

Trucks and Society

Trucking is a large and important industry. No matter where you live, a day is unlikely to go by when you will not see a truck. We use these vehicles to deliver almost every material item we buy. Without trucks, our economy would not work efficiently.

Just think for a minute of all the things that are moved by trucks. The clothes you wear, the food you eat, the books you read, your camping equipment, your video games—all of these things at some point are moved on a truck.

Trucks are the main means of moving freight in the United States. Even products moved part of the way by another means of transportation, such as rail or ship, are at some point carried by truck. Not surprisingly, 70 percent of American towns rely solely on trucks to bring in the goods that are sold there.

Trucks are everywhere. There are about 20 million trucks on the roads of the United States, not counting those used for government and farm work. It is hard to imagine what our lives would be like without trucks.



According to the American Trucking Associations, the trucking industry employs more than 9 million people. That is more workers than any other private industry in the United States. About 3 million of these employees are truck drivers.

There are a couple of ways you can find out which major truck lines serve your town. Look in the yellow pages of your local telephone directory or, if you have a computer, search on the Internet (with your parent's permission).

Trucks often are favored as a means of transporting goods because they are both quick and inexpensive. Shipping by airplane is the fastest way to move goods, but it's a very expensive way to transport cargo. Railroads are economical but slower than trucks and generally only move items in large quantities or in bulk, such as grain, lumber, coal, and automobiles. Ships are cost-efficient, too, but they can move goods only between ports. So, the versatile truck offers the best combination of cost-effectiveness and speed for moving goods within the United States.

transportation mode. Method of transportation such as truck, air, rail, ship, or pipeline.

Trucks often work in combination with other *transportation modes*. For example, trucks haul large freight containers (weather-tight steel boxes used in shipping) to oceangoing container ships that move goods in containers all over the world. Or, truck trailers may be loaded onto rail flatcars for transport over long distances. When the train reaches a rail yard near the destination, the trailer is hooked to a truck tractor again and the goods are delivered to the customer. This is an example of *intermodal*, or *piggyback*, transportation. It also is known as *drayage*.

So, as you can see, trucks are important to the way we live.

History of the Truck

The world's first motorized truck was built in Germany in 1896 by a company owned by Gottlieb Daimler (1834–1900), a pioneer in the development of the gasoline engine and the automotive industry. This was 10 years after the same company built its first automobile. By World War I (1914–18), trucks were in wide use, and by 1923, the fuel-saving diesel engine was developed. By 1935, more than 329,000 trucks were registered in the United States.

During World War II (1939–45), trucks were the main method of moving troops and supplies, largely replacing horse-drawn wagons. After World War II, the U.S. government decided that an efficient national highway system was important to the security of the country. The Federal-Aid Highway Act provided money to build 42,000 miles of modern highways across the United States. These new highways, the beginning of the interstate highway system, made truck transportation even more efficient and popular.

Trucks move more than 80 percent of all goods traded between Canada, Mexico, and the United States.



The introduction of the motorized truck made deliveries quicker and more efficient in the early 1900s.

Major Dates in Automobile and Truck History

- 1896 First motorized truck made
- 1899 First automobile hauler built
- 1903 First windshields were used
- 1904 Steering wheel replaced hand levers for steering
- 1912 Electric lights replaced lanterns
- 1922 Backup lights were first used
- 1926 Shockproof glass used in windshields
- 1927 Chrome trim first used
- 1931 Sun visors first used
- 1938 Turn signals used in all new trucks
- 1960s Air-conditioning becomes a standard feature in trucks

Types of Trucks

There are different trucks for different purposes, and you probably have seen many different kinds at work. On the highway, there are tractor-trailers for general cargo, trucks that haul dirt, trucks that deliver new cars to a showroom, and trucks that carry bulk liquids. In your neighborhood, you may have seen special trucks that pick up trash or recycling materials. Refrigerated trucks deliver frozen produce to retailers. Flatbed trucks can move an entire house to a new location.

Before meeting with your counselor, think of the different types of trucks you have seen and what they transport. The next couple of pages show several of the more common trucks on the road.



The tractor-trailer is the typical "big rig" used to transport most of the nation's freight. These are a common sight on streets and highways.



Tanker trucks are used to haul large amounts of liquid products, from milk and corn syrup to chemicals, gasoline, and heating oil.



The flatbed truck typically is used to haul very large items that will not fit in a closed truck or that cannot easily be unloaded from the back of a truck trailer.



Cement mixers mix cement powder with water in a rotating barrel and haul the cement mixture to a construction site.



Delivery vans are used by companies to deliver smaller items to businesses and homes. They are easier to drive and more economical to operate than the bigger trucks.



Garbage trucks pick up and remove trash from neighborhood homes and businesses. The trash is dumped into the garbage truck, then the full truck is taken to a garbage collection point or recycling center for emptying.

Trucks and Commerce

Trucks play a major role in today's world economy. They provide a smooth flow of goods through the global *supply chain*. Just think for a minute about how trucks fit into U.S. *commerce*. Trucks pick up *raw materials* at one company and deliver them to another, where they are used to make a product. That product may then be shipped by truck to a *warehouse*, where it is stored. The product may be shipped again by truck to a retailer, where it is sold to a consumer.

supply chain. The various companies involved in making something from raw materials into a finished product that is then available to the consumer.

commerce. The movement of goods, funds, and information.

raw materials. Resources that are converted into another product.

warehouse. A place where goods are stored.

