

# **DISPATCHING 101**

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## General Rules & Terminology

### Terms

**Pallets or Skids.** A pallet and skid is the same thing. Typically you can fit 24-26 skids per truckload on a 53 foot van. Anything over 15 skids is considered a truckload. Generally a skid is a 48inch square made of wood.

**Truckload.** A truckload is considered anything over 15 skids or 28,000 lbs. All trucks should be able to handle 22 skids (minimum) and 40,000 lbs (minimum). Maximum weights vary, but load up to 44,500 lbs are common, just be sure to tell the trucks dispatcher the exact or approximate weight if the load is over 40,000 lbs. Transit time is quick and should not be delayed greatly.

**Less than Truck Load or LTL.** LTL loads are any load that take up less than 28 or 30 feet of room and weigh less than 28,000 lbs. This can be anything from 1 pallet to 14 pallets. It's safe to say 2 pallets = 4ft of room on a truck. An ltl load can go on nearly any type of equipment and the rates vary greatly. Typically ltl load transit time is a few days more than a truckload transit time. Sometimes the truck you get to take the ltl load will take the load back to his dock and re-work it so he can fit more products in the truck that is going to haul it. Generally, they have to consolidate with other freight going the same direction so make it cost effective for them. On LTL loads this is very common.

**Load to Ride.** The way the customer loads it, is how the receiver gets it. This load should NOT be reworked or touched by the carrier. Be sure to tell carrier before booking the load if it is a load to ride.

**Transit time.** The transit times vary greatly depending on when it goes and where it goes. If a customer asks transit time on a truck load, run the miles. The average driver does about 550 miles a day, some do more, and some do less. If the miles are less than 600 the driver should deliver the day after pick up (usually the next morning after pick up).

**Truck order not used.** If a truck shows up at a customer or is close to the customer, and the customer cancels the load, then the truck will probably want some money. If the truck calls and says the customer canceled the load, YOU call and verify before sending the truck away. Double check, and if they did then you can tell the truck to leave. If the truck asks for money, say no problem and tell them that you'll fax it over to his company. If he doesn't ask, do say anything. Sometimes they forget about it, others don't. If a customer cancels the load, we are going to bill them regardless if the truck bills us or not. But the standard truck order not used to the customer is \$100 - \$150 (and up depending on the circumstances). The standard to the truck is \$50 - \$125. But many factors affect the price. If you do run into it, call either myself or Jeremy.

**Detention time.** On nearly all loads, the trucks will give you 2 hours loading and unloading free. If the time goes over that, then they will try to charge you x amount of dollars per hour. If the customer tells you in advance that it will take 3 or 4 hours to get loaded, tell the dispatcher that BEFORE you book the load, that way they are prepared and probably won't charge you. Also, if the truck calls you after he's been there for an

hour or so, and the customer hasn't done anything, call the customer and politely ask them how much longer it will be before the truck will get loaded. If they say it will be a while, and then tell myself or Jeremy. What we'll do is call the customer back in a little bit and makes them aware of detention time and when it will start. That will sometimes get the customer moving faster. The rate a truck charges varies, some do \$40 per hour, and some do \$75 per hour. These rates are generally negotiable. Don't agree to anything without talking to me. The guys that try to charge in the least amount of time are the LTL / Bobtail / Hotshot guys. Make sure the load is ready before sending them in.

**Hot Load / Rush Load.** A hot load or rush load is any load that has to be picked up ASAP and delivered ASAP. We charge extra because chances are we'll pay extra. Be careful before accepting hot loads. Let me know about them ASAP. Sometimes we can't do them.

**HAZMAT.** Hazardous materials. Complicated to say the least. Forklift batteries should be about the only hazmat thing you'll deal with and that by itself is complicated.

Batteries transported IN the forklift are NOT hazmat. Batteries transported on a pallet ARE hazmat. It's best to notify me if there is a load of batteries.

**Team Run.** Two drivers in the truck, very little down time. Cost extra.

**LANE.** A lane is a particular path. Example: Dallas – Houston or McKinney – Chicago.

## General Notes

Pay attention to detail and write everything down. When a customer calls in a load, write down everything they tell you and if you need any more info, ask. You might even give them the email address and tell them that if it is easier, just email it. Then you have everything in writing, which is best. If they want to give you a load verbally, be sure to get all the info, then repeat it to them and make sure it is correct. The info needed is, where it's loading and going, customer names, when it's going, what is going and a PO# or reference number if needed. Then you can proceed from there.

