

THE TOP 171 MOST COMMON

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE QUESTIONS

LOSE THE FEAR OF THE UNKNOWN.
STUDY THE MOST COMMON CDL
GENERAL KNOWLEDGE QUESTIONS SO
YOU'LL KNOW WHAT TO EXPECT ON
THE BIG TEST DAY



THE 171 MOST COMMON

US GENERAL KNOWLEDGE QUESTIONS

1. With a BAC of __, most people lose consciousness, and some die.

0.4

2. To prevent a load from shifting, there should be at least one tie-down for every __ feet of cargo.

10

3. Name two situations in which the legal maximum weights may not be safe to haul.

DURING BAD WEATHER; IN MOUNTAINS

4. If you are stopped at a rest area and found to have a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .02, you will be placed out of service for

24 HOURS.

5. The distance that you should look ahead of your vehicle while driving is about _____ at highway speed.

1/4 MILE

6. Inspect your cargo after you have driven

25 MILES OR 50 MILES, DEPENDING ON THE LAW IN THE STATE YOU ARE IN; AGAIN AFTER 3 HOURS OR 150 MILES; AND AFTER EVERY STOP FOR A BREAK.

7. Medical certificates must be renewed every

2 YEARS.

8. What is the minimum tread depth for tires other than front tires?

2/32 INCH

9. Escape ramps are

USED TO STOP RUNAWAY VEHICLES.

10. You are driving a vehicle that can be driven safely at 55 mph on an open road. Although the speed limit is 55 mph, traffic is heavy, moving at 35 mph. The safest speed for your vehicle in this situation is

35 MPH.

11. If you are driving a 30-foot vehicle at 55 mph, how many seconds of following distance should you allow?

4 SECONDS

12. How far ahead should you be looking while driving in town?

1 BLOCK

13. When driving a commercial vehicle with a height over 13 feet, you should

STOP AND MAKE SURE IF YOU AREN'T CERTAIN THAT A CLEARANCE IS HIGH ENOUGH.

14. In your mirror, you see a car approaching from the rear. The next time you check your mirror, you don't see the car. To change lanes, you should

WAIT UNTIL YOU ARE SURE THE CAR ISN'T IN YOUR BLIND SPOT.

15. Turn signals should be used

AT LEAST 100 FEET BEFORE TURNING OR CHANGING LANES.

16. If you are driving a long distance, you should

STOP OFTEN AND TAKE SHORT BREAKS BEFORE YOU FEEL REALLY DROWSY OR TIRED.

17. What does «axle weight» mean?

THE WEIGHT TRANSMITTED TO THE GROUND BY ONE AXLE OR ONE SET OF AXLES

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18. The distance your vehicle travels from the time your eyes see a hazard to the time your brain recognizes it is called _____.

PERCEPTION DISTANCE

.....

19. Optional safety equipment may include emergency phone numbers, tire chains, and

TIRE CHANGING EQUIPMENT.

.....

20. To prevent brake fade, you should

SELECT A GEAR THAT WILL KEEP YOUR VEHICLE AT A SAFE SPEED ON STEEP DOWNGRADES.

.....

21. Wheel bearing seals should be checked for

LEAKS.

.....

22. One can recognize hazardous materials by looking at the container's

LABEL.

.....

23. High beams should be

USED WHEN IT IS SAFE AND LEGAL TO DO SO.

.....

24. How do you calculate how many seconds of following distance you have?

WAIT UNTIL THE VEHICLE AHEAD OF YOU PASSES A CLEAR LANDMARK. THEN COUNT OFF THE SECONDS UNTIL YOU REACH THE SAME SPOT.

.....

25. How do you test the hydraulic brakes for leaks?

PUMP THE BRAKE PEDAL THREE TIMES; THEN APPLY FIRM PRESSURE TO THE PEDAL AND HOLD IT FOR FIVE SECONDS. THE PEDAL SHOULD NOT MOVE.

.....

26. Name two causes of fires.

UNDERINFLATED TIRES AND DUALS THAT TOUCH

.....