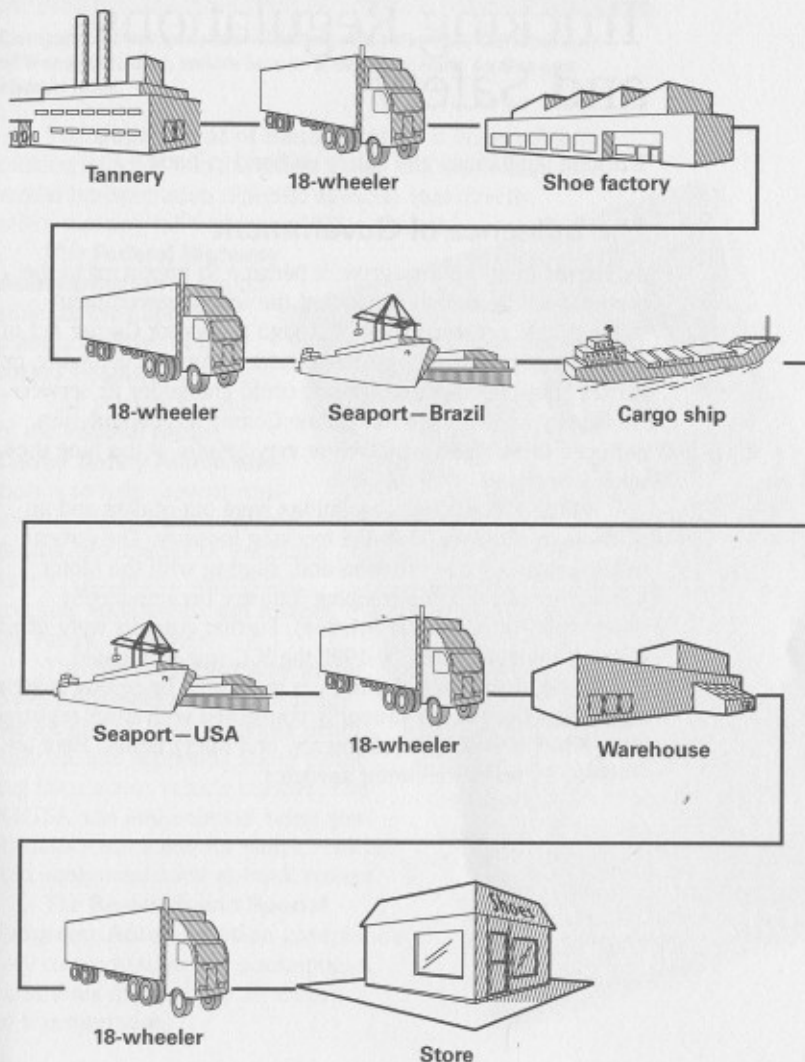
importation. The process of buying something from another country.

Trucks also play a large role in the *importation* of goods from foreign countries. At each stage of the journey that typically is taken to import something into the United States from another country, trucks play a part.

Say a company in the United States sells hiking boots to camping equipment stores. These boots were made in Brazil and transported by ship to a port on the East Coast of the United States. The leather used to make the boots was shipped by truck from the tanneries to the shoe factory. At the factory, the leather was manufactured, along with other raw materials, into hiking boots.

These finished boots were packed into cardboard boxes and loaded into cargo containers that were transported by truck to the seaport. The cargo containers were loaded onto enormous container ships that brought the cargo to a U.S. seaport.

Upon the ship's arrival in port, the container was off-loaded and again moved by truck to the shoe company's warehouse. This movement of transporting goods to and from a seaport is also known as *cartage*. Once a camping goods retailer orders some boots, they are shipped by truck to the store.



Trucking Regulations and Safety

Trucking regulations and safety go hand in hand.

The Influence of Government

As the trucking industry grew, it became so important to the economy of the United States that the federal government stepped in to set some rules. Through the Motor Carrier Act of 1935, the government regulated where a trucking company, or *carrier*, could operate and what it could charge for its services. An agency known as the Interstate Commerce Commission enforced these rules, which were very helpful at the time they were introduced.

By the 1970s, these regulations were out-of-date and an obstacle to competition in the trucking industry. The government recognized the situation and, starting with the Motor Carrier Act of 1980, the trucking industry became largely deregulated (made less restrictive). Further controls were lifted through the 1990s, and by 1995 the ICC was eliminated.

Today, the trucking industry is monitored by several government agencies that are primarily concerned with truck registration, driver licensing requirements, and safety issues. Here are some of the most important agencies.

USDOT 104249

Commercial vehicles are monitored by the U.S. Department of Transportation, which issues a number such as the one shown here.

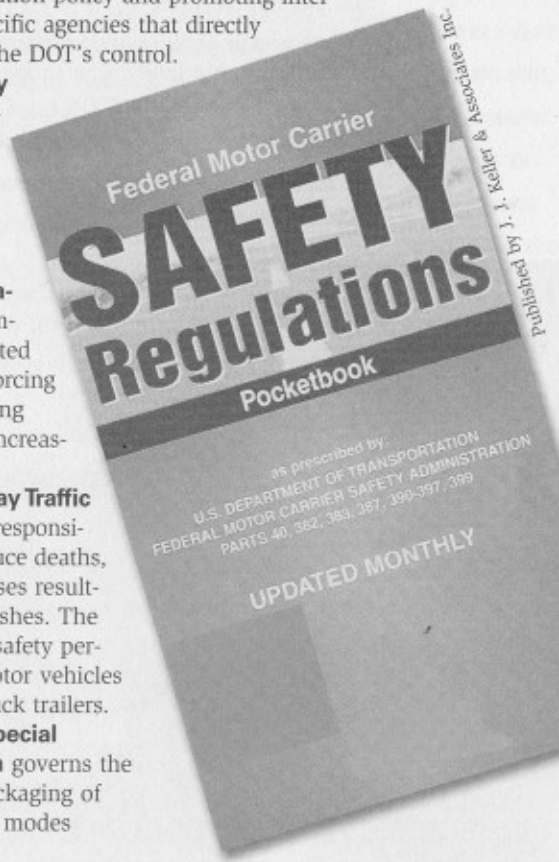
The **Department of Transportation** is responsible for making national transportation policy and promoting intermodal transportation. Specific agencies that directly affect trucking fall under the DOT's control.

