

## DRIVING YOUR SUV OR TRUCK Supplement



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## Table of Contents

|                                                   |           |
|---------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>Introduction</b>                               | <b>2</b>  |
| <b>Notice To Utility Vehicle and Truck Owners</b> | <b>3</b>  |
| <b>Vehicle Characteristics</b>                    | <b>4</b>  |
| <b>Driving On Roadways</b>                        | <b>6</b>  |
| <b>Driving Off-Road</b>                           | <b>9</b>  |
| <b>Inflating Your Tires</b>                       | <b>13</b> |
| <b>Tire Care</b>                                  | <b>15</b> |
| <b>Tire Replacement Requirements</b>              | <b>17</b> |
| <b>Loading Your Vehicle</b>                       | <b>19</b> |
| <b>Trailer Towing</b>                             | <b>22</b> |
| <b>Maintenance and Modifications</b>              | <b>23</b> |

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# Introduction

## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Ford Motor Company's world of Sport Utility Vehicles (SUV) and truck driving! Your new vehicle opens up a completely different and challenging world of travel unlike what you have ever experienced with a conventional car. Most importantly, you'll be able to travel with the safety, comfort and dependability of a Ford-built vehicle.

Your vehicle, particularly when loaded, will handle differently than an ordinary passenger car. This is because your vehicle has special design and equipment features for cargo-hauling or off-road operation.

Study this supplement and the *Owner's Manual* for specific information about equipment features and instructions for safe driving. You must also learn and understand the capabilities and limitations of your vehicle through experience. Take it slow and easy until you get to know and understand your vehicle.

Driving at speeds safe for road conditions and the use of safety belts are the best means of avoiding the possibility of accident and serious injury. All occupants must wear their safety belts and children/infants must use appropriate restraints to minimize the risk of injury or ejection.

*Ford Motor Company reserves the right at any time to change information provided herein, including specifications, design or testing procedures without incurring obligation.*

## Notice To Utility Vehicle and Truck Owners

### NOTICE TO UTILITY VEHICLE AND TRUCK OWNERS



**WARNING:** Utility vehicles have a significantly higher rollover rate than other types of vehicles. To reduce the risk of serious injury or death from a rollover or other crash you must:

- **Avoid sharp turns and abrupt maneuvers;**
- **Drive at safe speeds for the conditions;**
- **Keep tires properly inflated;**
- **Never overload or improperly load your vehicle; and**
- **Make sure every passenger is properly restrained.**



**WARNING:** In a rollover crash, an unbelted person is significantly more likely to die than a person wearing a seat belt. All occupants must wear seat belts and children/infants must use appropriate restraints to minimize the risk of injury or ejection.

Utility vehicles and trucks handle differently than passenger cars in the various driving conditions that are encountered on streets, highways and off-road. Utility vehicles and trucks are not designed for cornering at speeds as high as passenger cars any more than low-slung sports cars are designed to perform satisfactorily under off-road conditions.



Study your *Owner's Manual* and any supplements for specific information about equipment features, instructions for safe driving and additional precautions to reduce the risk of an accident or serious injury.

# Vehicle Characteristics

## VEHICLE CHARACTERISTICS

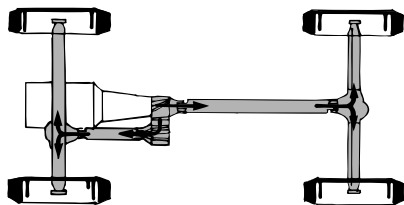
### 4WD and AWD Systems



**WARNING:** Do not become overconfident in the ability of 4WD and AWD vehicles. Although a 4WD or AWD vehicle may accelerate better than two-wheel drive vehicle in low traction situations, it won't stop any faster than two-wheel drive vehicles. Always drive at a safe speed.

A vehicle equipped with AWD or 4WD (when you select the 4WD mode) has the ability to use all four wheels to power itself. This increases traction which may enable you to safely drive over terrain and road conditions that a conventional two-wheel drive vehicle cannot.

