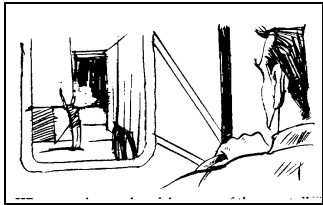


BACKING UP

When You Need Eyes In The Back Of Your Head



Whenever possible use a spotter

When you learned to drive, one of the most difficult tasks was making the car go in reverse. You had to twist your head uncomfortably. It was impossible to steer straight and you had blind spots in every direction.

Today you're a professional, but the task of backing your vehicle may still be intimidating. In fact, it's harder than it was then because you have to do it with a machine that's far more unwieldy than a car and has 10 times as many blind spots.

Some people say the best advice about backing up is to avoid doing it whenever you can. That's true especially when you're pulling a combination rig. But you can't always avoid it. Know how to do it right and it will make your job easier and safer.

Some Basics

It's best to have a spotter outside the vehicle. If not, you have to be your own spotter. It means getting out of the vehicle to make sure you know how much clearance you have at all points: in the back, on both sides and on top.

Walk around the rear where you plan to park your rig and scope out the situation before you start. Estimate clearances all around. Then check them again by getting out of the vehicle at least once when you're more than halfway in.

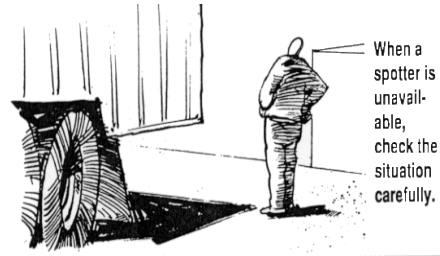
Back from the left side if you can. That's your "seeing side." You can see a lot more from there

than you can on the blind side. Check both sides frequently in your mirrors.

Go Slowly

Creep into place. If it's not going right, pull forward and take another look, then try again.

Be aware of all hazards and obstacles, including people who may walk through the



area. Plan your maneuver so you'll interfere with traffic as little as possible.

Make absolutely sure you've got clearance for the top of your rig. Watch for overhangs that might be in its way.

Remember The "S" Curve

With a commercial vehicle, you turn the wheel in the direction you want the rear end to go. It's a lot like backing a car, except your vehicle is bigger.

Don't oversteer. Back out of traffic, not into it.

Make Your Job Easier

Master the techniques of backing your vehicle into a tight spot and you will have acquired one of the most important skills that any professional driver ever needs to have. You'll make your job a lot easier.