The **Federal Highway Administration** is responsible for the improvement and safety of the nation's highways.

The primary mission of the **Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration** is to help prevent commercial motor vehicle-related deaths and injuries by enforcing safety regulations, improving trucking equipment, and increasing safety awareness.

The **National Highway Traffic Safety Administration** is responsible for finding ways to reduce deaths, injuries, and economic losses resulting from motor vehicle crashes. The NHTSA sets and enforces safety performance standards for motor vehicles and equipment such as truck trailers.

The **Research and Special Programs Administration** governs the safe transportation and packaging of hazardous materials by all modes of transportation.



The **Surface Transportation Board** is responsible for the economic regulation of interstate (transportation between states) surface transportation within the United States. Its mission is to ensure that competitive, efficient, and safe transportation services are provided to meet the needs of *shippers* (companies that hand over freight to a trucker for transportation), *receivers* (*consignees*), and consumers.

In addition to these federal agencies, a number of other regulatory agencies affect the trucking industry.

- **Some state public utilities commissions** are charged with ensuring safe, reliable, and competitively priced transportation services.
- **State motor vehicle departments** control licensing, registration, and safety regulations of all motor vehicles in operation in their state.
- **State and local police departments** enforce the law.

Together, all these separate agencies help ensure public safety on our roadways.



State troopers help keep our highways safe, too, by enforcing the law.

Safety and Trucking

A truck driver's first priority is safety. Whether driving a delivery van or a big tractor-trailer, a driver must always be concerned with driving in a safe manner. A careless or reckless driver could damage the truck, the cargo, or other people's property. Worse yet, such a driver could get injured or cause injury to others. That is why trucking companies make efforts to train their drivers well and strongly enforce safety.

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration reports that the average cost of a truck crash is \$59,000. Because of concern for people's lives and the cost of accidents, trucking companies work hard to make sure their equipment is safe and their drivers operate their vehicles safely.

Here are some important safe-driver rules.

- Watch for dangers by scanning ahead, to the sides, and to the rear of the truck.
- Make sure other drivers understand your intention, whether it is to change lanes, slow down, or stop.
- Understand the condition of the road and drive as slowly as is necessary.
- Buckle up; always wear your safety belt.
- Never exceed the speed limit.
- Keep a safe distance behind the vehicle in front of you.

Don't Hang Out in the No-Zone. No-zones are danger areas around trucks and automobiles where crashes are more likely to occur. Such areas include actual blind spots where your car "disappears" from the driver's view (or where another vehicle on the road "disappears" from your own view). A safe driver is a predictable driver who stays out of the no-zone.

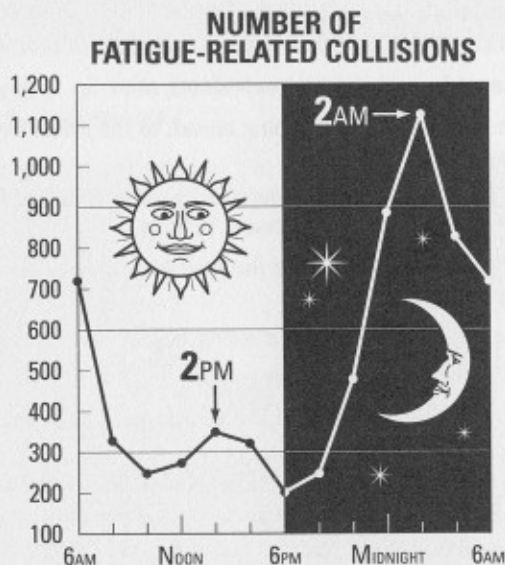


Safe drivers rarely have accidents. They are alert, and well-prepared, and they try to anticipate dangerous situations in time to prevent accidents.

Statistics show that an estimated 58 percent of commercial vehicle accidents are fatigue related.

A tired driver is much more likely to have an accident than a well-rested one. Because the U.S. government is very concerned about the safety of our roadways, federal laws limit the length of time a truck driver may operate a vehicle. These regulations are known as the hours-of-service rules.

- A driver may not operate a truck for more than 11 hours in a day.
- A driver can take on additional responsibilities like loading and unloading but may not work more than 14 hours straight in a day.
- A driver must be off for 10 hours straight every day.
- Drivers cannot drive more than 60 hours in a seven-day period.



Source: Mitler, M. M., M. A. Carskadon, C. A. Czeisler, et al., "Catastrophes, Sleep, and Public Policy: Consensus," *Sleep* 11 (1988): 100-109

To ensure these rules are followed, every driver involved in interstate transportation must complete a driver's log for every day worked. This log shows the driver's name, the date, and the number of miles driven that day. Drivers keep a *log-book* of all their daily logs.

In the end, it takes effort from trucking companies, individual drivers, and government agencies to help make sure highways are as safe as they can be.

OFFICIAL
DUPLICATE COPY
DRIVER'S DAILY LOG
PRESCRIBED BY FEDERAL MOTOR CARRIER SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

COMBINED 5-IN-1 RECORD
CONTAINS:
DAILY VEHICLE INSPECTION REPORT • REGULATIONS • RESTRICTIONS • MONTHLY LOG SUMMARY

DRIVER'S VEHICLE INSPECTION REPORT

Aug. 20 2004
MONTH: 8/20/04 YEAR: 2004 (TOTAL MILEAGE REPORT)
625 (LOCAL MILES TRAVELING (1000))
Rapid Trucking (NAME OF CARRIER (REGULATED))
1000 Main St., Newark, N J (ADDRESS OF CARRIER)

Tractor 1234/trailer 9876 (VEHICLE NUMBER - LIST ON EACH DAY)
Robert Johnson (NAME OF DRIVER)
None (TYPE OF COMPANY - LOCAL, INTERSTATE, OR OVERSEAS)
500 Park Ave., Phoenix, AZ (ADDRESS OF DRIVER)

REGAP

1: OFF DUTY	2: SLEEPER BERTH	3: DRIVING	4: ON DUTY (NOT DRIVING)	TOTAL HOURS
7 3/4	4	10 1/4	3	25

REMARKS
 Phoenix, AZ Dispatch
 Flagstaff, AZ The check
 Holbrook, AZ
 Albuquerque, NM off duty

FROM: (CITY/STATE/POST OFFICE) TO: (CITY/STATE/POST OFFICE)
 USE THIS STANDARD AT HOME TERMINAL (INSTALLATION OR TURN ANALYZED POINT ON PLACE)

The driver's daily log shows what the driver did that day while on duty.

