



A safety guide for towing trailers

You can only tow the club trailer if you hold you hold a B+E licence if you passed your test after 1996 then you need to take a trailer test. Your car needs to be able to tow the weight of the trailer. Trailer weighs 780 kg + boats on top, so four fours 2 sculls could weigh 300 kg so you would need a car that can tow 1080 kg trailers.

Trailer towing is an important service that certain members kindly provide to others at the club. It is also a significant responsibility, which is potentially hazardous if not carried out with great care. Please make sure that you understand the following guidelines if you are involved in towing a trailer for the club.

1. *Tying boats.*

- Each boat usually requires four ties: two main ties in the standard positions around the hull attached to a trailer support beam, and two additional 'failsafe' ties at the fore and aft
- The tension in the main ties should be such that the hull cannot move when vigorously shaken, but not so great that the saxboard is in danger of splintering
- There should also be a failsafe tie at each end of the boat, attached to the trailer beam and to some substantial internal part of the boat: usually a stretcher
- For singles and pairs usually only a single failsafe tie is required (so the total number of ties may be only three). They have a metal crossbar astern of stroke's stretcher which is tied onto one of the trailer beams
- The boats should always be tied by or under the supervision of someone who is experienced in doing so. Even if all the 'conventional' ties come loose, the failsafe ties will ensure that the boat merely drags along the side of the trailer rather than potentially ending up at 90 degrees across the road
- When a boat is supported across its canvas (normally just single sculls), the canvas should be protected using carpet or wooden formers
- If a boat is split into sections then they should be tied on with the 'pointy' end forwards to lessen air resistance
- White flags (and red lights if travelling by night) should be tied to the ends of boats protruding by more than 1m from the back of the trailer

2. *Seats.*

All seats must be removed from boats before transporting them, or securely tied in otherwise they are liable to 'fly off' during transit.

3. *Distribution of weight.*

Try to make sure that the weight of both boats and equipment is distributed evenly across the trailer and a little towards the front. The weight on the tow bar should ideally be about 15 kg.

4. *Tyre pressures.*

Check that the tyres are fully inflated (including the spare).

5. *Rolling brake.*

Make sure that the rolling brake is connected and test it before leaving the club rounds.

6. *Number plate.*

Make sure that a copy of your number plate is displayed at the rear of the trailer.

7. *Co-driver.*

The main trailer driver should always be accompanied by another adult, who can assist should any emergencies occur, or should the trailer or boats need to be manually manoeuvred.

8. *Check the lights.*

Before embarking on your journey attach the towing vehicle to the trailer and make sure that the rear lights, brake lights, and indicator lights are all in working order.

9. *Further checks to be performed before you start your journey.* The driver should check that:

- All boats are tied on securely to his satisfaction
- All seats have been removed
- Any equipment carried in the lower part of the trailer: riggers, oars, and trestles, is safely secured as necessary

10. *Checks to be performed during your journey.*

It is essential to stop after 10-20 minutes for a quick check of ties because boats that have been poorly tied on will come loose quickly due to vibration on the road. You should stop gain approximately every 40 minutes after that or alternatively have another vehicle follow so that the passengers can observe what is happening on the trailer and advise you to stop if anything appears to be loose.

You should also read the British Rowing [trailer towing guide](#).