Power is supplied to all four wheels through a transfer case or power transfer unit. 4WD vehicles allow you to select different drive modes as necessary. Information on shifting procedures and maintenance can be found in your *Owner's Manual*. You should become thoroughly familiar with this information before you operate your vehicle.



On some 4WD models, the initial shift from two-wheel drive to 4WD while the vehicle is moving can cause a momentary clunk and ratcheting sound. These sounds are normal as the front drivetrain comes up to speed and is not cause for concern.

## Vehicle Characteristics

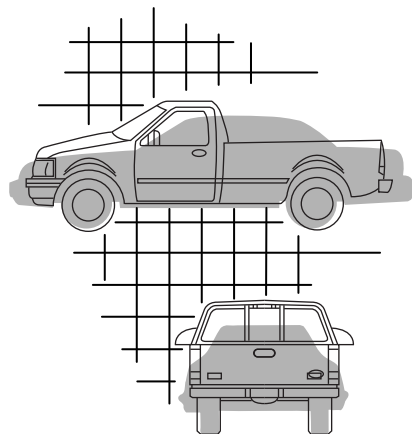
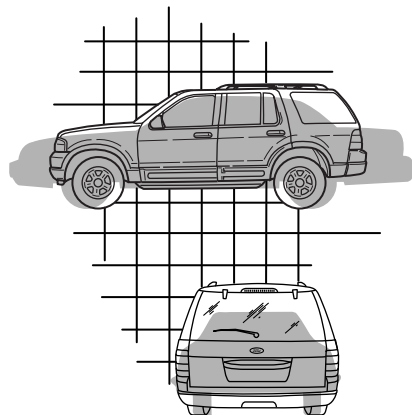
### How your vehicle differs from other vehicles

SUVs and trucks can differ from some other vehicles in a few noticeable ways. Your vehicle may be:

- Higher – to allow higher load carrying capacity and to allow it to travel over rough terrain without getting hung up or damaging underbody components.
- Shorter – to give it the capability to approach inclines and drive over the crest of a hill without getting hung up or damaging underbody components. All other things held equal, a shorter wheelbase may make your vehicle quicker to respond to steering inputs than a vehicle with a longer wheelbase.
- Narrower — to provide greater maneuverability in tight spaces, particularly in off-road use.

As a result of the above dimensional differences, SUVs and trucks often will have a higher center of gravity and a greater difference in center of gravity between the loaded and unloaded condition.

These differences that make your vehicle so versatile also make it handle differently than an ordinary passenger car.



# Driving On Roadways

## DRIVING ON ROADWAYS



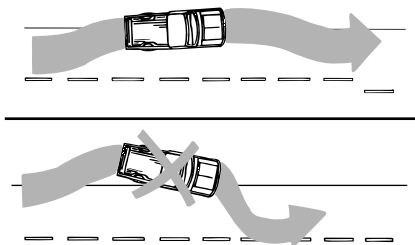
**WARNING:** Vehicles with a higher center of gravity such as utility vehicles and trucks handle differently than vehicles with a lower center of gravity. Utility vehicles and trucks are not designed for cornering at speeds as high as passenger cars any more than low-slung sports cars are designed to perform satisfactorily under off-road conditions. Avoid sharp turns, excessive speed or abrupt maneuvers in these vehicles. Failure to drive cautiously could result in an increased risk of loss of vehicle control, vehicle rollover, personal injury and death.

### Basic operating principles

- Drive slower in strong crosswinds which can affect the normal steering characteristics of your vehicle.
- Be extremely careful when driving on pavement made slippery by loose sand, water, gravel, snow or ice.
- Do not use 4WD on dry, hard surfaced roads (except models equipped with Auto 4WD or AWD). This may damage the drivelines and axles.

### If your vehicle goes off the edge of the pavement

- If your vehicle goes off the edge of the pavement, slow down and avoid severe brake application or aggressive steering. Ease the vehicle back onto the pavement only after reducing your speed. Do not turn the steering wheel too sharply while returning to the road surface.
- If you have the space, it may be safer to stay on the apron or shoulder of the road and slow down gradually before returning to the pavement. You may lose control if you do not slow down or if you turn the steering wheel too sharply or abruptly.
- It often may be less risky to strike small inanimate objects, (such as highway reflectors), and incur minor damage to your vehicle rather than attempt a sudden return to the pavement which could cause the vehicle to slide sideways out of control or rollover. Remember, your safety and the safety of others should be your primary concern.