How Trucking Companies Operate

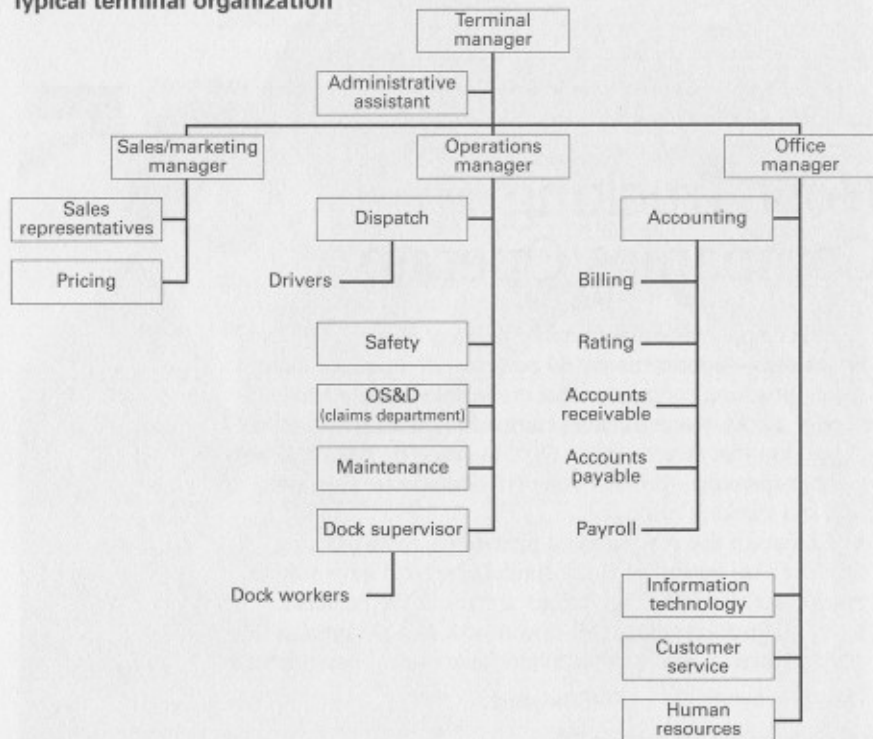
Trucking companies come in many different shapes and sizes. The majority—approximately 80 percent—of interstate motor carriers (trucking companies that cross state lines) operate 20 or fewer trucks. Some trucking companies are made up of just a driver and that driver's truck. Such business people are known as *owner-operators*—drivers who own and operate their own truck and trucking company.

Except for the very smallest operations, most trucking companies are organized along similar lines and have similar departments to handle the various aspects of the business. Generally, trucking companies operate out of a *terminal*, a building where a number of activities take place. These include:

- Loading freight on and off the trucks
- Sorting freight for delivery
- Sending trucks out to pick up freight
- Repairing and maintaining the trucks
- Conducting office work related to the trucking company's operations
- Storing trucks when they are not out on the road

The following chart shows how the various departments and responsibilities within a trucking terminal might be organized. Of course, each company is different. When you visit a truck terminal, ask the terminal manager how that terminal is organized.

Typical terminal organization



Trucking Company Departments

Here are some of the departments likely to be found within a trucking company.

Sales and Marketing. This group of people represents the company to the public and helps keep customers happy. Sales people call on shippers to sell the trucking company's services. They must have a good understanding of the company's services and the needs of their customers. The marketing team is responsible for developing new services, pricing the company's services, and advertising.

Operations. These people "move" the freight. Within the operations group you will find the dispatcher, drivers, dock workers, and the safety group, maintenance team, and cargo claims people who handle OS&D (over, short, and damaged) goods.

Administration. These office workers handle the paperwork associated with making a trucking company work.

- **Accounting.** This group maintains the company's financial records, bills customers, pays bills, and handles payroll.
- **Information Technology.** The IT people develop and maintain the company's computer systems.
- **Customer Service.** These company representatives help customers. They may track down a lost shipment, schedule a pickup, answer a question on the proper way to ship something, or explain how long it will take or how much it will cost to ship.
- **Human Resources.** The HR people locate, hire, and train employees for the company. They also may settle disputes between management and the workers.

One requirement for the Truck Transportation merit badge calls for a visit to a trucking terminal. As you probably can tell by now, a lot of activity happens there. Because trucking terminals are busy places, it is important to schedule a visit for a time that is convenient to the company, probably at least two weeks in advance.

When calling, ask to speak to the terminal manager. Explain who you are and what you want to do. Most terminal managers will be happy to meet with you. If you have difficulty making an appointment, speak to your merit badge counselor for assistance. Your counselor may have other suggestions, or may have a contact at a local trucking company.