If it is a rush or hot load, and you need help, call me. If it's not a big rush and we've done the load before, look in the log book file and see which carrier did it. If a particular carrier pops up several times on the same lane, then chances are they'll do it again. If they ask what the rate is, see what they did it for the last time and that should be ok. If they ask for more, ask me. Remember though, once the load is faxed to the carrier, we CAN'T lower the rate, we can always up it.

If you can't find who did it last time, or if it is a new lane, you can post the load on Internet Truckstop ([www.internettruckstop.com](http://www.internettruckstop.com)). Our password is already saved, so just hit OK if it asks for it. Then go to "broker tools", then to "post / update freight" and click on it. Then click on "post single" load. Then fill in the blanks. Generally leave the weight, length, delivery date and money blank, unless the weight is very heavy or the customer asks for a 53 or 48 ft.

If a carrier agrees to the rate, and we are not already set up with them, fax them over our carrier packet. Once we get there's back, then we can send them the rate confirmation. If the carrier is already set up with us and there name is highlighted in red in a truck file, DO NOT use them. They have already screwed up.

Here's a tip. If you've faxed over your carrier packet, but haven't gotten their fax back after a while, something could be wrong. They might not have gotten it or they might not do your load and wasn't going to tell you. So after 30 min or so, call the truck just to make sure everything is still ok.

Another tip. If your gut tells you that something is fishy, chances are your right. Don't be afraid to call the truck until you get that warm fuzzy feeling.

If there is an appointment time for your truck to either load or unload your load, and you haven't heard from them and it's approaching the appt time, call the dispatcher. If my truck has a 3pm loading time, and I haven't heard from them by 1pm, I'll call.

Keep in mind, a lot of drivers and dispatchers will lie. Some will have actual delays, others will tell you anything to buy time.

## Equipment

1. **Van**, the most common trailer on the road, also known as an enclosed trailer or dry box. The standard lengths are 48 and 53 foot. There are some 57 footers out there but generally cost extra. Very few customers even know about 57's and you'll rarely ever deal with them. The standard width is 102 inches, unless it's older equipment, some of the older equipment is 96 wide, but they are rare. The standard height is 110 inches. Most vans have swing doors; some have roll-up doors. Be sure that if you are loading something tall, that the van your loading has the swing doors, otherwise it will not be loaded. A van with a roll up generally has 90 inch clearance or thereabouts, which is fine for most palletized loads. The weight a van can carry varies, but most will not have a problem hauling 42,000 lbs. Once the weight goes over that, it's best to tell the truck driver or dispatcher the weight just in case. 45,000 lbs is about the max for any van. So if a customer says it's somewhere around 45k, tell them that 45k is the max, and if possible you'll need the exact weight before loading. That way the truck will be prepared. Most vans also come with a few load bars, which is basically a bar that runs from one side to the other, generally used to keep light weight pallets from shifting. They are NOT good to keep anything heavy from shifting. Vans have wood floors unless they are something unique.



Inside view of basic van.



Outside view of basic van.

2. **Van with Lift Gate.** The van with lift gate is considered specialty equipment. If a customer asks for lift gate service, chances are you are not delivering to a dock, and therefore must do a ground drop. This service costs extra. The weight a lift gate can lift varies, but generally a 1,000 lbs isn't a problem. If a customer needs something that is heavier delivered with a lift gate, you need to call and get quotes on a heavy duty lift gate delivery. The heavy duty lift gate is rare and expensive. Some customers docks can not accommodate a lift gate truck, so if you get a lift gate truck that wants to do one of your regular loads, be sure to ask the customer if they can load a lift gate. Some can, some can't. The max amount of weight a van w/ lift gate can handle will be less also, so if you have a heavy load, be sure to let the truck know the weight that way there won't be a problem loading.



Lift Gate.

