



Mota-Bars

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Glossary of Towing and Technical Terms

Towing Weight

The weight of the trailer that a vehicle (both technically and legally) to tow.

Kerb

or

Nett

weight

The weight of the vehicle when parked at the kerb, ready to be used. In the case of a trailer, the (empty" weight of the trailer.

Gross (or Laden) weight

The weight of the vehicle (or trailer) in its laden state.

Gross plated weight

The maximum weight the vehicle (or trailer) is allowed to operate at. This will be specified on the chassis (or VIN plate) - the location of which will be detailed in the vehicle handbook. On a trailer the chassis plate is usually found towards the front of the trailer.

Train Weight

The maximum that the laden vehicle combination is allowed to weigh - i.e the towing vehicle + driver + passengers + luggage + trailer + load.

Roof Rack weight.

The maximum allowed weight that can be safely carried upon the vehicles roof rack.

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Nose weight

The vertical load imposes upon the towing vehicle (via the towing bracket).

Vehicle combination

The towing vehicle complete with an attached trailer

Trailer

Generic term for a "towed vehicle" which could consist of a boat/trailer/horsebox/caravan

Towbar/Towing Bracket

The "frame" specifically designed for the vehicle in question, to provide a coupling point (usually a 50mm diameter ball) for the connection of a trailer.

Towing Hitch/Coupling

The mechanical connection between the towing primary coupling, vehicle and the trailer (usually a 50mm ball and socket).

Secondary Coupling

A secure connection that will restrain the trailer to the rear of the towing vehicle in the event that the primary coupling will fail.

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Breakaway Cable

A device, usually in the form of a thin wire rope, that in the event of the primary coupling failing, will apply the trailers brake before "snapping", leaving a detached trailer with the brakes applied, so that it will rapidly come to rest.

Nearside

The side of the vehicle closest to the kerb, (the left hand side in the UK).

Offside

The side of the vehicle furthest from the kerb, (the right hand side in the UK).

EC Directive

A legislative document issued by the appropriate department of the European Community.

EC Type Approval

An approval that has been granted when inspection and tests have been proved that an item (such as a tow bar) conforms to the requirements of the relevant E.C. directive.

Stabiliser

A mechanical device that dampens the oscillations (shaking) that can be experienced between the car and trailer, when towing. Will not cure

inherently unstable combination.

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Jockey Wheel

A Screw Jack mounted vertically on the nose of the trailer fitted with a wheel to allow the trailer to be "jockeyed" into position. Used to elevate the nose of the trailer to facilitate coupling to and uncoupling from the vehicle.

Corner Steadies

Screw Jacks mounted at, or under corners of a trailer to facilitate levelling of the trailer. Should not be used to "jack up" a trailer to facilitate changing of a wheel!

Braked Trailers

Trailers equipped with brakes that operate on all wheels when the trailer "overruns" (or catches up with the towing vehicle).

Unbraked Trailers

Trailers that fail to conform to the classification of a "Braked trailer".

Wheel Blocks

Chocks used to prevent wheels from rotating.

Levelling Blocks

"Ramps" that a trailers wheels can be manouvered onto to assist with levelling of the trailer.

Engine braking

The procedure of changing down to a lower gear, in order that the engine compression will provide retardation of the vehicle (combination).

Jack-Knife

The situation that occurs when the articulation between the towing vehicle and the trailer is exceeded, usually by virtue of the bodywork of the towing vehicle and the trailer meeting.

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