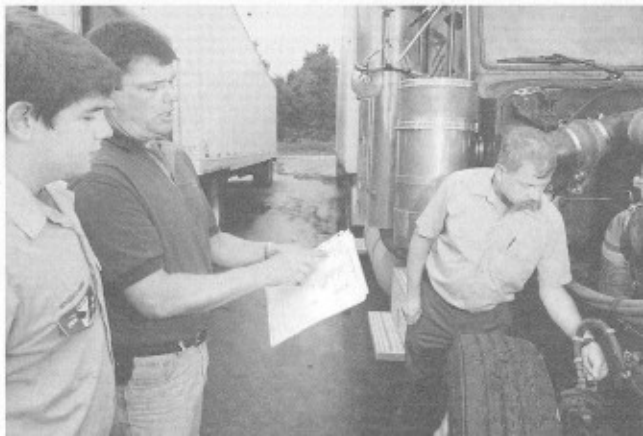


Keep That Truck Running

One of the keys to truck safety is proper maintenance. The driver plays a major role in this by inspecting the truck at the beginning and end of each run. These daily inspections are required by government regulations and go a long way toward making sure the truck is safe when it hits the road. The following are among the things the driver checks to make sure the truck is working properly: fuel, oil, and coolant levels; gauges, brakes, horn, lights, tires, hoses, exhaust system, suspension, fuel tank.

In addition to the driver's daily checks, trucking companies have fixed schedules for maintaining their trucks. Some of the maintenance work performed by mechanics includes

- Changing the engine oil and oil filters
- Checking and adjusting tire pressure
- Tuning the engine
- Changing the brakes
- Rebuilding the transmission
- Servicing the cooling and heating systems



Keeping trucks well-maintained helps ensure not only the driver's safety and safety on the road, but also helps keep trucks working so that carriers can stay in business.



When you visit a trucking terminal, ask the terminal manager or the maintenance manager

- How the company maintains its vehicles
- How daily checks are made by truck drivers
- How often the maintenance department performs service on the trucks
- If you can see a schedule of preventive maintenance for the vehicles



Keeping a truck clean helps prolong the life of the truck and ensure the company maintains a "clean" image.

The Heart of the Truck: The Engine

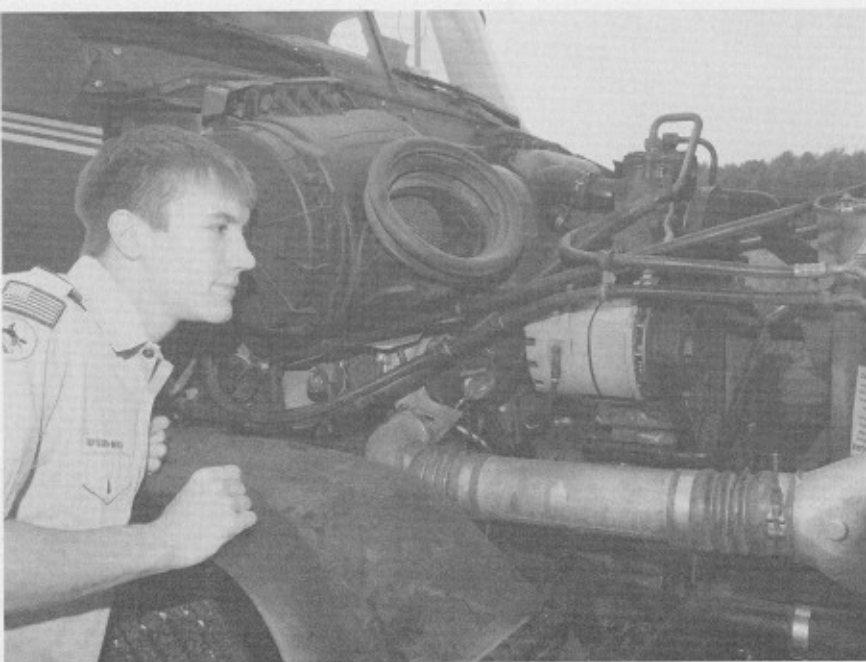
There are two main types of truck engine—gasoline and diesel. The gasoline engine in a truck is similar to that used in most automobiles and is typically found in smaller trucks such as pickups, vans, and sport utility vehicles (SUVs). Most large trucks are powered by diesel engines. While diesel engines are used in some cars and small trucks, they are most commonly found in big trucks.

Diesel and gasoline engines have much in common.

- They are both *internal combustion engines*, which means the power they produce is a result of explosions occurring within cylinders inside the engine block.
- They both use a mixture of air and fuel as part of the process of creating an explosion.
- They both have pistons and valves.

There are some differences between the diesel and gasoline engine, primarily in the way the fuel and air mixture is ignited. Gasoline engines use a device called a spark plug to ignite the fuel-air mixture; diesel engines rely on heat made by air compression.

Diesel engine parts are exposed to higher temperatures and compression pressure than are gasoline engines. Therefore, diesel engine parts must be more durable.



Diesel engines have some advantages over gasoline engines.

- They have more power than gasoline engines.
- They operate more efficiently.
- They last longer and are more reliable.
- They require less service.

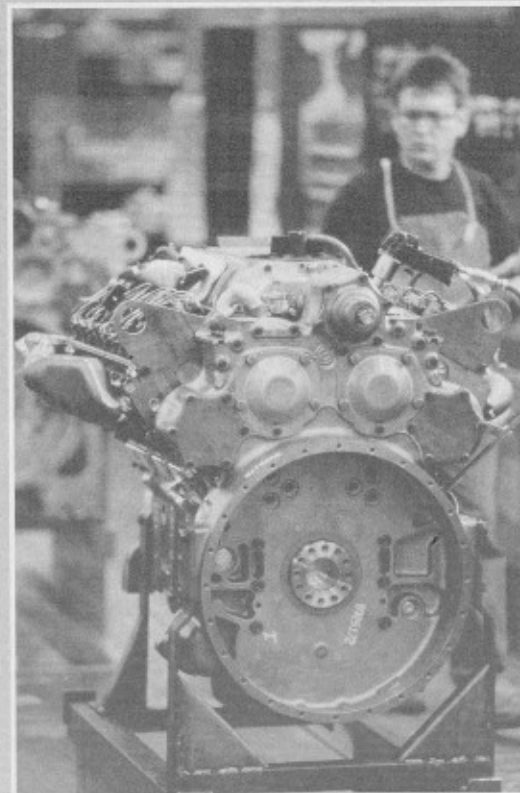
Here are the advantages of gasoline engines over diesel engines.