### Emergency maneuvers

- In an emergency situation where a sudden sharp turn must be made, remember to avoid “over-driving” your vehicle, i.e., turn the steering wheel only as rapidly and as far as required to avoid the emergency. Avoid abrupt steering, acceleration or braking which could increase the risk of loss of vehicle control or vehicle rollover. Instead, smooth variations of the accelerator and/or brake pedal pressure should be utilized if changes in vehicle speed are called for. Use all available road surface to return the vehicle to a safe direction of travel.
- In the event of an emergency stop, avoid skidding the tires and do not attempt any sharp steering wheel movements.
- If the vehicle goes from one type of road surface to another (i.e., from concrete to gravel), there will be a change in the way the vehicle responds in steering, acceleration or braking. Again, avoid abrupt steering or braking inputs.

### Snow and ice

Your 4WD or AWD vehicle will have advantages over two-wheel drive vehicles in snow and on ice by providing increased driving traction. However, if you suddenly change speed or direction, you may lose traction and in turn, control as is the case with all vehicles. 4WD and AWD vehicles can slide on slippery roads just like any other vehicle. Should the rear end of the vehicle start to slide while cornering on snowy or icy roads, turn the steering wheel in the direction of the slide until you regain control. Avoid sudden braking as well. Although a 4WD or AWD vehicle may accelerate better than a two-wheel drive vehicle in snow and ice, it won't stop any faster, because as in two-wheel drive vehicles, braking occurs at all four wheels. Do not become overconfident in the ability of 4WD and AWD vehicles to compensate for aggressive driving maneuvers in poor road conditions.

Make sure you allow sufficient distance between you and other vehicles for stopping. In emergency stopping situations, avoid locking the wheels.

- For vehicles without anti-lock brakes, use a “squeeze” technique: push on the brake pedal with a steadily increasing force which allows the wheels to brake yet continue to roll so that you may steer in the direction you want to travel. If you lock the wheels, release the brake pedal and repeat the squeeze technique.

## Driving On Roadways

- For vehicles with anti-lock brakes, apply and hold the brake firmly. Do not “pump” the brakes. During hard stopping or stopping on slippery surfaces, you may feel or hear a pulsing or vibration in the brake pedal. Do not be alarmed because this is your anti-lock brake system working. See your *Owner's Manual* for additional information on the operation of the anti-lock brake system.

## Parking



**WARNING:** Do not leave the vehicle unattended with the transfer case in N (Neutral) position. Always set the parking brake fully and turn off the ignition when leaving the vehicle. If you do not follow these precautions your vehicle may move unexpectedly and injure someone.

Before leaving the driver's seat, make sure that the gearshift is engaged in P (Park) with an automatic transmission or either 1 (First) or R (Reverse) with a manual transmission. Set the parking brake fully, shut off the ignition and remove the key.

Some 4WD vehicles include a Neutral mode. When the transfer case is in the N (Neutral) position, the engine and transmission are disconnected from the rest of the driveline. Therefore, the vehicle is free to roll even if the automatic transmission is in P (Park) or the manual transmission is in gear.

### DRIVING OFF-ROAD



**WARNING:** Sudden changes in terrain can result in abrupt steering wheel motion. To maintain better control and reduce the risk of injury to your hand or wrist, grip the steering wheel from the outside. Do not grip the spokes.

“Tread Lightly” is an educational program designed to increase public awareness of land-use regulations and responsibilities in our nation’s wilderness areas. Ford joins the U. S. Forest Service and the Bureau of



Land Management in encouraging you to help preserve our national forest and other public and private lands by “treading lightly”.

Driving off-road requires good judgment to avoid personal injury and vehicle damage from concealed objects such as rocks and stumps. Know the terrain or examine maps of the area before driving off road. Map out your route before driving in the area. To maintain steering and braking control of your vehicle, you must have all four wheels on the ground and they must be rolling, not sliding or spinning. To avoid loss of control, maintain a firm grip on the steering wheel, especially in rough terrain.

