



Considerations when towing a horse float

When you put a horse in a horse float you have a couple of tonnes of unstable weight behind your vehicle. Each horse has its own character: some will travel well and others won't and because horses move around you will feel it through the car. The following guidelines will help ensure your prized equine remains safe and everyone arrives at their destination happily.

How will you tow your horse float or trailer?

Towing with an under-powered or under-braked vehicle is unsafe. Check what you can tow with your vehicle before you start to shop for a new horse float or trailer or if you intend to borrow/hire one for the day. Consider the following:

- What is your towing vehicle's towing capacity?
- What is your tow bar rating?
- What is your tow bar's ball rating?
- What is the tare weight and Aggregate Trailer Mass (ATM) of the horse float you intend to use?
- Does the horse float have adequate safety chains?
- Will I need an electric breakaway system?
- Do the horse float's lights work?
- Is the horse float/trailer registered?

Towing capacity

If your vehicle can be used for towing, there are restrictions imposed by the towing capacity of your vehicle and tow bar which include:

- The trailer's loaded mass (including horses, saddlery, feed, water, etc.) must not exceed the towing capacity of your vehicle or the capacity of the tow bar (whichever is the lowest).
- You must comply with any conditions imposed by the vehicle manufacturer.
- The weight of passengers and items added to your vehicle such as canopies, roof racks and bull bars can all affect your vehicle's towing capacity.
- You must not exceed the weight limit for your class of licence (C class licence is 4.5 tonnes or less).

You can find the towing capacity by looking in the vehicle handbook or by contacting the manufacturer.

Horse float/trailer

It is essential that you check horse float manufacturer's information so the float or trailer isn't overloaded and the combined weight of the trailer and what it is carrying and the ATM doesn't exceed the towing capacity of your vehicle.



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Trailer equipment

- All trailers with a Gross Trailer Mass (GTM) (total trailer mass when attached to the vehicle) of more than 750 kg must be fitted with brakes and all trailers over 2,000 kg must have electric breakaway systems (highly recommended for added safety regardless of trailer weight).
- All trailers must also be attached to the towing vehicle by means of a chain or cable. If the trailer coupling fails, it must allow safe towing of the trailer and should prevent the drawbar from hitting the road. The safety chain on your horse float or trailer coupling must have a rating that is adequate for the ATM of that horse float or trailer, attached with the correct weighted 'D' shackles. Chains should be crossed.

For further information on towing a horse float please refer to the National Vehicle Standards or www.mylicence.sa.gov.au.

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