27. What does «communicating» mean in safe driving?

LETTING OTHER DRIVERS KNOW YOU'RE THERE TO HELP PREVENT CRASHES

28. What is the proper way to hold the steering wheel?

FIRMLY, WITH BOTH HANDS ON OPPOSITE SIDES OF THE WHEEL

.....

29. The tendency for long commercial vehicles to swing wide on turns is called

OFF-TRACKING.

.....

30. How does the height of the vehicle's center of gravity affect safe handling?

TRUCKS WITH A HIGH CENTER OF GRAVITY CAN ROLL OVER AT THE POSTED SPEED LIMIT FOR A CURVE

.....

31. You do not have a Hazardous Materials Endorsement on your commercial driver's license. You are asked to deliver hazardous materials in a placarded vehicle. You should

REFUSE TO HAUL THE LOAD.

.....

32. The purpose of retarders is to

HELP SLOW THE VEHICLE WHILE DRIVING AND REDUCE BRAKE WEAR.

.....

33. While driving, you see a small (1-foot-square) cardboard box ahead in your lane. You should

STEER AROUND IT WITHOUT MAKING A SUDDEN OR UNSAFE MOVE.

.....

34. If your vehicle catches fire while you are driving, you should

PARK IN AN OPEN AREA.

.....

35. When should you review the pre-trip inspection report from the last driver?

YOU SHOULD REVIEW IT DURING YOUR PRE-TRIP INSPECTION

.....

36. You can see a sign on a vehicle ahead of you. The sign is a red triangle with an orange center. What does the sign tell you about the vehicle?

IT IS A SLOW-MOVING VEHICLE

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37. Name some important steering system parts.

TIE ROD, SPINDLE, AND PITMAN ARM

38. The gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) is the

MAXIMUM GVW SPECIFIED BY THE MANUFACTURER FOR A SINGLE VEHICLE, INCLUDING ITS LOAD.

39. During a pre-trip inspection, you discover an exhaust leak or power steering leak. You should

REPORT THE PROBLEM AND MAKE ARRANGEMENTS TO USE ANOTHER VEHICLE.

40. The best drivers are those who watch and prepare for hazards. This is called being

DEFENSIVE.

41. Name some things you should check on the FRONT of your vehicle during your pre-trip inspection.

LOW BEAMS, HIGH BEAMS, FOUR-WAY FLASHERS, AND TURN SIGNALS

42. The most common cause of serious vehicle skids is

DRIVING TOO FAST FOR ROAD CONDITIONS.

43. What is an «escape ramp?»

RAMPS THAT ARE LOCATED A FEW MILES FROM THE TOP OF A DOWNGRADE TO HELP YOU STOP

44. A car suddenly cuts in front of you, creating a hazard. What should you NOT do?

HONK AND STAY CLOSE BEHIND THE CAR

45. If you are being tailgated, you should

INCREASE YOUR FOLLOWING DISTANCE.

46. What is a hazardous materials placard?

A SIGN PLACED ON THE OUTSIDE OF A VEHICLE THAT IDENTIFIES THE HAZARD CLASS OF THE CARGO.

47. What is the most important hand signal that you and your backing helper should agree on?

STOP

48. What is the definition of «sleep debt?»

THE CUMULATIVE EFFECT OF NOT GETTING ENOUGH SLEEP

49. It is important to shift gears correctly to keep

CONTROL OF THE VEHICLE.

50. The reaction distance is the distance traveled from the time

THE BRAIN TELLS THE FOOT TO PUSH THE BRAKE PEDAL TO THE TIME THE FOOT ACTUALLY PUSHES THE PEDAL.

51. Bridge formulas permit

LESS MAXIMUM AXLE WEIGHT FOR AXLES THAT ARE CLOSE TOGETHER.

52. The purpose of a baffle is to

CONTROL THE LOAD SURGE.

53. A vehicle is loaded with most of the weight on the steering axle. What may result?

HARD STEERING AND POSSIBLE DAMAGE TO THE TIRES

54. Gross vehicle weight (GVW) is

THE TOTAL WEIGHT OF A SINGLE VEHICLE, INCLUDING ITS LOAD.

55. You are starting your vehicle from a stop. As you apply power to the drive wheels, they start to spin. You should

TAKE YOUR FOOT OFF THE ACCELERATOR.