### Driving on sand



**WARNING:** Avoid reducing tire pressure. Operating your vehicle with below the recommended tire pressure can increase the risk of loss of vehicle control, vehicle rollover, personal injury and death. If you choose to reduce the tire pressure for off-road operation, make sure you re-inflate the tires as soon as possible.

When driving over sand, try to keep all four wheels on the most solid area of the trail. Avoid reducing the tire pressure. Instead, shift to a lower gear and drive steadily through the terrain. Apply the accelerator slowly and avoid spinning the wheels.

Avoid excessive speed because vehicle momentum can work against you and cause the vehicle to become stuck to the point that assistance may be required from another vehicle. Remember, you may be able to back out the way you came if you proceed with caution.

## Driving Off-Road

### Driving in mud

Be cautious of sudden changes in vehicle speed or direction when you are driving in mud. Even 4WD and AWD vehicles can lose traction in slick mud. As when you are driving over sand, apply the accelerator slowly and avoid spinning your wheels. If the rear end of the vehicle does slide while cornering, steer in the direction of the slide until you regain control of the vehicle.

After driving through mud, clean off residue stuck to rotating tires, wheels and driveshafts. Excess mud stuck on tires, wheels and rotating driveshafts causes an imbalance that could damage vehicle components.

### Driving through water

Before driving through water, determine the depth. Avoid water higher than the center of the wheel or hubcap. Proceed slowly to avoid splashing; if the ignition system gets wet, the vehicle may stall.

Once through water, always try the brakes. Wet brakes do not stop the vehicle as effectively as dry brakes. You can dry the brakes faster by driving the vehicle slowly while applying light pressure on the brake pedal.

### Driving in deep snow



**WARNING:** If you are driving in slippery conditions that require tire chains or cables, then it is critical that you drive cautiously. Keep speeds down, allow for longer stopping distances and avoid aggressive steering to reduce the chances of a loss of vehicle control which can lead to serious injury or death. If the rear end of the vehicle slides while cornering, steer in the direction of the slide until you regain control of the vehicle.

4WD and AWD vehicles are unique in that they can be driven in deep snow that would stop a conventional two-wheel drive vehicle. Shift to a low gear and maintain steady pressure on the accelerator. This will help prevent spinning the wheels while maintaining sufficient momentum to keep from bogging down. Using tire chains or cables will also help.

It is preferable to install tire chains or cables on all four tires, if it is allowed per your *Owner's Manual*.

### Driving on hills



**WARNING:** Operating your vehicle off-road on slopes or hills requires safe off-road driving practices. Read and follow these safe off-road driving practices to reduce the risk of loss of vehicle control, vehicle rollover, serious injury or death.

Although natural obstacles may make it necessary to travel diagonally up or down a hill or steep incline, you should always try to drive straight up or straight down. Avoid driving crosswise or turning on steep slopes or hills. A danger lies in losing traction, slipping sideways and possibly rolling over. Whenever driving on a hill, determine beforehand the route you will use. Do not drive over the crest of a hill without seeing what conditions are on the other side. Do not drive in reverse over a hill without the aid of an observer.

When climbing a steep slope or hill, start in a lower gear rather than downshifting to a lower gear from a higher gear once the ascent has started. This reduces strain on the engine and the possibility of stalling. If you do stall out, do not try to turn around because you might induce a rollover. It is better to back down to a safe location.

Apply just enough power to the wheels to climb the hill. Too much power can cause the tires to slip, spin or lose traction, resulting in loss of vehicle control.

Descend a hill in the same gear you would use to climb up the hill to avoid excessive brake application and brake overheating. Do not descend in neutral. Disengage overdrive or manually shift to a lower gear. When descending a steep hill, avoid sudden hard braking as you could lose control. In a vehicle without four wheel anti-lock brakes, if you lock up the front brakes, the front wheels can't roll and if they aren't rolling, you won't be able to steer. The front wheels have to be rolling in order to steer the vehicle. Rapid pumping of the brake pedal will help you slow the vehicle and still maintain steering control. If your vehicle has four wheel anti-lock brakes, apply and hold the brakes firmly. Do not "pump" the brakes.



