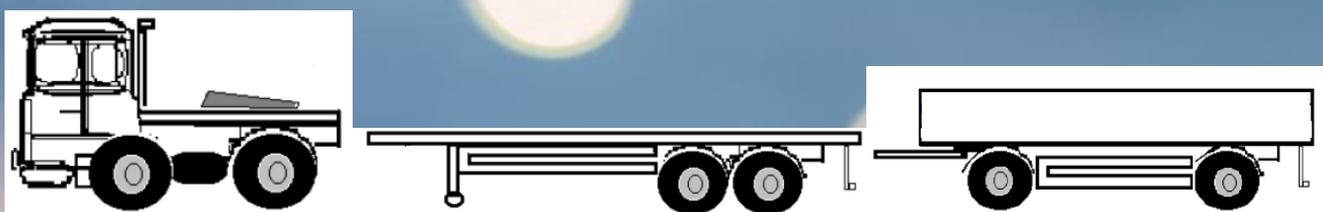


FAQs on Heavy Trailers (O3 and O4)

RSA

Heavy trailers can be classed into two types: trailers and semi-trailers or articulated trailers. These are pulled by a road tractor or agricultural tractor.



Which category is my heavy trailer?

O3 Trailers: DGVW* = more than 3.5 but less than 10 tonnes.

O4 Trailers: DGVW* = more than 10 tonnes.

**Design gross vehicle weight (DGVW) is the weight of the trailer including the maximum load it can carry as per manufacturer's design specifications.*

What are the maximum weight limits for my tractor and trailer?

See our [weights and dimensions](#) leaflet which outlines the maximum weights permitted under Irish law for various tractor and trailer combinations. If your load exceeds this limit you may be able to get an [abnormal loads permit](#). For further information on permits see our [FAQ](#) on Abnormal or Indivisible Loads.

Where do I find information about my trailer's weight and what it can carry? Check the trailer's weights and dimensions plate or authorisation plate. If your trailer does not have one contact the original manufacturer or authorised distributor. If they are no longer in service or the trailer brand is unknown contact an existing trailer manufacturer who may be willing to plate it for you

Do heavy trailers need to be registered and licensed? If your heavy trailer is being used in a commercial capacity i.e. for hire or reward it needs to be licensed with the your local motor tax office and for information on registration contact [Revenue](#).

Do heavy trailers require roadworthiness testing? If your trailer is used purely for agricultural purposes it does *not* need to be roadworthiness tested. However if your trailer is used for hire or reward then you will need to contact Commercial Vehicle Roadworthiness Testing [CVRT](#). It is important to note that regardless of whether your trailer needs to be tested or not under road traffic law the owner and or driver must ensure that it is maintained in a roadworthy condition and is safe at all times when used in a public place.

Do all heavy trailers need to be fitted with a weights and dimensions plate? Yes, even agricultural trailers. Contact the original manufacturer or authorised distributor. If they are no longer in service contact an existing trailer manufacturer who may be willing to plate it for you.

What documentation is required when importing a heavy trailer? You will need to contact [Revenue](#) when registering an imported trailer.

What is required when purchasing a heavy trailer? Since 29 October 2012 all new trailers must be type approved and hold a certificate of conformity (CoC). This means that the trailer has met a European safety and quality standard.

What driving licence is required to tow a heavy trailer? For information on licences see [licence categories](#) or contact our [Licensing Section](#) on 1890 41 61 41 or (096) 25000

How do I know if my vehicle can tow a heavy trailer? Consult owner's manual or contact original manufacturer or authorised distributor. Then check the DGWV of the trailer. Always ensure that this does not exceed the towing capacity of your vehicle.

Should trailers with air operated brakes and a DGWV exceeding 3,500 kg use safety chains? No. With air brakes the emergency red line acts as a breakaway brake in the event of the trailer uncoupling.

Is it mandatory to have a number plate on a heavy trailer and does it have to correspond with the towing vehicle? Yes.

