

CDL Pre-Trip Inspection Checklist

Checklist · 28 items · 8 sections

Commercial truck drivers are required by FMCSA regulations to perform a pre-trip inspection before each trip. This CDL pre-trip inspection checklist covers every required area: engine, cab, coupling, tires, brakes, lights, and cargo: in the order inspectors evaluate them.

Open the editable version online:

<https://genechecklist.com/checklist/cdl-pre-trip-inspection-checklist>

ENGINE COMPARTMENT

- Check engine oil level: between MIN and MAX
HIGH
- Check coolant level and inspect for leaks
HIGH
- Check power steering fluid level
HIGH
- Inspect belts for fraying or cracking: alternator, fan, and power steering
HIGH
- Check battery: no cracks, secure, terminals tight and clean
HIGH
- Inspect hoses for cracks, bulges, or leaks
HIGH

UNDER VEHICLE

- Check for fuel, oil, or coolant leaks under the vehicle
HIGH
- Inspect drive shaft: no missing U-bolt clamps or broken welds
HIGH
- Check air/hydraulic brake lines: no chafing, kinks, or leaks
HIGH

BRAKES

- Inspect brake drums and linings for wear or damage
HIGH
- Check brake adjustment: slack adjusters within adjustment limits
HIGH

HIGH

- Test service brakes: pedal does not fade or pull

HIGH

- Test parking brake: holds fully loaded vehicle

HIGH

- Test tractor protection valve (air system)

HIGH

TIRES & WHEELS

- Inspect all tires: no cuts, bulges, or objects embedded; adequate tread

HIGH

- Check tire inflation: steer tires 90–110 PSI, drive/trailer tires 90–110 PSI

HIGH

- Inspect lug nuts: all present, no cracks, no rust streaks

HIGH

LIGHTS

- Test headlights, high beams, and clearance lights

HIGH

- Test brake lights, tail lights, and marker lights

HIGH

- Test turn signals: front and rear, both sides

HIGH

- Test four-way hazard flashers

HIGH

COUPLING & TRAILER

- Inspect coupling: fifth wheel properly locked, kingpin secure

HIGH

- Check glad hands and air lines are connected securely

HIGH

CARGO & LOAD

- Verify cargo is properly secured: no shifting or overhanging

HIGH

CAB CHECK

- Check required emergency equipment: fire extinguisher, triangles, first aid kit

HIGH

- Verify documents on board: CDL, medical card, registration, IFTA decals, logbook
HIGH
- Check mirrors, windshield, and wipers: clear and fully functional
HIGH
- Test horn, heater/defroster, and seatbelt
HIGH