- They cost less to produce than diesel engines.
- More local service locations are available, making servicing more convenient.

Diesel engines work like this.

- The starter turns the engine and sets the crankshaft in motion.
- The crankshaft begins a process that pushes the pistons down in the cylinders.
- Air is pulled in as the pistons travel down in the cylinders.
- When the pistons start to move up in the cylinders, the air is compressed and made very hot.
- When the pistons are near the top of the cylinders, diesel fuel is injected into the cylinders, where they meet with the super heated air. This creates an explosion called *combustion*. The temperature and pressure in the cylinder becomes higher as the diesel fuel burns.
- The combustion pushes the pistons down in the cylinders.
- As the pistons reach the bottom of the cylinders, exhaust valves open.
- The pistons move up in the cylinders and burned gases are pushed out.

This process continues with each explosion, passing power through the transmission and drive shaft to the wheels.



Diesel engine

Getting From Here to There

Making a shipment via truck transportation involves a number of steps. There are many things a shipper should be aware of before making a shipment.

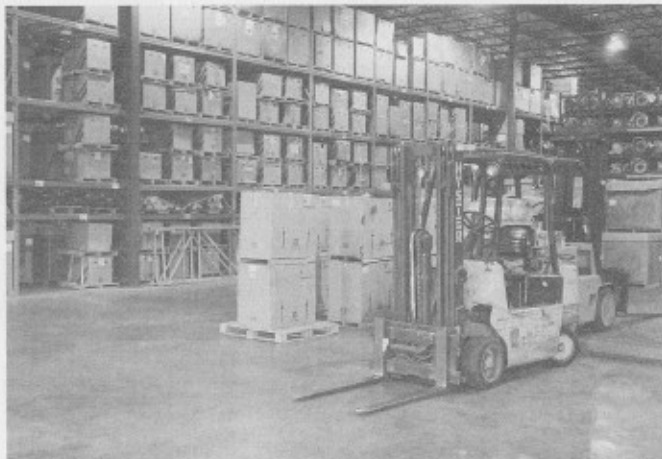
- **What is being shipped.** This affects the cost of shipping and how the cargo will be packaged for protection.
- **Where the cargo is going.** The destination will affect the cost of shipping. Generally, the farther you ship something, the more it will cost to ship.
- **The weight of the shipment.** The weight will affect the cost to ship and how it is packaged. In general, the more something weighs, the more it will cost to ship.
- **The estimated time of arrival (ETA).** Some carriers can deliver freight to certain locations faster than others. You need to know when the receiver needs the shipment to arrive, then pick a carrier that can meet that date.
- **How the goods should be packaged.** Items need to be packaged so they arrive intact. Some items may be fragile or require special packaging or handling. Everything does not get packaged the same way. A computer monitor needs to be packaged differently from a tent.
- **How much it will cost to ship your cargo.** Freight is not shipped free of charge; this is how trucking companies make a profit. It's important to find out the cost of shipping up front.

After you have found several reliable carriers that meet your requirements, choose the one with the lowest cost.

Now let's try to "ship" something by truck. Let's say you have 12 unassembled bicycles to ship from New Jersey to

Not all trucking companies charge the same price nor offer the same services. Be sure to choose one that is reliable and can deliver your shipment on time.

California. As the shipper, you are responsible for preparing the goods for shipment. You pack the unassembled bicycles carefully in strong cardboard boxes and then secure the boxes to a pallet—kind of like the one you see here—so it is easy to load and unload the cargo.



Next, weigh the pallet of bicycles so you know the total weight of your shipment. You will need to give this information to the trucking company. Now check your local yellow pages or search the Internet for three trucking companies near you. Call each one and ask for customer service. Give the customer service representative the details of your shipment, including the following.

- Explain what you are shipping.
- Tell how much it weighs.
- Tell where it is going.
- Ask when it will be available for pickup.
- Say when it needs to be delivered.

After providing these details, ask if the trucking company can meet your needs, when someone will pick up the shipment, when the shipment will be delivered, and what it will cost to ship your cargo. Make your choice based on whether your shipment can be picked up and delivered on time. If all three trucking companies can perform the delivery when it is needed, choose the least expensive one.

When the carrier arrives to pick up your shipment, you must give the driver a *bill of lading*. This document tells the driver what is being picked up, where it is going, how much it weighs, and who is paying the freight charge—you (the shipper) or the *consignee*. The driver will sign this bill of lading and give you a copy as a receipt. It is important to keep this document in case the shipment is lost or damaged. The bill of lading serves as your proof that the goods have been shipped.

Truck freight prices are set by using the class rate system. This is a way of taking the thousands of different possible products and grouping them into similar classes to simplify freight pricing. There are 18 different freight classes, ranging from class 50 to class 500. The higher the class rating of a product, the more it will cost to ship.

In general, inexpensive items that are heavy, dense, and unlikely to be damaged during shipping have a lower class rating than items that are expensive, lightweight, bulky, and easily damaged. Freight charges are listed at a cost per 100 pounds. As the weight of a shipment increases, the cost per 100 pounds decreases.

These charges are found in *tariffs*, which are a schedule of rates. Almost every carrier has its own set of rates, so it is important to compare different carrier prices to get the best one.

No one wants a shipment to get lost or damaged while it is in transit, but that sometimes happens. All reputable carriers have insurance to protect the value of freight if it is lost or damaged. However, the level of protection offered varies from carrier to carrier. Check with your carrier on the limitations

Bill of lading

of the coverage offered. If the value of your shipment exceeds the basic coverage offered, you should tell the carrier what the value is and advise the carrier that you want to buy extra insurance.

Extra insurance coverage is, in many cases, charged as a cost per \$100 of value. So if you want to buy insurance for something valued at \$1,000 and the cost for insurance is \$1 for every \$100 of value, insuring the shipment will cost \$10. Many large shippers have their own insurance policies, which protects the value of their goods beyond what the carrier provides.

