CHAPTER 15 — COMMERCIAL VEHICLES

You will need to know the following information if you are applying for a Class E license. As a driver of a commercial vehicle, you must obey all Missouri traffic laws including the laws on commercial vehicles.

Note:
1. All size and weight limits listed below include the load of the vehicle.
2. All limits that refer to interstates or certain designated highways include roads up to 10 miles from the interstate or highway.
3. The size and weight and exceptions listed in this chapter are for Missouri highways only.

SIZE LIMITATIONS (WITHOUT SPECIAL PERMIT)

HEIGHT
1. Maximum height of any vehicle outside of a commercial zone* on designated highways plus 10 miles therefrom .................14’
2. Maximum height of any vehicle in a commercial zone ....................15’
3. Maximum height on all other highways .........................................13½’

WIDTH
1. Maximum width of any vehicle ......................................................8½’

*COREMERCIAL ZONE — Commercial zones exist only in cities with a population of 75,000 or more. The commercial zone is one mile beyond the city limits plus one mile for every 50,000 residents or portion thereof, except:
   • The commercial zone for St. Louis City extends 18 miles beyond the city limits.
   • The commercial zone for Kansas City extends 12 miles beyond the city limits and includes the city of Harrisonville.
   • The commercial zones for Springfield, St. Joseph, and Columbia extends only 2 miles beyond the city limits.
   • The commercial zone on interstate highways extends only 2 miles beyond the city limits.

LENGTH
1. Maximum length of any single vehicle.........................................45’
2. Maximum length of any bus or trackless trolley coach not including one foot in front and back for safety bumper ...............45’
3. Maximum length of truck-tractor and semi-trailer
   • upon interstates and certain designated highways the length of the semi-trailer (no overall maximum length, includes load) ....53’
   • upon all other roads.................................................................60’
4. Maximum length of truck-tractor, semi-trailer, and trailer combinations (double bottoms)
   • upon interstates and certain designated highways the length of the semi-trailer or trailer (no overall maximum length) ............28’
   • upon all other roads..................................................................65
5. Maximum length of truck and trailer(s) and all other combinations of vehicles
   • upon interstates and certain primary highways .................................65’
   • the overall maximum length upon all other roads ............................55’

6. Maximum length of Automobile Transporters and Boat Transporters
   • Conventional 5th Wheel ........................................75’ for combination unit plus
   • Stingersteered .........................................................75’ 3’ front to 4’ rear overhang.

7. Maximum length of Driveaway Saddle Mount Combinations (Double or Triple on interstate and designated highways) 97’

Motor vehicle carriers may carry loads that extend beyond their legal length limits. Loads must not extend more than 3 feet beyond the front or 4 feet beyond the rear of the vehicle.

EXEMPTIONS FROM SIZE LIMITS
1. Farm machinery driven occasionally for short distances
2. Vehicles temporarily transporting farm machinery
3. Implement dealers delivering or moving farm machinery for repair
4. Vehicles temporarily transporting road-making machines or road materials
5. Vehicles towing disabled vehicles for repair on highways
These exemptions do not include interstate highways.

WEIGHT LIMITATIONS (WITHOUT SPECIAL PERMIT)
A bridge’s weight limit may differ from the road’s weight limit. If a bridge has a different weight limit, the limit will be posted.

MAXIMUM WEIGHT ON ANY SINGLE AXLE ...................... POUNDS
1. Maximum weight allowed on interstates ........................ 20,000
2. Maximum weight allowed in a commercial zone ............ 22,400
3. Maximum weight allowed on all other routes ............... 22,000

MAXIMUM WEIGHT ON ANY TANDEM AXLE .................. POUNDS
1. Maximum weight allowed on interstates ........................ 34,000
2. Maximum weight allowed on all other routes ............... 36,000

MAXIMUM GROSS WEIGHT ........................................... POUNDS
The actual gross weight allowed depends on the distance from the first to last axle. To determine the maximum gross weight allowed in a commercial zone, multiply the number of axles by 22,400 pounds. 80,000 pounds maximum gross weight is allowed on all highways in Missouri, except where bridge structures are posted with lesser weight limits.
1. Maximum gross weight allowed on interstates, primary and other designated highways .............................. 80,000

OVERDIMENSION AND OVERWEIGHT PERMITS
You may apply for an overdimension or overweight permit by calling 1-800-877-8499, or (573) 751-2871 for local calls only, or by contacting:
   Missouri Department of Transportation, Motor Carrier Services Unit
   P. O. Box 893
   Jefferson City, MO 65102
   Fax: (573) 751-7408
To receive an oversize or overweight permit:
• the load on your vehicle must be non-reducible,
• you must have property damage and bodily injury liability insurance, and
• you must pay a permit fee.