I have 3 vehicles with 4 trailers and any vehicle can be towing any of the trailers at any time. Do I need different number plates for each trailer? For multiple trailers of any kind attached to a vehicle a duplicate of the registration plate shall be exhibited on the back of the rearmost trailer. At all times the towing vehicle and trailer number plates should match.

Do portable air compressors need to be registered in Ireland?

- If the portable compressor falls into light trailers i.e. less than or equal to 3,500 kg., it is not required to be registered.
- If it falls under the heavy trailers category i.e. more than 3,500 kg category it is required to be registered and roadworthiness tested.

Are reversing lights compulsory on trailers?

- Under UN-ECE Regulation 48 reversing lights are mandatory on O2, O3 and O4 category trailers over 750 kg but are optional on O1 category trailers less than or equal to 750 kg.
- Reversing lights are compulsory on all new trailers manufactured since 29 October 2012.

What is the difference between side lamps and marker or parking lamps?

Side Lamps are located at the front corners of a trailer, display a white light to the front and a red light to the rear. For testing of side lamps see [HCV Manual](#)

Marker lamps are fitted to the side of a trailer and are amber in colour and must be less than or equal to 7 watts. For testing of marker lights see [HCV Manual](#)

Are tri-axle trailers required to have brakes fitted on all axles? Yes. In order to be able to carry the maximum axle weight brakes are required on all axles.

What are the laws on tractor units towing more than one trailer? A large tractor is permitted to tow two trailers and exceed 18.75 m in overall length but NOT in any town with a population exceeding 10,000 people. The limit for this combination is 22 m. For vehicle combinations that carry abnormal or indivisible loads see our FAQ [here](#).

What are the requirements for a 2.74 m. wide low loader trailer moving heavy indivisible construction equipment between city sites? For information on Abnormal and Indivisible Loads see our FAQ [here](#).

Is it a legal requirement to fit disc holders on Irish registered heavy trailers?

Yes. A certificate of roadworthiness has a detachable disc that you are *legally obliged to display on your vehicle* either on the windscreen or in the case of a goods trailer can be displayed on the chassis or as close as possible to the registration plate where it can be easily inspected.

What are the requirements for a drive axle tyre on a trailer?

In Ireland a drive axle tyre on a trailer must adhere to certain rules;

- each tyre to ensure that the tyre load index rating for a single fitment tyre is not less than 50% (or for a twin fitment tyre is not less than 25%) of the design axle weight.
- all tyres on the same axle must be of the same structure and nominal size.

Further details regarding tyres can be found in [HCV Manual](#).

Is it illegal to use a tractor and trailer to carry tourists for hire or reward either on or off a public road?

Yes. In accordance with [S.I. No. 5 of 2003](#) of Road Traffic Construction and Use of Vehicles Regulations it states:

'39. A trailer or articulated vehicle, other than an articulated bus, shall not be used for the carriage of passengers for reward'.

The exception to this are land trains used for tourism which require a permit from the RSA and licenced from An Garda Síochána.

What are the correct vehicle specifications for a drag or

commercial low loader towed behind a truck? See our Weights and Dimensions [leaflet](#) and you can also view our FAQs on Heavy Commercial Vehicles [here](#).

Should tractors and dump trailers used for non-agricultural work use white diesel and what licence is required?

- For information on diesel contact [Revenue](#)
- For information on tractor licences or view licence categories click [here](#)

Does a tub grinder mounted on a trailer chassis and towed by an articulated tractor unit require roadworthiness testing? Yes. If it is mounted on a standard trailer chassis it will require testing.

What regulations apply to Type 2 long distance transporting of live animals? You will need to contact the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine [here](#) who have responsibility for the regulating of the transport of live animals outlining what is involved in this practice.

What is the maximum legal bumper height on heavy trailers in Ireland? Under European and National Type Approval Requirements a set of safety and quality standards for newly manufactured vehicles must be met before they can be sold or registered throughout Europe and that if rear ground clearance of a vehicle exceeds 550mm then some form of underrun needs to be added. See Section 6 of HCV Manual [here](#) detailing rear underrun limits.