Road Signs



The driver must come to a complete stop before proceeding.



The driver must let the oncoming traffic go first.



Do not enter.



Indicates the driver is going in the wrong direction. Used many times along with the Do Not Enter sign.



Indicates a pedestrian crosswalk.



Indicates an area where children may be crossing the street. Often seen near schools and parks.



Indicates an area where there is construction and workers may be present; be careful.



Warns the driver of an area where there may be falling rocks; be careful.

All drivers—not only truckers—must be familiar with and follow these common road signs.

07304 Jersey City, New Jersey, to 94404 Foster City, California

Class Rating	Less than 500 lbs.	More than 500 lbs.	More than 1,000 lbs.	More than 2,000 lbs.	More than 5,000 lbs.	More than 10,000 lbs.	More than 20,000 lbs.
500	684.61	554.60	472.28	397.12	345.33	283.06	248.51
400	547.69	443.68	377.82	317.69	276.27	226.45	198.81
300	410.77	332.76	283.37	238.27	207.20	169.84	149.10
250	342.31	277.30	236.14	198.56	172.67	141.53	124.25
200	273.85	221.84	188.91	158.85	138.13	113.22	99.40
175	239.62	194.11	165.30	138.99	120.87	99.07	86.98
150	205.38	166.38	141.68	119.14	103.60	84.92	74.55
125	171.16	138.65	118.07	99.28	86.34	70.77	62.13
110	150.61	122.01	103.90	87.37	75.97	62.27	54.67
100	136.92	110.92	94.46	79.42	69.07	56.61	49.70
92	128.02	103.71	88.32	74.26	64.58	52.93	46.47
85	118.77	96.21	81.93	68.89	59.91	49.11	43.11
77.5	108.98	88.28	75.18	63.21	54.97	45.06	39.56
70	101.28	82.04	69.86	58.75	51.09	41.87	36.76
65	95.26	77.17	65.71	55.25	48.05	39.38	34.58
60	90.28	73.14	62.28	52.37	45.54	37.33	32.77
55	85.31	69.11	58.85	49.48	43.03	35.27	30.97
50	80.25	65.01	55.36	46.55	40.48	33.18	29.13

This sample tariff shows the cost per 100 pounds for all weights and all classes covering shipments from Jersey City, New Jersey, to Foster City, California.

Careers in Truck Transportation

Truck transportation offers a variety of interesting careers, and the U.S. Department of Labor predicts that the number of positions in truck transportation will increase 23 percent by 2012. This means good career prospects for all positions within the industry, although most openings will be for drivers and diesel mechanics.

Here are some of the career opportunities in truck transportation. One of these positions might interest you.

Truck Driver

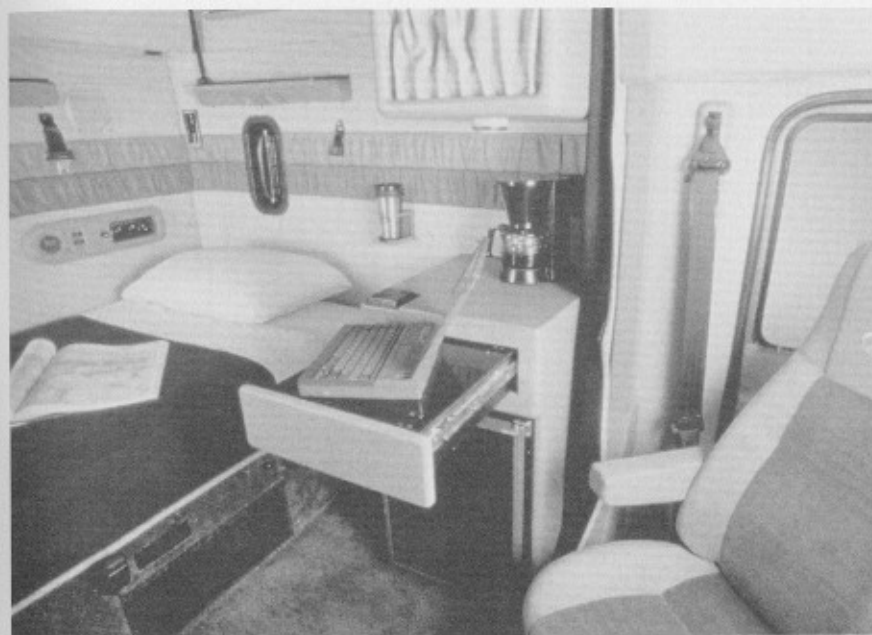
About 35 percent of all people employed in truck transportation are drivers, making it the industry's single largest occupation. Truck drivers not only pilot their trucks but also are responsible



In order to get their commercial driver's license, truck drivers need to be trained, too. If you have a knack for teaching others, you might want to think about becoming a commercial driving instructor.



Some drivers must load and unload their own trucks.



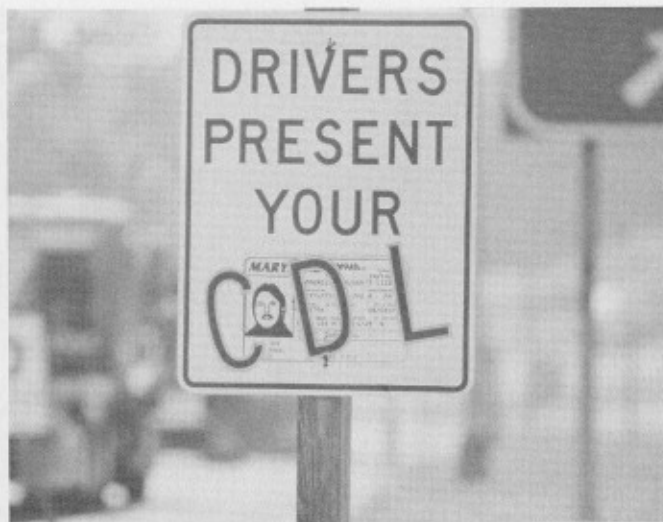
Some over-the-road drivers have sleeper cabs that come with a bunk bed, refrigerator, and even TV.

for the truck's cargo and for making deliveries on time. Drivers have responsibility to other users of the road, too. They must always put safety first when driving.