3. **Logistics Van.** A logistics van is a regular van, with a few extras. E-Track is a long metal rail that runs along each side of the van that will allow the driver or customer to strap pallets, furniture or miscellaneous equipment to the trailer not allowing anything to move. Most logistics vans also carry pads or blankets. When transporting an office or some high value electronics, the customer might want the desks or some boxes pad-wrapped or blanket wrapped (it means the same thing). This service cost extra, and sometimes the driver will have to do work, which cost extra. Some logistics vans also have lift gate, which is fairly common. A few days advance notice is required for these loads. These loads can be very expensive, do not quote without my approval.
4. **Refrigerated unit or Reefer trailer** is generally used for produce or can also be used on most van loads. A reefer also comes in 48 and 53 foot lengths, however, 48's are more common. A reefer unit has the air conditioner at the front of the trailer, which takes up some room and weighs several hundred lbs. Typically, since most reefers are 48ft, they can handle 43,000 lbs, some can handle more. A reefer has a metal floor, and is generally 96 inches wide, most of the newer ones are 102 inches wide. The width is a major concern on some loads. For instance, if you have pallets that are 48in x 48in, getting 2 beside each other is almost impossible on a 96in wide trailer. But with a 102 wide, you have plenty of room. Some pallets are 40 x 48, others 48 x 48. A typical reefer unit can generally run temperatures from -10 degrees Fahrenheit to 70 F depending on the unit and the weather. The height of a reefer is also less than a van, generally it is around 102 inches. The majority of our loads can go on either a van or reefer. Some customers will specify what they want, in that case be sure not to send in the wrong equipment.



Outer view.



Inside looking out, notice the metal floor and insulated walls.  
This particular unit has the E-track bars, which is rare on a reefer.

5. **Flat Bed.** The typical flatbed is 58 inches tall and 45ft long. The next common length is 48ft. 53 ft flat's are somewhat hard to come by. If the customer wants a 53 flat, ask them if they are sure and tell them that most flats are 45 or 48 footers. Most of the time, they will say that is fine. A flatbed generally cost more than a van and generally handles more weight. In many cases, with flatbeds, the customer might want the driver to put a tarp over the freight, in that case, we usually pay the driver anywhere from \$50 - \$75 for the typical tarp charge. If the freight is something over size or difficult to tarp, the fee will go up. Always ask the customer if they want it tarped. Most flats have wood floors, some metal, and most drivers carry straps & or chains with them. Some customers will want the load strapped, others chained, be sure everybody is on the same page before sending the driver to load a chained load and all he has is straps. With flatbeds, make sure you get the dimensions of the freight from the customer (if the freight is not palletized). With the dim's we'll be proceed. Sometimes the freight might be to wide, tall or long. Therefore, requiring a permit or perhaps even a different trailer. Also, each state has different allowances for height, width, length and weight. When taking an order for a permitted load, check with myself or Jeremy first.



This is a basic flatbed.

6. **Step Deck or Drop Deck.** A step deck (sd) is similar to a flat bed, but it accommodates the hauling of taller equipment. The step deck is the next most common equipment of the flatbed variety. It generally cost a bit more than a flatbed and holds less. Always get dimensions before proceeding and contact myself or Jeremy. Generally, the height from the ground to the top of the trailer is

40 inches (varies widely), the length of the bottom deck is typically 35-40 foot (this also varies widely) and the top is generally 5-8ft.



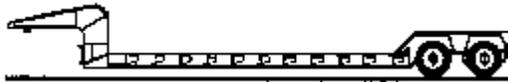
This is a typical step deck.

- 7. Double Drop or Lowboy.** Another in the flatbed variety. This is considered specialty equipment and the costs for such equipment can be quite expensive. This is for hauling even taller equipment. The bottom well of a double drop (dd) is typically 28 inches from the ground and 25-30 feet long.



This is a basic double drop.

- 8. Removable goose neck (RGN).** A RGN is much rarer and way more costly. On an RGN the front part of the trailer unhooks, allowing someone to drive equipment onto the trailer from the front. Then the driver will back up to the trailer and raise it via hydraulics so he can hook back up to it and take off. Typically 45-48 ft long, with 30ft in the well (or bottom deck).



- 9. Bobtail.** A bobtail is basically a short van. Common lengths are 24, 26 & 28ft. They can typically hold up to 12 pallets and up to 15,000 lbs without a problem. If your load is small, then you can use this type of equipment. However, keep in mind, sometimes these guys expect to get paid a truckload rate. A bobtail can be a van or reefer, but most of the time it's a van. And many of them have liftgates.
- 10. Gooseneck / Hotshot.** The gooseneck or hotshots are basically the type of trailers a 1 ton truck can haul. Typically, 18,000 lbs is about max (some can do more, other less). These guys generally cost a lot, but are very fast. Make sure that if you are talking to a hot shot that he knows the weight and dim's before he does the load.