VEHICLE ROUTE MAP
The Missouri Vehicle Route Map is available from the Missouri Department of Transportation. This map shows the routes on which the larger and heavier trucks are allowed to travel as specified by state statute. You may obtain a map by calling 1-866-831-6277 or by contacting:

Missouri Department of Transportation, Motor Carrier Services
P. O. Box 893
Jefferson City, MO 65102
Fax: (573) 751-7408
contactus@modot.mo.gov

FEDERAL MOTOR CARRIER SAFETY REGULATIONS
Missouri has adopted as state law Parts 390 through 397 of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations. Therefore, drivers and vehicles operating solely intrastate must obey those regulations except for the following exemptions:
• Commercial vehicles with a GVWR or GCWR of 26,000 lbs. or less than 26,001 GVWR unless transporting hazardous materials or passengers.
• Commercial vehicles licensed for gross weight of 60,000 pounds or less when used only for the transportation of solid waste
• Commercial vehicles licensed for 42,000 pounds or less for farm use and indicated by the letter “F” on the license plate as authorized by Missouri Revised Statutes, Section 301.030 unless transporting hazardous materials except fertilizer.

TRANSPORTING HAZARDOUS MATERIAL
If you are transporting hazardous material, your vehicle must comply with the equipment and operating regulations of the United States Department of Transportation.

EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT AND SIGNALS
When operating wholly within the state, Missouri law does not require emergency equipment for:
• Vehicles licensed for 42,000 pounds or less with an “F” plate,
• Solid waste haulers licensed for 60,000 pounds or less, and
• Commercial vehicles licensed for 12,000 pounds or less.

Any other commercial motor vehicle used for intra or interstate commerce that is licensed for more than 12,000 pounds must carry the following emergency equipment:
• One fire extinguisher. The extinguisher must be rated at 5 B:C or more by Underwriter’s Laboratories Incorporated.
• One spare fuse or other overload protective device for each kind and size used, if the devices are not of a reset type.
One of the following combination of warning devices:
1. Three flares (liquid-burning pot torches) and three fuses and two red flags. This combination must not be carried by vehicles transporting explosive or flammable material or using flammable compressed gas as a motor fuel.
2. Three red electric lanterns and two red flags.
3. Three bi-directional emergency red reflective triangles.

INFORMATION ON COMMERCIAL MOTOR VEHICLES
The following information must be clearly visible on commercial motor vehicles:
• The name of the owner
• The address the vehicle is operated from and the number issued to a motor carrier by the Motor Carrier Services. (USDOT 123456 MO)
• The word “Local” displayed on every local commercial vehicle.
  For-hire carriers must display their USDOT number followed by the letters “MO”.

Your vehicle does not need to show the above information if:
• It is licensed for 36,000 pounds or less, and
• It is not regularly used for commercial purposes.

FOLLOWING DISTANCE
If you are driving a bus or truck, you must not follow another bus or truck any closer than 300 feet. However, you may follow closer than 300 feet when you are in a business or residential district or when passing. Always stay a safe distance behind the vehicle in front of you. For each 10 feet of length in your vehicle, keep at least one second between you and the vehicle in front of you. For example, if you are driving a 40-foot vehicle, keep four seconds between you and the vehicle in front of you.

RAILROAD CROSSING
If you are driving an:
• motor vehicle carrying passengers for hire,
• school bus,
• motor vehicle carrying material that is corrosive, flammable, explosive, or poisonous, or
• motor vehicle used for the transportation of flammable or corrosive liquids in bulk, whether loaded or empty,
You must stop within 15 to 50 feet before the railroad tracks. If there is no sign of a train, you may cross the tracks.

LOAD SECURITY
To avoid any part of a load falling off your vehicle, you must secure it or have a protective cover on it.

OFF-TRACKING
When a vehicle turns, the rear wheels take a shorter path than the front wheels. The greater the distance between the front and rear wheels, the greater the difference in their paths. To compensate for the off-tracking, begin a left turn as far to the right as possible. Begin a right turn as far to the left as possible.
WEIGH STATIONS
All commercial motor vehicles must stop at weight stations except those licensed for 18,000 lbs or less or otherwise exempted by law, unless directed by a peace officer.

TAILGATERS
To avoid a crash with a tailgater, you should:
1. Slow down. It is better to be tailgated at a low speed than a high speed.
2. Avoid any sudden turns or stops and signal well in advance.
3. Increase the distance between you and the vehicle in front of you. This will help you to avoid any sudden stops.
4. Do not flash your taillights or brake lights at the tailgater. The tailgater may not believe your brake lights when you do slow down or stop.

SPACE OVERHEAD
Make sure you have enough space over your vehicle at all times.
• Do not assume that posted heights at bridges or underpasses are correct.
• Check all wires, signs, trees, and air conditioning units.

SOFT SURFACES
Make sure the surface will hold the weight of your vehicle. Be wary of:
• Parking lots
• Unpaved roads or parking areas, especially when wet
• Construction areas

SPACE TO CROSS OR ENTER TRAFFIC
Your acceleration rate varies with the weight of your vehicle. And your time to cross the road is also affected by the length of your vehicle. In a long or heavily weighted vehicle, you will need a larger gap to cross the road than you would in a car.