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WHITE PAPER



CONNECTING A DOUBLE TRAILER

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CONNECTING A DOUBLE TRAILER

As the needs of the American economy have grown, so have the demands for more trucking on the road. Over the last five years, OEMs – with brands like Freightliner, Kenworth, and Peterbilt – have produced an average of 135,000 new trucks each year. With approximately two million trucks on the road, and nearly six million trailers in service, there is a lot of heavy equipment rolling across America each day.

But how does it all work? How do America's drivers safely move product throughout this enormous country? What do these amazing men and women do to ensure everyone gets what they need on time?

The basic concept of coupling or hooking up to a trailer is simple, but must be done in a safe and methodical manner.

Accidents involving trucking happen every day, and even deaths have occurred during what should be a routine process.



First, do a quick inspection to make sure your tires are in good shape and your fifth wheel plate is greased. Then, get in the cab and position yourself so that you're lined up properly in front of the trailer. The outside edge of your tires should line up with the edges of the trailer on both sides. Using both mirrors as you begin to back up, you only want to take the fifth wheel about halfway up on the apron, or the front of the trailer. The skid plate then lies down, and you have a gap between it and the trailer.

At this point, the trailer comes up a bit as the backend of the truck squats down. You should then exit the cab and make sure you're in the right position to capture the kingpin and lock in place. As you back up slowly, you should hear the locking jaw click in place, confirming you are attached. You can then put it into gear and gently pull forward to make sure you're connected. Now you can hook up your air lines and electrical connections to the front of the trailer. Check to make sure your seals are good and connect one side at a time. For the electrical connection, make sure your tabs are lined up properly and connect firmly to the trailer. You can then begin winding up the landing gear.

The second trailer will likely connect via a pintle hitch, a simple but extremely effective hitch that offers several benefits over a ball hitch or any other type of coupling. As before, position yourself as straight as you can in front of the second trailer, knowing that as long as you can get the lunette ring or drawbar eye over the horn, you're good to go. Once in position, secure the pintle hitch and lock in the safety chains. Connect the air hoses and electrical as before, and you are ready to go. This second connection should take no more than a couple of minutes.



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Premier Manufacturing is a private, American owned company with roots going back almost a century, with the invention of the pintle hitch by our founder Dewey Weiss. We design and develop top-of-the-line trailer components, and 8 of the top 10 LTL carriers use our equipment to handle their trucking needs while moving goods across our great nation.

Reach out to us today and discover more about our line of world class couplings, pintle hitches, and jacks for you and your team.