Typical gooseneck w/ loading ramps

## Potential New Customers

We are always on the lookout for new customers. If any call, be sure that if you don't get anything else, at least get a name and number. Some will be calling back, others will be calling for the first time. If a potential customer calls and wants a quote, be sure to get ALL the info you can. Then let me know. If any call and want to speak with me, assure them I'll call them back ASAP. We NEED THEM!

## Quoting

Here is what you'll need if a new customer calls wanting a quote:

1. Pick up location (town name or zip code will suffice)
2. Delivery location (same as above)
3. What is the product, and what kind of equipment they are wanting
4. Weight
5. When they would like for it to ship.

Once you have that info, run the miles, and then call me.

\*\*Don't forget to get their name, number and email if possible.

## Carriers

We are set up with hundreds of truck lines. If the truck says that he is already set up with us, we can proceed to booking the load, if not we need to get set up. Begin by faxing over our carrier packet. Then wait for theirs in return. Then fax them the load confirmation and wait for the truck to call for dispatch.

If the truck calls for dispatch, but then asks for the customer's number, don't give it to them. Tell them we have directions if they need it. If they still want the number, there's a chance that something is up. Sometimes the drivers want the number so they can see if they can load late without us knowing, or they might want the number so they can make a sales call on our customer. If they do that, we will NEVER use them again. Try not to give them the customer's number at all. If they keep insisting, give them my number.

Once you send a rate confirmation, you can not go back and lower the rate, so be sure of the rate before you fax it. If the customer wants a van only, include that on the fax in bold letters.

If you've booked a load, and the driver hasn't called for dispatch and it's been a little while, call the dispatcher. Also, if you've faxed over the carrier packet and haven't seen theirs in return, call just to make sure they received ours.

Sometimes, a truck will accept a load, and then look for better paying loads before he returns our paperwork, so we want to keep them on it or hurry and get them off it so we can move on.

Some dispatchers don't want you talking about the rate you paid them with the drivers, so if a driver ask, tell them his dispatch has that info.

If you're doing a search on Internet Truckstop and a truck highlighted in red shows up, do NOT use them. If they are highlighted in yellow, that means they are very good and go ahead and call them. Keep in mind; if you call them, chances are you'll pay more than if they call you.

## The Board

The white board exists so everybody is on the same page. By looking at the board, we all should be able to find out just about everything with the load we need. Once a load has been called in (or emailed) from the customer, write it on the board. That way, regardless of who is on duty, they can see all the important info at a glance.

1. Who is the customer
2. Origin of load
3. Destination
4. Skid count or what is it, or any special instructions
5. PO# or customer ref#
6. Pick up date (and appt time if needed)
7. Delivery date (and appt time if needed)
8. Which carrier is going to haul it

If the load is hot, high light the load in red so everybody knows that that load is high priority. Once the loads have been picked up, mark through the carrier so we know that they have been loaded. Once the load has been delivered, you can then erase it.

## Quick Review / Tips

**Van** = Wood floor trailer. Most common. 43,000 lbs safe. 110 inches tall and 102 inches wide.

**Reefer** = Refrigeration unit, insulated walls, metal floor. Most are smaller than van.

**Flatbed** = 60 inches tall, 45 – 53 foot long.

Take notes on everything. Get names, phone numbers and email address when needed.

If something can go wrong, chances are it will.

If you think a truck driver is lying, chances are, he is.

To estimate travel time, take the total miles and divide by 45mph. For every 10 hours driving time, estimate 12 hours sleep / eat time.

300 miles, divided by 45mph avg=6 & ½ hrs. Usually it's a bit faster, but this is a safe figure.

800 miles, divided by 45mph =17 & 1/2 hrs. But add 10 hours for sleep and you now have a 29 hour trip.

To calculate fuel cost, figure most big rigs get about 5 miles per gallon. Total miles divided by 5 = total gallons. Multiply that by the price of fuel (which can be found under "my favorite" websites at Weekly Retail On Hwy Diesel Prices). For instance: 700 miles divided by 5mpg is 140 gallons, multiply by 2.88 (cost of diesel per gallon) = \$403.20. That is what the truck will spend in fuel alone.

Never ask a truck to run illegal; the DOT could fine us big time.

Never give out customer info, someone wants it.

Maximum height allowed in Texas is 14ft. That's from the ground, so if your flat bed is 60 inches tall, then your equipment can be no taller than 108 inches or 9 ft. A lot of states don't allow 14ft, so if the load is close, and going over state lines, call me.

