

FAQs on Light Trailers (3.5 tonnes or less)

RSA

Does a trailer have to be plated? All new light trailers sold after 29 October 2012 must legally be plated.

My trailer is homemade, where can I get it plated? You can contact an existing trailer manufacturer in your area and ask them if they are willing to plate it for you.

Does my trailer need a number plate fitted? Yes, unless the DGWV is under 750 kg. The number plate on your vehicle must be visible at all times. If the trailer obstructs your number plate you will need to attach another number plate with the towing vehicle's registration number on the light trailer as well.

Does a light trailer need to be licensed and taxed? No.

Does a light trailer need to be insured? Insurance queries should be directed to your insurance company.

Does a light trailer require roadworthiness testing? Only trailers over 3,500 kg have to be roadworthiness tested. However under Road Traffic law trailers must be maintained in a roadworthy condition at all times when used in a public place. Contact the original manufacturer for advice on servicing intervals and part replacement.

How do I get my new unregistered trailer type approved? To obtain certification contact the [NSAI](#).

I'm buying a trailer, what do I need to know? Since 29 October 2012 all new trailers must be type approved and hold a certificate of conformity. This means that the trailer has met a European safety and quality standard.

What is the speed limit for towing light trailers? The speed limit is 80 km/h. unless a lower speed limit sign is posted which must be obeyed at all times.

What can I tow with a B or BE Driving Licence?

B Licence	BE Licence
A trailer whose DGWV is not more than 750 kg, or	A trailer whose DGWV is not more than 3,500 kg, or
If the trailer's DGWV is more than 750 kg but the design gross combination weight (DGCW) of the vehicle + trailer does not exceed 3,500 kg.	If the trailer's DGWV is more than 750 kg and less than 3,500 kg but the design gross combination weight (DGCW) of the vehicle + trailer does not exceed 7,000 kg.

Can I tow a double axle caravan with a car? You will need to check the towing capacity of your car. See our [FAQ](#) on Calculating the Towing Capacity of a Vehicle.

Do I need a 4x4 or four-wheel drive vehicle to tow a trailer? No. A two wheel drive is fine provided the weight of the loaded trailer does not exceed the towing capacity of your vehicle i.e. how much it can tow.

Is it illegal to tow a three-axle trailer? No. However the DGWV of the three-axle trailer must not exceed the towing capacity of your vehicle and you must hold the appropriate [driving licence](#).

Does a light trailer require lights? Yes. Trailers attached to vehicles that are used in public places must be equipped with:

- Functioning white side lamps
- Red rear lamps
- Red stop lamps
- Amber directional indicators
- Identification mark lighting and
- Rear red reflectors.

Any cracked or broken lenses must be replaced. Always ensure that your trailer lights have been connected, clean, working properly and clearly visible.

Are reversing lights compulsory on trailers? Under UN-ECE Regulation 48, reversing lights are mandatory on O2, O3 and O4 category trailers with DGWV of more than 750 kg but are optional on O1 category trailers with DGWV of 750 kg or less. Reversing lights are compulsory on all new trailers manufactured since 29 October 2012.

Do portable air compressors need to be registered in Ireland?

- If the portable compressor falls into the light trailers category i.e. less than or equal to 3,500 kg they are not required to be registered.
- If it falls under the heavy trailers category i.e. more than 3,500 kg they are required to be registered and roadworthiness tested.

What are the laws on parking unattended trailers alongside national roads?

- Road Traffic Lighting of Vehicles Regulations as amended. Article 50 of [S.I. 189 of 1963](#) specifies the requirements on the use of lighting on parked vehicles.
- Road Traffic Act 1961, '*a person shall not park a vehicle in a public place if, when so parked, the vehicle would be likely to cause danger to other persons using that place*'. A public place means any street, road or other place to which the public have access with vehicles whether as of right or by permission and whether subject to or free of charge.

Where you encounter a vehicle parked dangerously along the road or causing an obstruction, you should contact An Garda Síochána.

Is it mandatory that a single axle generator have a weight plate fitted? All O1 and O2 light trailers manufactured on or after 29 October 2012 are required to be type approved which includes the fitment of a manufacturer's plate.

Is there a legal requirement to have a power socket with a tow bar? If the tow bar is being used to tow a trailer and the trailer obscures the lights and reflectors required to be fitted to the rear of a vehicle, then a power socket would need to be fitted to the vehicle in order to provide lighting for the trailer. However, if the tow bar is not being used to tow a trailer and does not obscure the rear lights of the vehicle, then there is no legal requirement to have a power socket fitted to the vehicle.

What are the regulations when transporting a boat when the mast exceeds the length of the trailer by approximately 3 metres and is 4 metres in height? For information on loading and unloading see:

- Loading and Unloading your trailer section in our [Booklet](#) on Light Trailers and
- Weights and Dimensions leaflet on our website [here](#)

Is the tread depth on a light trailer tyre the same as on a car tyre?

Yes. The legal requirement is a minimum of 1.6 mm. For safety reasons it is recommended that each tyre should have at least 3 mm tread depth. Most new tyres have 8 mm.

Is it legal to tow a boat and jet ski? While it is not illegal to pull two trailers behind a vehicle, the vehicle in question must have a sufficient towing capacity to tow such a combination or load, and the towing trailer must be designed for the purpose of towing another trailer and plated accordingly. All light trailers (O1 and O2) manufactured on or after 29 October 2012 are required to be type approved which includes the fitment of a manufacturer's plate. For further information see FAQ on braking requirements on light trailers at this [link](#).

- Under [S.I. No. 5 of 2003](#) of Road Traffic Construction and Use of Vehicles regulations 2003 it states that 'a *drawbar means any drawbar, chain or other towing device and includes any special fitting for the attachment of such drawbar, chain or towing device*
- Regulation 40 of this regulation also states that 'A *drawbar shall be of such strength and shall be so fitted that a drawn vehicle to which it is fitted cannot become detached while in use as part of a combination of vehicles*'.

We would also advise that you contact your insurance provider to ensure that your vehicle is insured to tow such a combination.

What are the regulations for constructing a trailer for a bicycle and towing it on the public road?

- Road Traffic Lighting of Vehicles Regulations [S.I. No. 189 of 1963](#) (as amended) Section 29 prescribe that pedal cycles shall at all times while ridden, or wheeled by a person on foot, in a public place during lighting-up hours be equipped with and show duly lit a front lamp and a rear lamp. If the bicycle trailer were to obscure the rear light of the bike, then such lamps or reflectors should be fitted to the trailer itself.
- BS EN 15918:2011+A2:2017 specifies safety requirements and test methods for two track cycle trailers i.e. with one or two wheels and their connecting devices. These cycle trailers are intended for the conveyance of cargo loads or up to two passive child passengers i.e. not pedalling, both of whom are capable of sitting unaided and neither of whom weighs more than 22 kg. The maximum permitted weight of such a cycle trailer, including cargo and or passenger(s), does not exceed 60 kg.