



BEING ALERT AND FIT TO DRIVE



Being a truck driver is a difficult job. Some loads demand you staying awake at night and make you feel more tired than if you were driving during the day. The reason Hours of service regulations exist, is to prevent drivers from driving tired, however night shifts and long trips still happen from time to time and you can follow a few tips to stay awake while on the road.

1. **Get enough sleep:** getting behind the wheel when you're tired is dangerous to you and other drivers. Make sure you're fully rested before starting your pre trip.
2. **Schedule trips safely:** if your body is used to being alert during the day, you'll have a harder time driving at night. Try organizing your schedule to drive when you're more alert.
3. **Avoid medications:** some medicines make you drowsy, so avoid taking anything that will make you sleepy. Nobody likes to suffer the consequences of a flu but dealing with the aftermath of an accident is much worse.
4. **Keep the cabin cool:** if the cabin is hot or poorly ventilated, you will be sleepy, use the A/C!
5. **Take breaks:** not only is it mandatory now to take at least one break after 8 hours on duty, but it will help you feel less tired. Taking short breaks will keep you alert and you can just do a quick inspection of your vehicle that will avoid DOT violations!
6. **Stop if tired:** there is the misconception that coffee will help keep you alert and that is simply not true. If you're sleepy nothing will help except sleeping. By getting up earlier the next day you will make up for it and keep on schedule.
7. **Take a nap:** sleep whenever you can, if you're being loaded and the shipper instructed you to stay in the sleeper, use the opportunity to relax and get some ZZZZ's. If you're on a tight schedule but you feel tired, stop and take a nap, 30 minutes of sleep can really make you feel rested enough.
8. **Avoid drugs:** stay away from supplements of caffeine that promise to keep you up. Nothing cures sleep but sleeping and eventually they will make you feel more tired than if you hadn't taken anything

