

Commercial Motor Vehicle **TRUCK** Classification



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Introduction

Commercial motor vehicles that operate on US highways can be classified based on their gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR). The classification is divided into eight classes, one through eight, although many people use the more generic terms, light duty, medium duty and heavy duty.

Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR)

The gross vehicle weight rating, more commonly known as the GVWR, is the maximum weight a vehicle is designed to carry including the net weight of the vehicle with accessories, plus the weight of passengers, fuel, and cargo.

The GVWR is a safety standard used to prevent overloading. The vehicle manufacturer determines the maximum acceptable weight limits by considering the combined weight of the strongest weight bearing components, i.e. the axles, and the weaker components, for example the (vehicle body, frame, suspension and tires.

① Light Duty Trucks

The light duty trucks comprise of commercial truck classes 1, 2 and 3. The class is determined by the GVWR of the vehicle.

Class 1 – This class of truck has a GVWR of 0 to 6,000 pounds (0 to 2,722kg).

Class 2 – This class of truck has a GVWR of 6,001 to 10,000 pounds (2,722 to 4,536 kg).

Class 3 – This class of truck has a GVWR of 10,001 to 14,000 pounds (4,536 to 6,350 kg).

② Medium Duty Trucks

The medium duty trucks comprise of commercial truck classes 4, 5 and 6. The class is determined by the GVWR of the vehicle.

Class 4 – This class of truck has a GVWR of 14,001 to 16,000 pounds (6,351 to 7,257 kg).

Class 5 – This class of truck has a GVWR of 16,001 to 19,500 pounds (7,258 to 8,845 kg).

Class 6 – This class of truck has a GVWR of 19,501 to 26,000 pounds (8,846 to 11,793 kg).

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Heavy Duty Trucks

The heavy duty trucks comprise of commercial truck classes 7 and 8. The class is determined by the GVWR of the vehicle. Class 7 and 8 vehicles require that the driver have a Class B CDL to operate the vehicle.

Class 7 – This class of truck has a GVWR of 26,001 to 33,000 pounds (11,794 to 14,969 kg).

Class 8 – This class of truck has a GVWR of greater than 33,001 pounds (14,969 kg), and includes all tractor trailers.

Vehicle Regulations

If a vehicle has a GVWR of over 10,001 pounds and is used for a business, which includes non-profit businesses, then they are subject to federal and state safety regulations. Even though a driver does not need a commercial driving license for Class 1 through 6 vehicles, every vehicle that has a GVWR over 10,001 pounds has to be identified with the name of the company and the US DOT Number. The driver has to operate under the regulations concerning hours of service and medical examinations are required for drivers. Any vehicle over 10,001 pounds is required to stop at state weight and inspection stations.

Summary

Truck classification is determined by the gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) and this determines the regulations that should be followed. A vehicle over 10,001 pounds means that the company and driver are required to follow regulations for the safe operation of commercial motor vehicles on US highways.