If a customer wants to ship something 20 ft tall, don't say we can't do it; we CAN, but tell them "let us work up a quote for you and I'll call you back". Then call me and proceed from there. It will take some time to arrange.

We'll ship just about anything to anywhere.

The majority of the time, if the load is going to Southern California, up the middle (Wisconsin, Illinois, Minnesota, Kansas, Missouri ) or to the South (Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee, the Carolinas), the load will be relatively easy to cover.

The best time to book a load (for same day loading) is from 0730 – 0930. There are usually many more trucks looking during that time. If you're booking a load for the next day, it's best to post a load after 2pm.

Whatever time a truck driver or dispatcher tells you the truck will be there (to load) add 1 hour. If a customer calls and asks what is the ETA for the truck to pick up, if you don't know, call the dispatcher, if he tells you 2pm, you tell the customer 3pm. It's much better to be early than late.

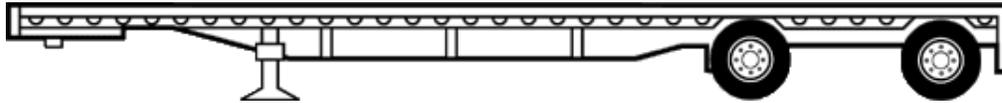
For over size loads, a driver will have to get permits, they generally take a little while for his company to get. They cost between \$15 - \$30 per state. We pass this fee on (plus a little) to the customer: unless it's figured into the quote. On a permitted load, the drivers typically can NOT drive after dark or the weekends (depending on how oversize it is).

When you have a load posted & a truck calls, whatever the rate is, you tell the truck \$25 - \$50 LESS, they will nearly all ask for more. When they do, pause, and then give them some more. Depending on the lane and truck availability you might have to go more than expected.

When posting a load, post the load going / coming to a larger town if possible. Example: Instead of posting this load (Pilot Point to Arlington) post it as Denton to Dallas.

**Quick Equip. Spec Sheet (all have variations, but these are common).**

Flatbed



**This trailer accommodates freight with the maximum legal weight and dimensions shown below.**

**Max. Freight Weight**

48,000 lbs.

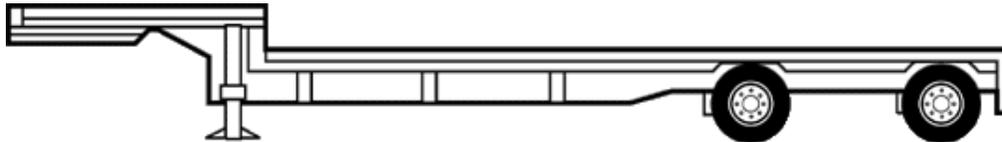
**Maximum Freight Dimensions**

Length 48 feet

Width 8.5 feet (102")

Height 8.5 feet (102")

Single-Drop Deck (aka Stepdeck)



**This trailer accommodates freight with the maximum legal weight and dimensions shown below.**

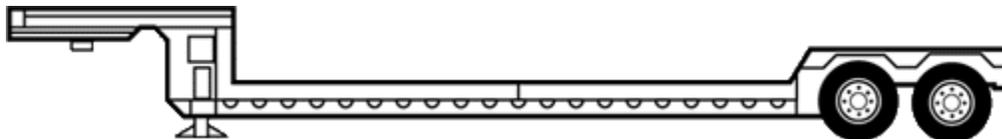
**Max. Freight Weight**

48,000 lbs.

**Maximum Freight Dimensions**

Main Deck	Max. Dims.	Front Deck	Max. Dims.
Length	37 feet	Length	11 feet
Width	8.5 feet (102")	Width	8.5 feet (102")
Height	10 feet (120")	Height	8.5 feet (102")

Double-Drop Deck



**This trailer accommodates freight with the maximum legal weight and dimensions shown below.**

**Max. Freight Weight**

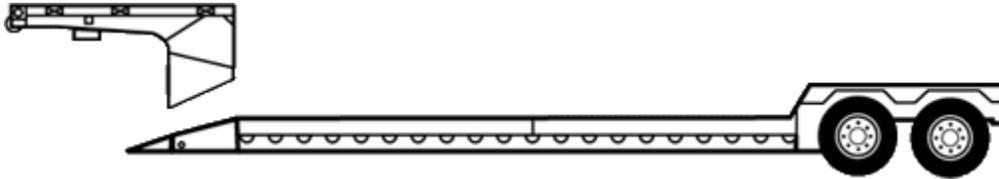
45,000 lbs.

