

Life on the Road Before You Begin Driving

You've made the decision to become a professional driver and with it comes a certain set of expectations. But before you head out on the road, there are some things you should do. From asking the right questions to creating a contact list, completing the items below can help you transition into your new career more smoothly.



Creating a Contact List

This is a list of common contacts; you may have others you'll want to include

Create a list of contacts that you or your family may need to reach

- **Doctor:** Leave your physician's name, number and an additional point of contact in case he or she is out of the office.
- **Insurance:** Include medical, homeowner's, car, etc.
- **Bank or credit card:** This is important if someone else in your family will be paying bills while you are on the road.
- **Utilities:** Write down all utilities you pay monthly – electric, gas, water, cable, etc.
- **Veterinarian:** Animals can have medical emergencies too so make that information easy to access.
- **Personal Contact Information:** Make sure your family knows how to get a hold of you while you're driving. You may also want to give them your Fleet Manager's number.

Notifying Your Bank

You may think you've told everyone who needs to know you're going to be a driver, but have you thought about your bank?

- Driving is very different than your standard 8 to 5 desk job. Travelling through multiple states in one day can make things a little more complicated.
- Making purchases in multiple states can raise a red flag with your bank because this type of activity can often be perceived as fraud. It can appear as if someone has stolen your card and is making purchases under your name.
- If you receive a call from your bank asking about recent purchases, tell them they can now expect these types of charges because you are driver.
- You may also want to talk to your bank if you want to create a separate account for purchases you make over the road.
- Your bank can help determine the best plan for you.

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Preparing Your Family

Remember that others are affected by your decision to become a professional driver

- In today's technological world, your family may struggle with not being able to get a hold of you anytime they want. Sit down with them to review expectations and let them know you may not always be able to go to a safe haven and answer a call.
- Set a designated time to talk to your family every day and readjust the timing if it no longer works with your schedules.
- Determine with your family what celebrations are the most important. If birthdays are more important than anniversaries, make the extra effort to try to be home for them.
- On special occasions you do miss, make sure to reach out to them to let them know you are still a part of their day even if you can't be there.

Finding Support Sites

Your Fleet Manager and other professional drivers can help you with some issues, but you can also turn to the Internet

- **TeamRunSmart.com:** Five bloggers break down their posts into different categories, including maintenance, fuel efficiency, government regulations and personal experience.
- **TheTruckersReport.com:** Most of the stories on this site are news items that affect today's professional drivers. There is also a Trucking Forum link where drivers are encouraged to ask questions and start an online discussion with other drivers.
- **LifeasaTrucker.com:** This site is chock-full of information not only for professional drivers, but for their families as well. Some categories include Trucker Resources, Better Parenting, The Economy, Trucker Interviews, A Trucker's Life, and more.

Knowing What to Ask

Now is the time to ask your Fleet Manager some questions before you hit the ground running

- **Expectations:** Make sure your Fleet Manager knows what your expectations are of him or her while also asking what their expectations are of you.
- **Pay:** If you do not already know your pay, discuss this right away. You should have a strong understanding of how and when you will get paid.
- **Permits and Tolls:** While you should have everything you need, you need to talk to your Fleet Manager to make sure you have the proper passes.
- **Contact Information:** Of course, ask for your Fleet Manager's contact information. If he or she is not in the office, their responsibilities are covered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.