable) brakes
- the parking brake for the tractor is operational

These checks can be done by listening for the air releasing from the tractor and the trailer or by asking a colleague to watch the trailer brakes operating as you press the pedal.

Check that

- the service brake pedal does not have excessive side play or missing, loose or incomplete anti-slip provision
- the trailer parking brake works by operating it as you do the walk around check

Also check that the air pressure gauges and low air pressure warning are working correctly

CHECK FROM DRIVER'S SEAT