

Getting In and Out

Getting in and out of heavy equipment is not as easy as it sounds. More than one-quarter of all injuries to equipment operators and truck drivers occur during mounting and dismounting their vehicle. Many drivers do not enter and exit their vehicles properly and are not fully aware of the danger this creates until an injury occurs.

JUMP, SLIP, TRIP, & FALL

Jumps, slips, trips and falls from tractors and trailers are frequent causes of injuries for drivers. Nationwide, falls account for about 15% of all workplace deaths and is second only to auto accidents. 70% of all falls from equipment occurred at the bottom step.

Jumping from a vehicle without using handholds or grab rails and steps can result in injury to ankles, knees and backs. One recent study found that jumping from the vehicle *greatly* increased the impact forces on the human body. You may not ever break your ankle if you always look down before you jump, but you damage your back a bit each time.

FEDERAL REGULATIONS

To help prevent injuries during mounting and dismounting a vehicle, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations require: "Any person entering or exiting the cab or accessing the rear portion of a high profile COE (cab-over-engine) truck or truck-tractor shall be afforded sufficient steps and handholds, and/or deck plates to allow the user to have at least 3 limbs in contact with the truck or truck-tractor at any time. This rule applies to intermediate positions as well as transition between intermediate positions. To allow for changes in climbing sequence, the step design shall include, as a minimum, one intermediate step of sufficient size to accommodate two feet." (FMCSR, Section 399.207(a))

Additionally, regulations require that a handhold must be located within the reach of any person entering or exiting the vehicle and shall be free of sharp edges and have an effective peripheral grip length that permits full grasp by any person.

3 POINTS OF CONTACT

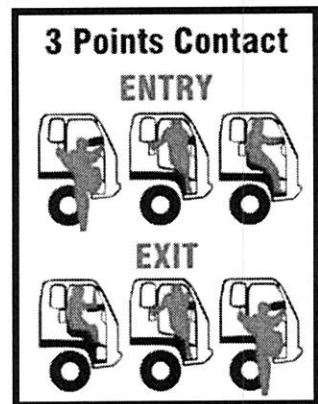
Proper use of the regulated steps and handholds allows the driver to maintain 3 points of contact with the vehicle at all times. A point of contact is generally a hand or foot. 3-point contact should only be broken when you reach the ground, the cab, or a stable platform. This is the safest way to exit and enter a cab or trailer.

To establish this contact, as you lift one of your legs to climb up on the equipment, you must have both hands firmly grasping the

equipment to help pull yourself up. When dismounting, before you let go of one of the handholds, you need to make sure that both feet are firmly planted on the ground.

Three points of contact is of the utmost importance to heavy equipment safety.

Remember: **-one hand, two feet - two hands, one foot.**



NECESSARY "STEPS"

- When entering a vehicle, use your legs for power and not your arms.
- Always mount or dismount facing the equipment.
- When climbing into the trailer body, select firm foot and handholds. Avoid long steps and reaches which may put you off balance or cause muscle strain. If hand grips and ladders are installed on the trailer, use them.
- When exiting the cab, step down gently and slowly to the ground. Grasp the wheel and back out of your cab. Reach for the handhold and gently lower yourself down.
- Always look at the ground before stepping down.
- Don't use wheel hubs, machine tracks, or door handles for mounting and dismounting.
- Watch out for slippery surfaces on or around your unit. Remember that steps, handholds, gratings, frame rails, tank tops and ground surfaces can be hazardous when accumulated oil, moisture, snow or ice are present.
- Use the same 3 points of contact when climbing up and down between power unit and trailer to hook up brake and electrical lines.
- Never attempt to climb or descend with anything in your hands.
- Avoid jumping from cabs, trailer bodies or loading platforms. Jumping is not necessary and is a primary cause of injuries for truck drivers.
- When possible, close or open overhead doors before pulling away from the platform, so you won't have to climb up and down from the trailer body.
- Consider the use of warning decals in the cab as a reminder of the 3 points of contact.

-one hand, two feet
-two hands, one foot

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The Shield
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Quiz



Driver Name: _____ Date: _____
Please Print

Driver Signature: _____

Please circle one correct answer for each question.

1. Don't use _____ for mounting and dismounting a vehicle.
 - a. wheel hubs
 - b. door handles
 - c. both a and b
 - d. neither a nor b
2. Jumping from a vehicle can injure your _____.
 - a. knees
 - b. back
 - c. ankles
 - d. all of the above
3. When entering a vehicle, use your legs for power, not your arms.
 - a. True
 - b. False
4. "3 Points of Contact" means using _____.
 - a. two hands, one foot
 - b. one hand, two feet
 - c. one hand, one foot, one step
 - d. both a and b
5. 3 points of contact should only be broken when you reach _____.
 - a. a stable platform
 - b. the cab
 - c. the ground
 - d. all of the above