**Maximum Freight Dimensions**

Main Deck	Max. Dims.	Front Deck	Max. Dims.	Rear Deck	Max. Dims.
Length	29 feet	Length	10 feet	Length	9 feet
Width	8.5 feet (102")	Width	8.5 feet	Width	8.5 feet

Height	11.5 feet (138")	Height	8.5 feet (102")	Height	10 feet (120")
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Double-Drop w/Detachable Deck (aka Lowboy, RGN)



**This trailer accommodates freight with the maximum legal weight and dimensions shown below.**

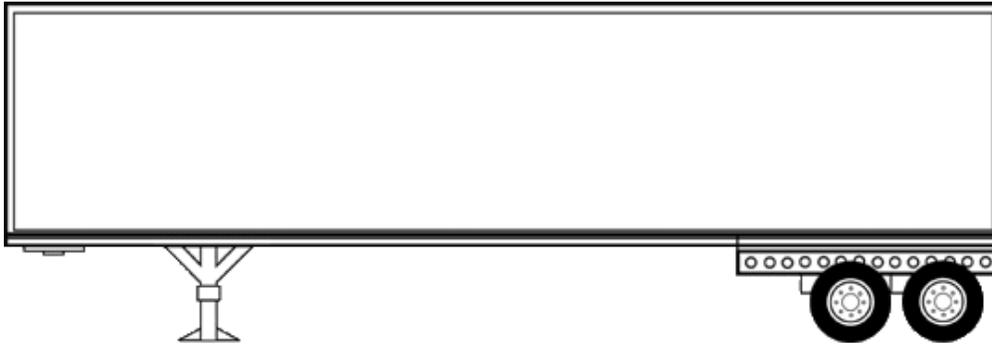
**Max. Freight Weight**

44,000 lbs.

**Maximum Freight Dimensions**

<b>Main Deck</b>	<b>Max. Dims.</b>	<b>Front Deck</b>	<b>Max. Dims.</b>	<b>Rear Deck</b>	<b>Max. Dims.</b>
Length	29 feet	Length	10 feet	Length	9 feet
Width	8.5 feet (102")	Width	8.5 feet (102")	Width	8.5 feet (102")
Height	12 feet (144")	Height	8.5 feet (102")	Height	10 feet (120")

Enclosed Box Trailer (aka Dry Van)



**This trailer accommodates freight with the maximum legal weight and dimensions shown below.**

**Max. Freight Weight**

45,000 lbs.

**Maximum Freight Dimensions**

Length 52.5 feet

Width 8 feet 5 inches (100")

Height 9 feet 2 inches (110")

Stretch Flatbed



**This trailer accommodates freight with the maximum legal weight and dimensions shown below.**

**Max. Freight Weight**

45,000 lbs.

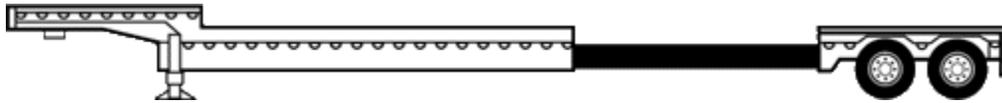
**Maximum Freight Dimensions**

Length 45-80 feet

Width 8 feet (96")

Height 8.5 feet (102")

Stretch Single-Drop Deck



This trailer accommodates freight with the maximum legal weight and dimensions shown below.

**Max. Freight Weight**

43,000 lbs.

**Maximum Freight Dimensions**

Main Deck	Max. Dims.	Front Deck	Max. Dims.
Length	38-63 feet	Length	10 feet
Width	8 feet (96")	Width	8 feet (96")
Height	10 feet (120")	Height	8.5 feet (102")

Stretch Double-Drop Deck - 2 or 3 axle (depending on weight)



This trailer accommodates freight with the maximum legal weight and dimensions shown below.

**Max. Freight Weight**

40,000 lbs.

**Maximum Freight Dimensions**

Main Deck	Max. Dims.	Front Deck	Max. Dims.	Rear Deck	Max. Dims.
Length	29-50 feet	Length	10 feet	Length	9 feet
Width	8.5 feet (102")	Width	8.5 feet (102")	Width	8.5 feet (102")
Height	8.5 feet (102")	Height	8.5 feet (102")	Height	10 feet (120")