

# THE IMPORTANCE OF SCALING



As a professional truck driver you should scale the load in order to find out the three sets of weights: the drive axle weight, the steer axle weight and the trailer axle weight. The sum of the three will provide you with the gross weight.

For most states the steer axles have a weight limit of 12,000 pounds, the drive and trailer axles have a weight limit of 34,000 pounds and the total gross weight should be equal or less than 80,000 pounds. You can look up the legal limits for each state in the Rand McNally Motor Carrier's Road Atlas. Keep in mind that when you get scaled at a customer, most of the times they are simply going to provide you with the total gross weight, not the axle weight, and they won't give you a print out. It is always necessary to scale the truck at a certified scale if you have a heavy load and it's a company policy.

There are several factors that will affect the weight distribution across the truck's axles, such as the position in which the trailer tandems are, as well as the fifth wheel, and amount of fuel on your tanks, however one of the most important factors is the way the overall weight of the cargo is placed across the trailer. One thing you can do when you're not allowed to see how the trailer is loaded, is inspect it when you get ready to close the doors.

Check that the weight has been equally distributed along the trailer and make sure the load is properly secured to prevent shifting. If necessary use your load locks or straps. If you believe or can see the weight has been placed unevenly contact your dispatcher and get confirmation by scaling the load.

Always look for the closest scale you can find. Here's the link you can use to find one: <http://catscale.com/cat-scale-locator>. Nowadays there's an app you can download for smart phones that will provide you with the three closest scales available in the area you find yourself in. Scale at the closest place possible, keep in mind it's always possible you won't be able to shift the weight with your tandems and you might have to come back to the shipper for weight re distribution or taking weight off if over the gross weight.

Scale the load and avoid overweight tickets.

