CHECKLIST TO TRAILER SAFELY

☐ Assess your horse for health and fitness before trailering and only trailer a healthy horse, unless it’s being shipped to a vet hospital for treatment.

☐ Make sure the trailer is the appropriate size for your horse in both width AND height.

☐ Know how to safely haul the trailer BEFORE you load the horse and inspect it before every trip.

☐ If you can, avoid travelling alone.

☐ If you are hauling someone else’s horse in your trailer, be sure to agree in advance who will be responsible if the horse is injured or the trailer is damaged.

☐ Train your horse to load and unload in a safe and calm manner ahead of time.

☐ Wear gloves, boots, and a helmet when loading and unloading horses.

☐ Make sure there are no hazards near the horse trailer (farm machinery, fencing, ditches) when you are loading and unloading horses.

☐ Apply leg wraps and head bumper before your horse gets into the trailer.

☐ Never put a horse into a trailer that is unhitched, or unhitch a trailer with the horse still inside.

☐ If the trailer is dark inside, open the doors and turn on the lights to increase visibility.

☐ Never load a horse into the trailer if you do not have an easy escape route.

☐ Always load a single horse on the left side, or tie on the left side in slant loads, as roads are “crowned” in the middle.
☐ If more than one horse is being unloaded from the trailer, keep at least one horse in sight of the last horse until he has been safely unloaded.

☐ Never get into the trailer or open the door if the horse is panicked. Instead, seek assistance.

☐ Make sure all inoculations are current and you are carrying the certificates.

☐ Carry a complete emergency first aid kit (for both human and horse) and know how to use it.

☐ Make sure the trailer is well vented and the trailer mats fit properly (snugly).

☐ Check that all trailer doors are secured and locked before setting out and after each stop.

☐ Ensure that the trailer has reflective tape top, bottom and sides.

☐ Drive defensively. Allow double the normal braking distance, and travel at lower than normal speeds.
CHECKLIST FOR SAFE TRAILERING
Please do a walk around before every trip.

For your horse trailer:

☐ Water
☐ Buckets/sponges
☐ Spare halters and lead ropes
☐ Broom, shovel, disposal bags
☐ Emergency triangles or flares
☐ 2 spare tires
☐ Wheel chocks (wedges to prevent accidental movement)
☐ Hydraulic jack – capable of jacking your trailer while loaded
☐ Lug wrench
☐ Spare bulbs for all lights
☐ 2 flashlights (one large Maglite flashlight or portable spotlight, one headband flashlight)
☐ Duct tape and electrical tape
☐ WD-40
☐ Knife
☐ First aid kit (equine/human)
☐ Fire extinguisher
☐ Portable fencing or a roll of construction fencing

For your tow vehicle:

☐ Vehicle and trailer registration
☐ Proof of insurance and roadside assistance membership
☐ Gloves
☐ Jumper cables
☐ Spare tire, jack and tire iron
☐ Tool kit including wiring, fuses, spare belts and hoses
☐ Tow chain
☐ Map book
TRAILER WALKAROUND

☐ I am within my gross vehicle rated capacity

☐ Tires are in good condition
  o The wheel bearings were serviced this year
  o Lug nuts are tight

☐ Check tire pressure on ALL tires (including inside ones)

☐ The trailer hitch is secured to the frame of the vehicle, not the bumper

☐ The ball size is correct and ball is tightly secured to the ball mount

☐ The hitch is in good condition, is lubricated, and is not showing signs of wear

☐ The hitch is seated properly on the ball and is locked
  o I can feel the clamp around the bottom of the ball when the coupler is connected
☐ Safety chains are properly connected UNDER the hitch
☐ Trailer jack is fully retracted or removed
☐ The electrical connection is the right one and is properly connected
☐ The emergency breakaway system is properly connected
☐ The breakaway battery is charged
☐ All trailer lights (brakes/turn signals/running/perimeter) are working
☐ Interior lights have safety cages to protect them from horses’ heads
☐ The brake controller is working
☐ The trailer is sitting level
☐ The floor has been checked and is in good condition. Mats are tight fitting
☐ Check trailer for any hazards – rough edges, chains that don’t open properly, loose wiring, door locks that are difficult to open or that don’t lock, butt bars/chains that don’t close properly
☐ All horses have leg wraps and a head bumper

Photo: Jackie Bellamy