## Driving Off-Road

### Parking



**WARNING:** Do not leave the vehicle unattended with the transfer case in N (Neutral) position. Always set the parking brake fully and turn off the ignition when leaving the vehicle. If you do not follow these precautions your vehicle may move unexpectedly and injure someone.

Before leaving the driver's seat, make sure that the gearshift is engaged in P (Park) with an automatic transmission or either 1 (First) or R (Reverse) with a manual transmission. Set the parking brake fully, shut off the ignition and remove the key.

Some 4WD vehicles include a Neutral mode. When the transfer case is in the N (Neutral) position, the engine and transmission are disconnected from the rest of the driveline. Therefore, the vehicle is free to roll even if the automatic transmission is in P (Park) or the manual transmission is in gear.

# Inflating Your Tires

## INFLATING YOUR TIRES



**WARNING:** Under-inflation is the most common cause of tire failures and may result in severe tire cracking, tread separation or “blowout”, with unexpected loss of vehicle control and increased risk of injury. Under-inflation increases sidewall flexing and rolling resistance, resulting in heat buildup and internal damage to the tire. It also may result in unnecessary tire stress, irregular wear, loss of vehicle control and accidents. A tire can lose up to half of its air pressure and not appear to be flat!

Safe operation of your vehicle requires that your tires are properly inflated. Every day before you drive, check your tires. If one looks lower than the others, use a tire gauge to check pressure of all tires, and adjust if required. Remember that a tire can lose up to half of its air pressure without appearing flat.

At least once a month and before long trips, inspect each tire and check the tire pressure with a tire gauge (including spare, if equipped). Inflate all tires to the inflation pressure recommended by Ford Motor Company.

You are strongly urged to buy a reliable tire pressure gauge, as automatic service station gauges may be inaccurate. Ford recommends the use of a digital or dial-type tire pressure gauge rather than a stick-type tire pressure gauge.

Use the recommended cold inflation pressure for optimum tire performance and wear. Under-inflation or over-inflation may cause uneven treadwear patterns.

Always inflate your tires to the Ford recommended inflation pressure even if it is less than the maximum inflation pressure information found on the tire. The Ford recommended tire inflation pressure is found on the Safety Compliance Certification Label or Tire Label which is located on the B-Pillar or the edge of the driver's door. Failure to follow the tire pressure recommendations can cause uneven treadwear patterns and adversely affect the way your vehicle handles.

**Maximum Permissible Inflation Pressure** is the tire manufacturer's maximum permissible pressure and/or the pressure at which the maximum load can be carried by the tire. This pressure is normally higher than the manufacturer's recommended cold inflation pressure which can be found on the Safety Compliance Certification Label or Tire Label which is located on the B-Pillar or the edge of the driver's door. The cold inflation pressure should never be set lower than the recommended pressure on the Safety Compliance Certification Label or Tire Label.

## Inflating Your Tires

When weather temperature changes occur, tire inflation pressures also change. A 10°F (6°C) temperature drop can cause a corresponding drop of 1 psi (7 kPa) in inflation pressure. Check your tire pressures frequently and adjust them to the proper pressure which can be found on the Safety Compliance Certification Label or Tire Label.

To check the pressure in your tire(s):

1. Make sure the tires are cool, meaning they are not hot from driving even a mile.

If you are checking tire pressure when the tire is hot, (i.e. driven more than 1 mile [1.6 km]), never “bleed” or reduce air pressure. The tires are hot from driving and it is normal for pressures to increase above recommended cold pressures. A hot tire at or below recommended cold inflation pressure could be significantly under-inflated.

**Note:** If you have to drive a distance to get air for your tire(s), check and record the tire pressure first and add the appropriate air pressure when you get to the pump. It is normal for tires to heat up and the air pressure inside to go up as you drive.

2. Remove the cap from the valve on one tire, then firmly press the tire gauge onto the valve and measure the pressure.

3. Add enough air to reach the recommended air pressure

**Note:** If you overfill the tire, release air by pushing on the metal stem in the center of the valve. Then recheck the pressure with your tire gauge.