Local truck drivers, often called city drivers, generally work about 50 hours per week. Most of them have regular routes and return home each night.

Long-distance truck drivers, or over-the-road drivers, are often on the road for long periods of time. Their trips can run from overnight to a stretch of a week or two. Many of these drivers are away from home for much of the year. Many long-distance drivers share the driving duties with a partner; these are called teams.

Before starting their route, by law, drivers must inspect their trucks thoroughly to ensure that everything is in proper working order. They make sure that the cargo on the truck is properly loaded to prevent damage. While driving, they must always be alert.



The U.S. Department of Transportation requires that truck drivers in interstate commerce be at least 21 years old. To drive a big truck (those that can carry more than 26,000 pounds of cargo), an operator must have a commercial driver's license, or CDL. Such drivers must pass a special test and have a safe driving record.

Sales Representative

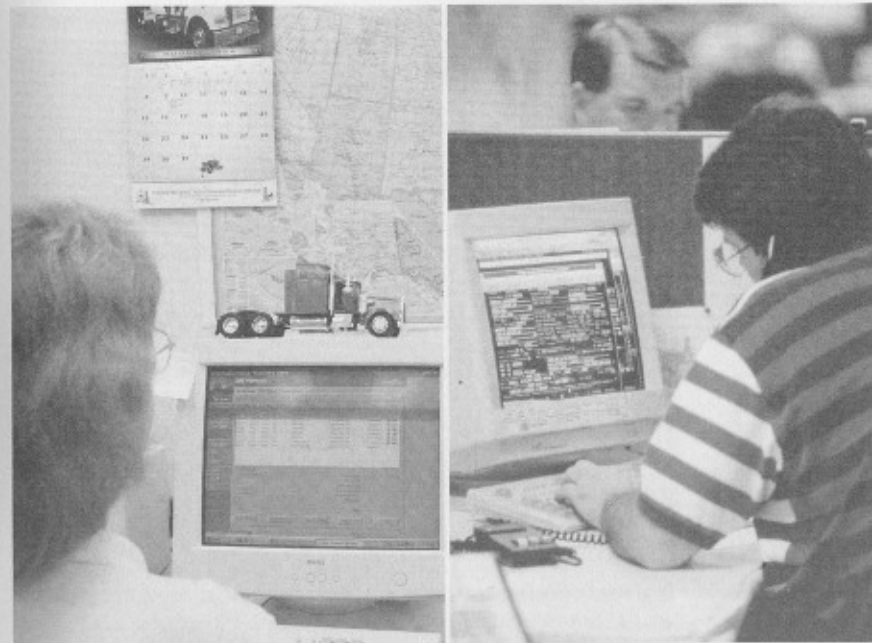
The sales representative is responsible for finding new customers and for maintaining the accounts of customers who are already on the company's books. Sales representatives must understand all of the trucking company's services so they can describe and sell these services to customers. They must be familiar with prices, types of services offered, rules and regulations, and whether the company can meet the customers' needs. To match the trucking company's services with a customer's needs, the sales rep must also have an understanding of the customer's business.

Sales reps maintain regular contact with customers and help ensure that customers are satisfied with the carrier's service. They must be comfortable making presentations and speaking in front of groups of people. They also must be able to negotiate, or bargain, well. Part of their responsibility is to obtain the best or most competitive price they can for the company's services.

Dispatcher

Dispatchers are responsible for coordinating the carrier's trucks with the customers' freight. They tell drivers where the freight is and when it will be ready for pickup. Dispatchers give drivers their assignments, schedules, and routes.

Years ago, dispatchers communicated with their drivers by two-way radio—and this may still be the case with some very small trucking companies. But today, dispatchers at larger companies usually rely on mobile phones to keep in contact with their drivers. Quite a few companies use global positioning satellite (GPS) tracking systems, which allow dispatchers to pinpoint the location of their trucks and predict with some accuracy when a truck will reach its destination.



Truck drivers are paid well for their hard work. The average pay for a driver of a heavy truck is about \$17 per hour.

Trucking Terms

bill of lading. A shipping document that lists the goods in the shipment.

carrier. A trucking company.

cartage. The action of moving freight to and from an airport or seaport.

commerce. The movement of goods, funds, and information.

consignee. The company receiving a shipment.

container. A steel box, normally 20 to 40 feet long, used primarily in ocean freight transportation. Freight is stored inside the container, which is weathertight.

drayage. (1) Intermodal freight transport; (2) additional handling services required at a destination beyond the transportation of the goods.

ETA. Estimated time of arrival; the time when a shipment should be delivered.

importation. The process of buying something from another country and bringing it to the United States.

intermodal. The practice of moving freight stowed in truck trailers or ocean containers via rail. This is also known as piggyback service, trailer-on-flat-car (TOFC), container-on-flat-car (COFC), or drayage.

internal combustion engine. An engine that produces power as a result of explosions occurring within the engine itself.

logbook. The book maintained by a truck driver showing the hours driven and the places the driver has been.

OS&D. Over, short, and damaged (goods). This is the claims department within a trucking company.

owner-operator. A very small trucking company where the owner of the company and the truck is also the driver.

piggyback. See *intermodal*.

raw materials. The things that go into making something else.

shipper. The company that gives freight to a trucker for transportation.

supply chain. The various companies involved in making something from the basic raw materials into the completed product, which is then available to the consumer.

tariff. A schedule of prices for transporting freight.

transportation mode. Means of transportation such as truck, air, rail, ship, or pipeline.

warehouse. A place where goods are stored.

