

Strapped Down

PROPER STRAPPING AND TOWING WITH MASTERCRAFT SAFETY



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TOWING IS ALL ABOUT SAFETY AND SECURITY, ENSURING THAT WHATEVER IS ON THAT 20-FOOT TRAILER BEHIND YOUR TRUCK MAKES IT IN ONE PIECE.

There are a few aspects that need consideration when towing. The first being a proper tow vehicle to accommodate the weight you are hauling. Much of this has to do with ease of handling and safety. You want to pull the trailer, not have the trailer dictate where you go or cause you to lose control. Look up the towing capacity your truck can handle, and make sure you combine the weight of the trailer with whatever you are towing. You will want to put a majority of the weight in front of the trailer axles, this means never loading a vehicle backwards. The extra tongue weight helps to prevent swaying when towing. Adding helper 'bags makes the job easier and levels out a lower truck.

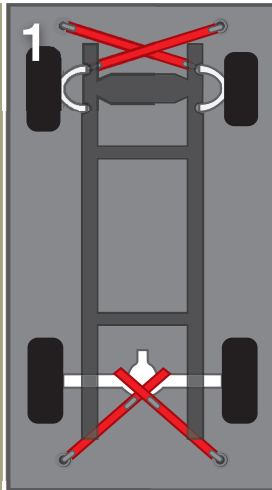
The MasterCraft Safety team has long been known for securing trophy truck race drivers with their line of racing seats, harnesses, limiting straps, suits and more. A natural progression was to include tie downs. After all, race trucks have to make it to the dirt some how. MasterCraft Safety offers several tie downs rated for everything from motorcycles to large trucks. The hook options are varied as well, including hooks, chain hooks and hooks with axle strap loops. The heavy-duty strap we opted for is 8 feet long and 2 inches wide with five stitch lines for extra strength, and it features a protective axle loop at the end that not only hooks around a rearend or frame nicely, but will protect the paint from rubs or scratches. Each of these straps is rated for 10,000 pounds. The full kit also comes with a carrying bag to ensure that the tie downs stay clean and in one piece—trust us, this is a must!

The final element to consider when towing is proper strapping techniques on all four corners. Mounting locations will depend on the truck and trailer, but the basic principles are the same for securing the hooks or axle straps. Crossing the straps is optional; the advantage is that having equal tension causes each side to pull against its opposite, ensuring the car or truck will not move. The advantage of not crossing straps is if one strap should fail, the truck will not be pulled to one side of the trailer. Follow along as we demonstrate a few strapping methods using MasterCraft Safety's tie downs. ■

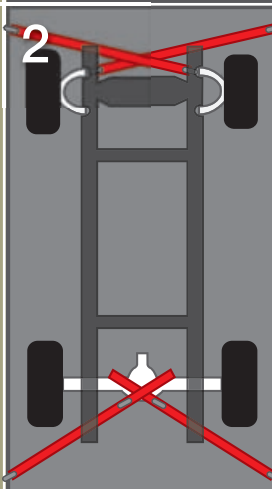
Here are the 8-foot tie downs from MasterCraft Safety complete with carrying bag. The 2-inch wide straps have five sets of stitching for strength. Each strap has a maximum load of 10,000 pounds.



This diagram shows a preferred cross-strapping method and hook locations for trailers with D-rings on the floor of the trailer. On the rear, the straps are looped around the axle housing tubes and hooked using the protective axle strap loop. Up front, the control arm pockets are the hook points for each strap.



This diagram shows a trailer using only side rail mounts. The disadvantage is that a longer strap and a more drastic strapping angle are required that could put more stress on the straps. However, the benefit is a stronger mounting point and no restriction on the length of the car or truck being trailered.



The first step after loading the truck (a C/K in this case) is to secure the ratchet end hook to the trailer.



The other end of the strap is hooked to the other side of the control arm mount pocket.



Pull the slack from the strap and crank the ratchet to tighten.

Repeat with the other side.



For the rear, put the axle loop under and over the axle tube and secure to the axle loop. Make sure you don't crunch any brake lines and that the strap doesn't rub on any panhard bars or cross members.



Pull the slack and tighten the ratchet. Once all of the straps have been tightened, you will want to check and retighten all of the straps because they may have moved while you were strapping the other points.



Tie off any excess strap material. If the excess is particularly long, a good tip is to roll it up and zip-tie it to the strap.



Proper strapping sometimes depends on the truck, this F-100 from No Limit Engineering features a painted frame with an aluminum fuel cell underneath, so the strapping locations will need to change.



Up front, the strap is looped around the lower control arms. The protective sleeve ensures that the powdercoating will not scratch.



Out back, we cannot strap to the rearend due to the aluminum fuel cell mounted behind it. Thankfully, the frame has a small section near the battery boxes that is perfect to loop the axle strap end around. The straps are not crossed to avoid impacting the fuel cell.



You should check the straps at every stop when towing long distances. Tighten them when necessary.

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