4. Replace the valve cap.

5. Repeat this procedure for each tire, including the spare.

**Note:** Some spare tires operate at a higher inflation pressure than the other tires. For T-type/mini-spare tires (see the *Changing a Road Wheel* section in the *Wheels and Tires* chapter of your *Owner's Manual* for description): Store and maintain at 60 psi (4.15 bar). For full-size and dissimilar spare tires (see *Dissimilar Spare Tire and Wheel Assembly Information* section in the *Owner's Manual* for description): Store and maintain at the higher of the front and rear inflation pressure as shown on the Tire Label.

6. Visually inspect the tires to make sure there are no nails or other objects embedded that could poke a hole in the tire and cause an air leak.

7. Check the sidewalls to make sure there are no gouges, cuts or bulges.

### TIRE CARE

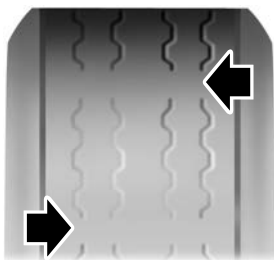
#### Inspecting your tires and wheel valve stems

Periodically inspect the tire treads for uneven or excessive wear and remove objects such as stones, nails or glass that may be wedged in the tread grooves. Check the tire and valve stems for holes, cracks, or cuts that may permit air leakage and repair or replace the tire and replace the valve stem. Inspect the tire sidewalls for cracking, cuts, bruises and other signs of damage or excessive wear. If internal damage to the tire is suspected, have the tire demounted and inspected in case it needs to be repaired or replaced. For your safety, tires that are damaged or show signs of excessive wear should not be used because they are more likely to blow out or fail.

Improper or inadequate vehicle maintenance can cause tires to wear abnormally. Inspect all your tires, including the spare, frequently, and replace them if one or more of the following conditions exist:

#### Tire wear

When the tread is worn down to 1/16th of an inch (2 millimeters), tires must be replaced to help prevent your vehicle from skidding and hydroplaning. Built-in treadwear indicators, or “wear bars”, which look like narrow strips of smooth rubber across the tread will appear on the tire when the tread is worn down to 1/16th of an inch (2 millimeters). When the tire tread wears down to the same height as these “wear bars”, the tire is worn out and must be replaced.



#### Damage

Periodically inspect the tire treads and sidewalls for damage (such as bulges in the tread or sidewalls, cracks in the tread groove and separation in the tread or sidewall). If damage is observed or suspected have the tire inspected by a tire professional. Tires can be damaged during off-road use, so inspection after off-road use is also recommended.

## Tire Care

### Tire Replacement Recommendation



**WARNING:** Tires degrade over time depending on many factors such as weather, storage conditions, and conditions of use (load, speed, inflation pressure, etc.) the tires experience throughout their lives. In general, tires should be replaced after six years regardless of tread wear. However, heat caused by hot climates or frequent high loading conditions can accelerate the aging process and may require tires to be replaced more frequently. You should replace your spare tire when you replace the road tires or after six years due to aging even if it has not been used.

### U.S. DOT Tire Identification Number (TIN)

Both U.S. and Canada Federal regulations require tire manufacturers to place standardized information on the sidewall of all tires. This information identifies and describes the fundamental characteristics of the tire and also provides a U.S. DOT Tire Identification Number for safety standard certification and in case of a recall.

This begins with the letters “DOT” and indicates that the tire meets all federal standards. The next two numbers or letters are the plant code designating where it was manufactured, the next two are the tire size code and the last four numbers represent the week and year the tire was built. For example, the numbers 317 mean the 31st week of 1997. After 2000 the numbers go to four digits. For example, 2501 means the 25th week of 2001. The numbers in between are identification codes used for traceability. This information is used to contact customers if a tire defect requires a recall.

