



## Safety: Vehicle Loads (Part 1)

### 1. Know Your Truck's Load Capacity

It's important to know your truck's gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) and load capacity before you begin loading your truck. The GVWR can usually be found on a label on the rim of your driver's door or in your owner's manual. Whatever your truck's GVWR is, don't exceed it. Doing so could damage your vehicle, cause a crash, and/or cause you to be fined.



### 2. Position Heavier Items Toward the Cab

Be sure to position heavier items towards the cab of your truck. This will prevent your truck from becoming back-weighted, which can cause poor steering and handling. Also, try to even out the weight on both sides of your truck when possible.

### 3. Secure Cargo on at Least Two Sides

Once you've completed the steps above, you'll need to tie down your cargo. It's important to tie down your cargo on at least two sides using the ratchet straps. You should also secure the straps to the load itself when possible. You'll want to make sure your load is as secure as possible to prevent any movement during transport.

### 4. Flag Long Loads

After you've secured your load, be sure to attach a red flag on the end of any overhanging materials. If you don't have something red at home to attach, Lowes & Home Depot usually give away flags that you can use. Just ask them.

Flags must be red, at least 12 in. by 12 in. and be attached to the end of the load where it is clearly visible. Flags are required for any load/ladder/etc. extending more than 4 feet beyond the rear bumper.



Your load/ladder/etc cannot extend beyond the front bumper by more than 3 feet.

Rolls of red plastic disposable flags have been ordered. Nate will bring them to each branch when they arrive.

### Virginia laws that apply:

- [§ 10.1-1424. Allowing escape of load material; penalty.](#)
- [§ 46.2-1156. Construction, maintenance and loading must prevent escape of contents; load covers; exemptions.](#)
- [§ 46.2-1121. \(Effective until July 1, 2023\) Flag or light at end of load.](#)
- [§ 46.2-1120. Extension of loads beyond front of vehicles.](#)