56. For an average commercial vehicle being driven at 55 mph on dry pavement, it will take about _____ to bring the vehicle to a stop.

THE LENGTH OF A FOOTBALL FIELD (300 FEET)

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57. Tie-downs must be of the proper type and strength. The combined strength of the cargo tie-downs must be enough to lift

ONE AND ONE-HALF TIMES THE WEIGHT OF THE CARGO TIED DOWN.

58. You are driving a heavy vehicle and must exit a highway using an off ramp that curves downhill. You should

SLOW DOWN TO A SAFE SPEED BEFORE TAKING THE CURVE.

59. What three things related to cargo are the driver's responsibility?

INSPECTING THE CARGO, RECOGNIZING OVERLOADS, AND PROPERLY SECURING THE CARGO

60. When should you downshift an automatic transmission?

WHEN GOING DOWN GRADES

61. When should you wear seat belts?

ANYTIME YOU ARE IN A MOVING VEHICLE

62. What effects can wet brakes cause?

BRAKES CAN GRAB OR BECOME WEAK

63. You should try to park your vehicle so that

YOU CAN PULL FORWARD WHEN YOU LEAVE.

64. Cargo that can shift should have at least __ tie-downs(s).

TWO

65. Containerized loads

ARE TYPICALLY USED FOR FREIGHT CARRIED PARTWAY BY RAIL OR SHIP.

66. Converter dollies built on or after March 1, 1998 are required to have anti-lock brakes. These dollies will have

A YELLOW MALFUNCTION LAMP ON THE LEFT SIDE OF THE DOLLY.

67. How many red reflective triangles should you carry?

THREE

68. It takes the body about ___ hours to get rid of the alcohol in four drinks.

FOUR

69. How does «bleeding tar» affect the road surface and driving conditions?

TAR RISES TO THE ROAD SURFACE IN VERY HOT WEATHER, CAUSING THE ROADS TO BECOME VERY SLIPPERY

70. Can federal inspectors inspect your truck or bus?

YES, AND THEY CAN PLACE IT OUT OF SERVICE.

71. How far ahead should you look?

12-15 SECONDS

72. You should have a minimum of _____ tread on your steering tires.

4/32 INCH

73. You are driving a 40-foot vehicle at 35 mph. The road is dry and visibility is good. What is the least amount of space you should keep in front of your vehicle to be safe?

4 SECONDS

74. You do not have a Hazardous Materials Endorsement on your commercial driver's license. You can drive a vehicle hauling hazardous materials when

THE VEHICLE DOES NOT REQUIRE PLACARDS.

75. How can you avoid wet brake problems?

SLOW DOWN, SHIFT TO A LOW GEAR, AND GENTLY APPLY THE BRAKES

76. On a two-way, two-lane road, if you must stop on a hill, how far back should you place your reflective triangles?

WITHIN 500 FEET BEHIND THE VEHICLE

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77. Where or when should you test the stopping action of your service brakes?

WHEN THE VEHICLE IS MOVING AT ABOUT 5 MPH

78. Some liquid tanks are divided into several smaller tanks by

BULKHEADS.

79. Why should you be in the proper gear before starting down a hill?

YOU WILL NOT BE ABLE TO SHIFT INTO A LOWER GEAR ONCE YOU ARE GOING DOWN A HILL

80. The total weight of the powered unit, the trailer, and the cargo is called

GROSS COMBINATION WEIGHT.

81. To avoid a crash, you had to drive onto the right shoulder. You are now driving at 40 mph on the shoulder. How should you move back onto the pavement?

IF POSSIBLE, COME TO A COMPLETE STOP BEFORE STEERING BACK ONTO THE PAVEMENT

82. When approaching a traffic light that has been green for a long time, you should

START TO SLOW DOWN SO YOU WILL BE READY TO STOP.

83. For your safety, when setting out reflective triangles, you should

HOLD THE TRIANGLES BETWEEN YOURSELF AND ONCOMING TRAFFIC.

84. If you have been drinking alcohol, before you drive, you should

WAIT FOR IT TO WEAR OFF.