# Tire Replacement Requirements

## TIRE REPLACEMENT REQUIREMENTS



**WARNING:** Only use replacement tires and wheels that are the same size, load index, speed rating and type (such as P-metric versus LT-metric or all-season versus all-terrain) as those originally provided by Ford. Use of any tire or wheel not recommended by Ford can affect the safety and performance of your vehicle, which could result in an increased risk of loss of vehicle control, vehicle rollover, personal injury and death. Additionally the use of non-recommended tires and wheels could cause steering, suspension, axle or transfer case/power transfer unit failure. If you have questions regarding tire replacement, see an authorized dealer.



**WARNING:** When mounting replacement tires and wheels, you should not exceed the maximum pressure indicated on the sidewall of the tire to set the beads without additional precautions listed below. If the beads do not seat at the maximum pressure indicated, re-lubricate and try again. If a pressure in excess of the maximum pressure indicated is required, the following additional precautions must be taken to protect the person mounting the tire: First check to ensure that you have the correct tire and wheel size. For mounting pressures up to 20 psi (1.38 bar) greater than the maximum pressure on the tire sidewall: When inflating the tire:

- 1. First, again lubricate the tire bead and wheel bead seat area.**
- 2. Stand at a minimum of 12 feet (3.66 meters) away from the tire wheel assembly.**
- 3. Use both eye and ear protection.**

**For a mounting pressure more than 20 psi (1.38 bar) greater than the maximum pressure, a Ford dealer or other tire service professional should do the mounting. Always inflate steel carcass tires with a remote air fill with the person inflating standing at a minimum of 12 feet (3.66 meters) away from the tire wheel assembly.**

Your vehicle is equipped with tires designed to provide a safe ride and handling capability.

**Important:** Remember to replace the wheel valve stems when the road tires are replaced on your vehicle.

## **Tire Replacement Requirements**

It is recommended that the two front tires or two rear tires generally be replaced as a pair.

If your vehicle is equipped with the tire pressure monitoring system (TPMS), the tire pressure sensors mounted in the wheels (originally installed on your vehicle) are not designed to be used in aftermarket wheels.

The use of wheels or tires not recommended by Ford Motor Company may affect the operation of your tire pressure monitoring system (if equipped).

If the TPMS indicator (if equipped) is flashing, your TPMS (if equipped) is malfunctioning. Your replacement tire might be incompatible with your TPMS, or some component of the TPMS may be damaged.

# Loading Your Vehicle

## LOADING YOUR VEHICLE

### Passenger and cargo load limits



**WARNING:** The appropriate loading capacity of your vehicle can be limited either by volume capacity (how much space is available) or by payload capacity (how much weight the vehicle should carry). Once you have reached the maximum payload of your vehicle, do not add more cargo, even if there is space available. Overloading or improperly loading your vehicle can contribute to loss of vehicle control and vehicle rollover.

The combined weight of all occupants and all cargo (including added accessories) must not exceed the **maximum payload** for your vehicle. The maximum payload for your vehicle can be found on the Tire Label on the B-pillar or edge of the driver's door (vehicles exported outside the US and Canada may not have a Tire Label). Look for statement "THE COMBINED WEIGHT OF OCCUPANTS AND CARGO SHOULD NEVER EXCEED XXX KG OR XXX LBS" to determine your vehicle's maximum payload.

In addition to **maximum payload**, additional loading terms and weight ratings are very important, particularly when towing a trailer or when a heavy accessory such as a snowplow has been added to the vehicle. Other terms related to loading include **base curb weight**, **gross vehicle weight rating** (GVWR), **gross axle weight rating** (GAWR), **gross combined weight rating** (GCWR). Refer to your *Owner's Manual* for additional information regarding these terms and maximum safe weight limits.

### Effects of improperly loading or overloading your vehicle



**WARNING:** Loaded vehicles, with a higher center of gravity, may handle differently than unloaded vehicles. Do not overload your vehicle and use extra precautions, such as driving at slower speeds, avoiding abrupt steering changes and allowing for increased stopping distance, when driving a heavily loaded vehicle. Over loading or loading the vehicle improperly can deteriorate handling capability and contribute to loss of vehicle control and vehicle rollover.

Improper weight distribution and exceeding the maximum payload can have serious consequences in terms of passenger safety, including damage to the suspension system, springs, and shock absorbers, reduced braking capability, handling or steering problems, irregular tire wear, tire failure or other damage.

