

CDL Doubles & Triples (T) Endorsement Exam

QUICK REFERENCE CHEAT SHEET | FMCSA / 49 CFR Part 383

COUPLING PROCEDURE (DOUBLES)

Step	Action
1. Inspect converter dolly	Check dolly kingpin, coupler, safety chains, brakes
2. Position dolly	Place dolly behind rear trailer; align fifth wheel
3. Connect first trailer	Back lead trailer to dolly; couple and lock; connect all lines
4. Secure rear trailer	Attach rear trailer to dolly; connect safety chains in X pattern
5. Connect lines	Air lines and electrical -- test brake application
6. Pre-trip inspection	Walk around; check all connections, brakes, lights

DOUBLES & TRIPLES HANDLING

Concept	Key Rule
Rearward amplification	Rear trailer sways more than front -- called 'crack the whip' effect
Speed restriction	Maximum 55 mph in most states for doubles/triples
Turning radius	Wider turns required; rear trailers track inside of curves
Braking distance	Longer than single trailer -- allow more following distance
State restrictions	Not all states allow triples -- check state regulations
Weight limits	80,000 lbs GVW standard; some routes allow over-length permits

UNCOUPLING PROCEDURE

Step	Action
1. Position trailers	Straight line; level ground; chock wheels before uncoupling
2. Disconnect lines	Air supply lines and electrical connections first
3. Lower landing gear	Rear trailer's landing gear fully down and stable
4. Release fifth wheel	Pull release handle; pull tractor forward slightly to test
5. Pull out dolly	Drive tractor and dolly forward; never leave dolly between trailers
6. Secure dolly	Chock dolly wheels; engage dolly parking brake

EXAM-DAY TIPS

- + Crack the whip: rear trailer amplifies any directional change -- handle steering smoothly.
- + Always put the heavier load in the first (lead) trailer -- lighter load in second.
- + Coupling: tug test BEFORE moving -- pull forward against locked brakes to test coupling.
- + Safety chains on converter dolly: must cross (X pattern) between dolly and rear trailer.
- + Never back doubles more than necessary -- it is extremely difficult; use a spotter.
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