



Truck Driver Jobs: A Brief Overview

Truck driver jobs are responsible for the delivery of everything from the food you eat to the furniture in your home. Truck drivers may work within the states in which they live, or they may haul their products from one part of the country to another. Everywhere you travel on the highways and interstates, you will see **semi truck drivers** hauling their products to different parts of the country for delivery.

What Are Truck Driver Jobs?

Truck drivers are not only responsible for getting their products to their destinations on time, they are also responsible for the trucks they drive. They must make sure that they are in perfect working order. From the safety aspects of the truck, including the brakes, lights, tires, and safety equipment, to the correct way of loading their merchandise, truck drivers are accountable for more than just deliveries.

They must make sure their trucks are equipped with safety equipment, such as fire extinguishers and flares. The loads they carry must be secure. Their job includes keeping a log of their trips to and from the places where they drop off their merchandise. The US Department of Transportation regulates this aspect of a truck driver's job. Any accidents or problems with a truck must be logged.

Some truck drivers have trucks with sleepers in the rear of the cab. They use these for resting in between runs or if they are on the road for a long time before they get a break. Sometimes two drivers will work together, one resting while the other drives, especially if they are on the road for long periods of time.

Some drivers have trucks that carry thousands of pounds of product. For example, those trucks that haul new cars to dealers are very heavy. The loaded truck may weigh 26,000 pounds or more, but the truck will be subject to certain weight limits, and overloading is not permitted due to safety reasons.

Truck drivers may spend 90% of their time behind the wheel, but they also may have to load or unload their trucks. This is true in the case of certain types of merchandise they deliver. Automobile delivery is one such job a truck driver may have that may require special handling.

Truck drivers who work for delivery services may work within an area of a city where they pick up and deliver packages. The

trucks involved are lighter than the ones used for delivering larger items. These light trucks weight less than 26,000 pounds, and usually these drivers work within an area such that they are home at night. This job normally requires the use of electronic tracking systems to help keep track of the merchandise they are delivering, which may include furniture or packages.

The light delivery truck driver will usually have the truck already loaded when he arrives for pickup and delivery. Unless it is a small company, the drivers normally do not have to load their own trucks. Such a driver will be responsible for collecting payments, writing receipts, keeping track of the deliveries, and various other aspects of the deliveries.

What Education Does a Truck Driver Require?

There are courses designed for truck drivers to learn how to drive tractor-trailers. There is also preparation available for obtaining a CDL, which is a commercial driver's license. Learning to drive tractor-trailers on crowded highways and interstates requires skills that must be taught before the test for a CDL license can be passed. Drivers will also need to learn how to inspect their trucks and the merchandise they carry to make sure they are compliant with the regulations of the trucking industry.

A passing score in a truck driving program does not necessarily mean **jobs for truck drivers** are going to be waiting. Although some companies do help to obtain employment, newly graduated truck drivers may have to find their own employment. The Professional Truck Driver Institute (PTDI) is an organization that was established by the trucking industry which certifies courses for drivers at the different schools.

There are both state and federal regulations that will determine the qualifications a driver must have to obtain a CDL. A driver of trucks weighing more than 26,000 pounds



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must have the CDL. Drivers who carry materials which are considered hazardous must also have a CDL, no matter whether the truck is over 26,000 pounds or not. These drivers must also pass a background check and be fingerprinted. The Transportation Security Administration handles these requirements. When driving a smaller truck such as a [delivery truck](#), a regular license is often all that is required.

What Are the Earnings of Truck Drivers?

Truck drivers' earnings are based on the types of trucks they drive and the distances they must travel. A tractor-trailer driver's median earnings per hour are typically \$16 to \$17. The middle earnings are anywhere from \$13 to \$21. The

highest earnings are over \$25 per hour, with the lowest being less than \$10 per hour.

The highest wages are paid in general freight trucking, and the lowest are paid to specialty trade drivers. The light delivery truck driver will normally make at least \$12.17 per hour. The pay ranges from \$9 to \$16 per hour, with the highest being more than \$21 per hour.

The earnings are also based on the area of the country in which the driver works. The areas that are predominantly import and export areas will have more merchandise that will have to be sent to warehouses and distribution centers.

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