85. You must park on the side of a level, straight, two-lane road. Where should you place the reflective triangles?

ONE WITHIN 10 FEET OF THE REAR OF THE VEHICLE, ONE ABOUT 100 FEET TO THE REAR, AND ONE ABOUT 100 FEET IN FRONT OF THE VEHICLE

86. If you do not have a CB radio, what is the first thing you should do at an accident scene?

PROTECT THE ACCIDENT SCENE

87. What is your most valuable way to see the sides and rear while driving?

CHECK YOUR MIRRORS REGULARLY

88. Implied consent means that when you sign the driver's license application form, you

CONSENT TO BE TESTED FOR ALCOHOL IN YOUR BLOOD.

89. If a straight vehicle (no trailer or articulation) goes into a front-wheel skid, it will

GO STRAIGHT AHEAD EVEN IF THE STEERING WHEEL IS TURNED.

90. You should back and turn toward the driver's side

SO YOU CAN WATCH THE REAR OF THE VEHICLE BY LOOKING OUT THE SIDE WINDOW.

91. Stab braking

INVOLVES RELEASING THE BRAKES ONLY AFTER THE WHEELS LOCK UP.

92. The oil pressure gauge should come up to normal within how long after starting the engine?

SECONDS

93. When backing, why is it important to have a helper?

THERE ARE BLIND SPOTS YOU CAN'T SEE.

94. The «load» means

THE MAXIMUM SAFE WEIGHT A TIRE CAN CARRY AT A SPECIFIED PRESSURE.

95. When inspecting mirrors and windshields for cracks, dirt, illegal stickers, and other obstructions to your vision, you should

CLEAN AND ADJUST AS NECESSARY.

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96. You are driving a new truck with a manual transmission. To take a long, steep downhill grade,

USE A LOWER GEAR THAN YOU WOULD USE TO CLIMB THE HILL.

97. Truck escape ramps

ARE DESIGNED TO STOP RUNAWAY VEHICLES SAFELY WITHOUT INJURING DRIVERS AND PASSENGERS.

98. What should you do if you get stuck on the railroad tracks?

GET OUT OF YOUR VEHICLE AND AWAY FROM THE TRACKS

99. What items should be checked for safety on the steering column?

STEERING ARMS SHOULD NOT BE MISSING ANY NUTS, BOLTS, OR COTTER KEYS

100. If the vehicle in front of you is smaller than yours, it can probably

STOP FASTER THAN YOU.

101. You should use a helper to help back your vehicle

WHEN POSSIBLE.

102. If you need to leave the road in a traffic emergency, you should

AVOID BRAKING UNTIL YOUR SPEED HAS DECREASED TO ABOUT 20 MPH.

103. Before transporting a sealed load, you must check that

THE LOAD IS PROPERLY SECURED.

104. As your blood alcohol concentration (BAC) rises, what happens?

JUDGMENT AND SELF-CONTROL ARE AFFECTED

105. According to the driver's manual, why should you limit the use of your horn?

IT CAN STARTLE OTHER DRIVERS.

106. Why make emergency plans when you see a hazard?

TO PROTECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS

107. Every time you park your vehicle and shut the engine off, you should

APPLY THE PARKING BRAKE.

108. What is hydroplaning?

WHEN THE TIRES LOSE THEIR CONTACT WITH THE ROAD

109. What is the minimum length for mud flaps?

WITHIN 8 INCHES OF THE SURFACE OF THE ROAD

110. What is the new blood alcohol concentration (BAC) for commercial drivers to be considered intoxicated when driving a commercial vehicle?

0.04

111. At night, when a vehicle is carrying a load that extends four feet or more beyond the rear of the body, there must be _____ at the extreme end of the load.

2 RED LIGHTS

112. You are driving a 40-foot vehicle at 50 mph. Driving conditions are ideal (dry pavement, good visibility). What is the least amount of space that you should keep in front of your vehicle to be safe?

5 SECONDS

113. When driving at night, use your low beams when an oncoming vehicle is within

500 FEET.

114. What is black ice?

A THIN LAYER OF ICE CLEAR ENOUGH THAT YOU CAN SEE THE ROAD UNDERNEATH IT

115. To prevent skidding, you should

ADJUST TO CONDITIONS WHILE DRIVING.

