

Understanding Semitrailer Length in Oregon

This document describes how semitrailer length works in Oregon, especially as it relates to permitted loads. Proper permitting will lead to increased safety for the traveling public, as well as minimal downtime for drivers at scales.

Oregon recognizes five different types of semitrailers:

1. **Fixed** – a semitrailer with no additional length or axles.
2. **Stretch** – a semitrailer capable of increasing the distance from the kingpin or coupling device to the rearmost axle. This stretch trailer provision is accomplished by using a “telescoping” principle in the trailer. This does not include fixed or sliding extensions to either end of the semitrailer with removable deck sections.
3. **Expanded** – a semitrailer which can be extended in length by adding removable deck section(s).
4. **Special Use** – a semitrailer which is specifically designed to haul one type of commodity.
5. **Tow-Away** – all equipment or tools mounted on wheels designed for towing by a motor vehicle, and which is not designed or used primarily for the transportation of persons or property but is only incidentally operated or moved upon a highway.

Other Semitrailer Length Extensions

Extra axle(s) or length may be added to a semitrailer, to support the load or better distribute the weight when hauling a single, non-divisible item.

Flip Neck Extension – a gooseneck extension to the front of a trailer which can be flipped up or down and can be used to adjust the axle weight(s) of a combination and load.



Flip Axle(s) – an axle that is bolted or pinned to a vehicle and flips from the closed position on the trailer to a deployed position on the ground extending the length or hauling capacity of the trailer.



Pinned Axle(s) – a separate vehicle pinned to another vehicle adding extra carrying capacity to a vehicle. The additional axle(s) do not pivot from side to side at the connection point or have wheels that steer during turning.



Other Vehicle Types

The length extensions described above are different from other types of vehicles used in heavy haul combinations:

Jeep – a separate vehicle connected to a motor vehicle by kingpin to fifth wheel connection. A jeep axle(s) must bear all or part of the weight of the load of another vehicle and must be connected to that other vehicle either by kingpin to fifth wheel connection or a pintle hook. In most cases, the jeep is between the truck-tractor and the semitrailer.

Booster – a separate vehicle bolted or pinned to another vehicle that redistributes weight from one or more axles to other axles and pivots from side to side at the connection point or has wheels that steer during turning. Normally, the booster is behind the semitrailer.

Dolly – those devices attached to a frame, deck or load converting the frame to a semitrailer and is included in the measurement of the trailer. The dolly must bear weight when the permitted vehicle is laden.

This list is not all-encompassing. Other equipment may be used as part of a heavy haul combination, including manual or mechanically steered vehicles, and frame rail trailers.

If the semitrailer is longer than 53 feet in length, a permit is required. Only one annual permit allows trailer length in excess of 53 feet: the annual unladen heavy haul permit, requiring jeep axles, booster axles, or other heavy haul equipment in addition to the truck-tractor and semitrailer. A single trip permit is required in all other situations, and the semitrailer type and extra axle(s) or length must be described properly in the permit application.

Secondary highways may have restrictions on semitrailer and/or overall length.

Notes on Proper Permitting

Do **not** include the booster or jeep axle(s) in the semitrailer length.

Fixed trailers longer than 53 feet in a truck tractor and semitrailer combination require special handling by the OD Permit Unit. Justification for use of these trailers may be required prior to permit issuance. Carriers should anticipate an additional time for ODOT to consider these permit requests.

Additional Questions?

Semitrailer length in Oregon can be complicated. If you have any questions, feel free to give the OD Permit Unit a call at 503-373-0000 or email CCD ORION Support.