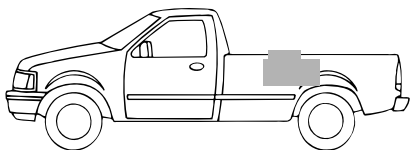
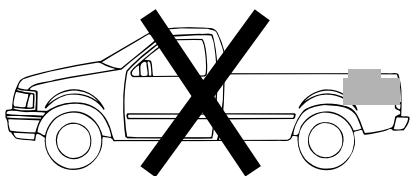
# Loading Your Vehicle

## Loading and securing cargo



**WARNING: Never** allow people to ride in the cargo area of your vehicle. People who are not riding in seats with their safety belts fastened are much more likely to be injured or killed in a collision.

When using your vehicle to haul cargo, make sure it is properly loaded to help ensure safe handling of the vehicle. You should tie down or restrain items in the cargo area so that they will not come loose and create the risk of injury in a crash. Cargo should be evenly distributed over the floor of the cargo area, with the heaviest cargo on the bottom and ahead of the rear axle.



## Loading cargo on the roof

Cargo placed on the roof will tend to make your vehicle more top heavy, causing it to lean more in corners and creating a greater possibility of vehicle rollover. If you must haul cargo on the roof of the vehicle, use extra caution when loading the vehicle and when driving. Cargo on the roof rack should be properly secured and evenly distributed over the roof rack area, with the heaviest cargo on the bottom, near the front of the roof rack area. Any load placed on the roof rack should not exceed the maximum load roof rack load allowed for the vehicle.

## Truck camper loading



**WARNING: Never** allow people to ride in a slide-in camper. People who are not riding in seats with their safety belts fastened are much more likely to be injured or killed in a collision.

When the vehicle is used to carry a slide-in camper, the total cargo load of the truck consists of the manufacturer's camper weight figure, the weight of installed additional camper equipment not included in the manufacturer's camper weight figure, the weight of the camper cargo, and the weight of all the passengers and cargo in your vehicle.

## **Loading Your Vehicle**

The total cargo load should not exceed the truck's cargo weight rating and the camper's center of gravity should fall within the truck's recommended center of gravity zone when installed. For more information refer to your truck camper loading label.

## Trailer Towing

### TRAILER TOWING

Your vehicle may be equipped for towing trailers (or may require a trailer tow package). Before you operate your vehicle with a trailer, make sure that you comply with the guidelines in the *RV & Trailer Towing Guide*. The combined total weight of the vehicle, additional trailer tow equipment, trailer, and any trailer cargo must be less than or equal to the recommended Gross Combination Weight Rating (GCWR) and must be properly balanced and secured. Refer to the *Towing* chapter in your *Owner's Manual* or see an authorized dealer for additional information.

## Maintenance and Modifications

### MAINTENANCE AND MODIFICATIONS



**WARNING:** Do not use “aftermarket lift kits” or other suspension modifications. “Aftermarket lift kits” could adversely affect the vehicle’s handling characteristics, which could result in an increased risk of loss of vehicle control, vehicle rollover, personal injury and death.

The suspension and steering systems on your vehicle have been carefully designed to provide safe, predictable performance and durable load carrying capability. Do not make modifications such as adding or removing parts (such as lift kits or stabilizer bars) or using replacement parts not equivalent to the original factory equipment because these modifications can affect the safety of your vehicle.

Any modifications to a vehicle that raise the center of gravity can make it easier to induce vehicle rollover. Ford recommends that you take extra precautions, such as driving at lower speeds, avoiding abrupt steering changes and allowing for increased stopping distance, for any vehicle equipped with a high load (for example, roof racks).

Failure to maintain your vehicle properly may void the warranty, increase your repair cost, reduce vehicle performance and operational capabilities and adversely affect driver and passenger safety. Frequent inspection of vehicle chassis and powertrain components is recommended if the vehicle is subjected to heavy off-road usage. Refer to the *Owner's Manual* for more information and to the *Scheduled Maintenance* chapter of your *Owner's Manual* for proper maintenance instructions and schedules.