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116. When you check the condition of visible parts during your pre-trip inspection, make sure that the _____ are secured against snagging, rubbing, or wearing.

AIR LINES AND ELECTRICAL WIRING

117. If you are convicted for driving under the influence (DUI) while driving a commercial vehicle, and this is your first offense, you will most likely get

AT LEAST A ONE-YEAR SUSPENSION OF YOUR CDL.

118. Stab braking should not be used on vehicles with

ANTI-LOCK BRAKES.

119. Dry bulk tanks and hanging meat

ARE UNSTABLE LOADS.

120. When a doctor prescribes medication for you and you know you will be driving, you should

ASK THE DOCTOR IF THE MEDICATION WILL AFFECT YOUR ABILITY TO DRIVE.

121. When looking ahead of your vehicle while you are driving, you should look

BACK AND FORTH, NEAR AND FAR.

122. A key principle to remember about loading cargo is to keep the load

BALANCED IN THE CARGO AREA.

123. What is an advantage of going right instead of left around an obstacle?

IF YOU ARE BLOCKED ON BOTH SIDES, A MOVE TO THE RIGHT WON'T FORCE ANOTHER VEHICLE INTO AN OPPOSING TRAFFIC LANE AND A POSSIBLE HEAD-ON COLLISION

124. Blood alcohol concentration (BAC) is calculated by measuring a person's

BODY WEIGHT.

125. Hydroplaning

IS MORE LIKELY WHEN THE TIRE PRESSURE IS LOW.

126. Brake fade

CAN BE CAUSED BY THE BRAKES BECOMING TOO HOT.

127. Retarders

CAN CAUSE THE DRIVE WHEELS TO SKID WHEN THEY HAVE POOR TRACTION.

128. To correct a drive-wheel braking skid, you should

COUNTERSTEER.

129. When you take a break in the middle of your trip, you should check

CRITICAL ITEMS SUCH AS TIRES, BRAKES, AND CARGO TIE-DOWNS.

130. Your truck has a dual air system, and one of the systems loses its pressure. What will happen?

EITHER THE FRONT OR REAR BRAKES WILL NOT BE FULLY OPERATIONAL

131. You should schedule your driving

FOR THE HOURS YOU ARE NORMALLY AWAKE.

132. If you go twice as fast, your stopping distance will increase by

FOUR TIMES.

133. What is the first thing you should try to do if your brakes fail while driving downhill?

GET OFF THE ROAD AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

134. What should you do before driving if you are sleepy?

GET SOME SLEEP

135. What should the wheel bearing seals be checked for?

THE HUB OIL LEVEL AND POSSIBLE LEAKS

136. Controlled braking

IS USED TO KEEP A VEHICLE IN A STRAIGHT LINE WHEN BRAKING.

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137. Is it legal to drive with one-fourth of a vehicle's leaf springs broken or missing?

NO

138. How long does it take a typical tractor-trailer to clear a single railroad track? A double railroad track?

IT TAKES 14 SECONDS TO CLEAR A SINGLE TRACK AND MORE THAN 15 SECONDS TO CLEAR A DOUBLE TRACK

139. What should you do if a car coming toward you at night keeps its high beams on?

LOOK TOWARD THE RIGHT EDGE OF YOUR LANE OR THE RIGHT EDGE OF THE ROAD.

140. When you are passing another vehicle, pedestrian, or bicyclist, you should assume that they

MAY MOVE INTO YOUR TRAFFIC LANE.

141. How can you test the parking brake?

SET THE PARKING BRAKE, TRY TO MOVE SLOWLY.

142. You are driving on a straight, level highway at 50 mph. There are no vehicles in front of you. Suddenly a tire blows out. What should you do first?

STAY OFF THE BRAKES UNTIL THE VEHICLE SLOWS DOWN ON ITS OWN.

143. The braking effect of the engine is greatest when the engine is _____ the governed rpm and the transmission is in the _____ gears.

NEAR; LOWER

144. When driving in cold weather conditions, your tires should

PROVIDE ENOUGH TRACTION TO STEER AND PUSH THE VEHICLE THROUGH SNOW.

145. You must park on the side of a level, straight, four-lane, divided highway. Where should you place the three reflective triangles?

ONE WITHIN 10 FEET OF THE REAR OF THE VEHICLE, ONE ABOUT 100 FEET TO THE REAR, AND ONE ABOUT 200 FEET TO THE REAR

146. To avoid rollbacks when you start, you should

PARTLY ENGAGE THE CLUTCH BEFORE YOU TAKE YOUR RIGHT FOOT OFF THE BRAKE.

147. What is a «pull-up?»

PULLING FORWARD WHILE BACKING A TRAILER TO REPOSITION IT

148. What three things add up to total stopping distance for your truck or bus?

PERCEPTION DISTANCE, REACTION DISTANCE, BRAKING DISTANCE

149. What should you do if your vehicle hydroplanes?

RELEASE THE ACCELERATOR.

150. If you have a heavy load that is slowing you down on an upgrade, you should

SHIFT INTO A LOWER GEAR.

151. Convex curved mirrors

SHOW A WIDER AREA THAN FLAT MIRRORS.

152. If required, a driver's trip log

MUST BE SHOWN IMMEDIATELY WHEN AN OFFICER REQUESTS IT.

153. How do you correct a rear-wheel acceleration skid?

STOP ACCELERATING.

154. While driving, ice builds up on your wipers and they no longer clean the windshield. You should

STOP SAFELY AND FIX THE PROBLEM.

155. To help you stay alert while driving, you should

TAKE SHORT BREAKS BEFORE YOU GET DROWSY.

156. If your brakes get wet while driving on a rainy day, what can happen when you apply the brakes?

TRAILER JACKKNIFING

THE 171 MOST COMMON GENERAL KNOWLEDGE QUESTIONS

157. What are two ways to know when to shift?
USE ENGINE SPEED (RPM) AND ROAD SPEED (MPH)

158. When driving through roadway work zones, you should
WATCH FOR SHARP PAVEMENT DROP-OFFS.

159. When roads are slippery, you should
MAKE TURNS AS CAREFULLY AS POSSIBLE.

160. Why are placards used?
TO COMMUNICATE THE RISK

161. What factors determine your choice of safe speed when going down a long, steep downgrade?
TOTAL WEIGHT OF THE VEHICLE, LENGTH OF THE GRADE, STEEPNESS, ROAD CONDITIONS, AND WEATHER

162. What are the two main things to look for ahead?
TRAFFIC AND ROAD CONDITIONS

163. What things should you check during a trip?
WATCH GAUGES AND MIRRORS AND USE YOUR SENSES TO CHECK FOR PROBLEMS: LOOK, LISTEN, AND SMELL

164. What is countersteering?
TURNING THE WHEEL BACK IN THE OTHER DIRECTION AFTER STEERING TO AVOID A TRAFFIC EMERGENCY

165. What are two ways to know when to shift?
USE ENGINE SPEED (RPM) AND ROAD SPEED (MPH)

166. What should you do if you see a hazard in the roadway?
USE YOUR FOUR-WAY FLASHERS OR BRAKE LIGHTS TO WARN OTHERS

167. Blocking the cargo to keep it from sliding must be done
AT THE FRONT, BACK, AND/OR SIDES OF A PIECE OF CARGO.

168. When driving in an area with few streetlights on a clear night, if you cannot see well with your headlights, you should
USE YOUR HIGH BEAMS WHEN LEGAL AND KEEP YOUR INTERIOR LIGHTS OFF.

169. While driving, you should use your mirrors to check
WHERE THE REAR OF YOUR VEHICLE IS WHILE YOU MAKE TURNS.

170. What is the most important reason for being alert to hazards?
YOU WILL HAVE TIME TO PLAN YOUR ESCAPE IF THE HAZARD BECOMES AN EMERGENCY.

171. Name some suspension system defects.
A CRACKED OR BROKEN SPRING HANGER, BROKEN LEAVES IN A LEAF SPRING, LEAKING SHOCK ABSORBERS
