

FLATBED CARRIERS, OWNER-OPERATORS, DISPATCHERS, SAFETY TEAMS, AND LOAD PLANNERS

Flatbed Load Planning Toolkit

Turn a flatbed posting into a documented carrier planning review without pretending a generic calculator can approve securement, equipment, route, or permits.

Use the interactive web worksheet and this printable record to compare all-mile economics and carrier-entered payload and deck values while organizing cargo facts, equipment, securement review, route and permit questions, loading hazards, inspection timing, documents, and exceptions. This toolkit does not calculate required tiedowns or working load limits, certify securement, determine legal size or weight, issue permits, or approve a load.

HOW TO USE IT

1. Read the gates

2. Print the worksheet

3. Record actual results

Reviewed July 20, 2026 | Complete web version: loadladder.com/resources/flatbed-load-planning-toolkit

WORKFLOW 1 OF 6

Gate 1 - Preserve current cargo and source facts

Keep the source record, actual cargo facts, and unresolved questions attached to the decision.

[]	Current source Record the authorized source, load ID, recheck time, locations, stops, appointments, rate, contact path, and source restrictions.
[]	Cargo identity Record commodity, piece count, individual and total weight, dimensions, packaging, shape, orientation, rolling or tipping tendency, and condition.
[]	Loading and unloading Confirm the loading method, site access, appointment duration, driver-assist expectations, and who controls placement.
[]	Unknowns Write missing cargo, equipment, route, securement, permit, appointment, payment, and contact facts as questions.

WORKFLOW 2 OF 6

Gate 2 - Compare exact trailer and loading fit

Use records for the actual equipment configuration. The worksheet compares carrier-entered values only.

[]	Trailer configuration Record trailer type, deck, axle configuration, ratings, usable deck, anchor points, structures, ramps, dunnage, tarps, and carried equipment.
[]	Available payload Use current carrier records after fuel, driver, tools, securement gear, tarps, dunnage, and other carried weight.
[]	Placement and distribution Have qualified carrier personnel review axle and gross weight, concentration, balance, center of gravity, overhang, clearance, and turning.
[]	Stop on mismatch Resolve cargo-weight or longest-piece mismatch through equipment, placement, route, dimension, permit, and securement review.

WORKFLOW 3 OF 6

Gate 3 - Build securement review from current rules

Securement depends on the actual articles, vehicle, devices, ratings, arrangement, and applicable requirements.

[]	Applicable rule set Review 49 CFR part 393, subpart I and every commodity-specific section that applies.
[]	Devices and structures Inspect tiedowns, chains, straps, binders, anchor points, blocking, bracing, chocks, dunnage, and protection for damage and proper use.
[]	Qualified plan Have qualified carrier personnel determine device count, aggregate working load limit, restraint, placement, blocking, bracing, rolling prevention, and edge protection.
[]	No generic approval A checked box records review; it does not prove the method, ratings, tiedown count, inspection result, or compliance.

WORKFLOW 4 OF 6

Gate 4 - Resolve route, permits, time, and economics

Confirm every jurisdiction, route restriction, operating window, cost, and carrier approval before acceptance.

[]	Route and jurisdictions Review every jurisdiction, local road, bridge, construction area, grade, turn, clearance, weather, parking location, and facility access.
[]	Size, weight, and permits Compare the actual configuration with current federal, state, local, toll-road, and facility requirements. This worksheet does not issue permits.
[]	All-mile estimate Include loaded miles, deadhead, repositioning, truck-specific cost, tarps, dunnage, permits, escorts, loading help, tolls, scales, and parking.
[]	Time and accessories Confirm appointments, loading, unloading, tarping, stops, detention evidence, layover, TONU, permits, escorts, driver assist, and reload effect.

WORKFLOW 5 OF 6

Gate 5 - Control loading, inspection, and handoff

Preserve what was actually loaded, secured, inspected, and communicated before the vehicle moves.

[]	Loading record Record placement, orientation, dimensions, weights, devices, anchor points, blocking, bracing, dunnage, tarps, edge protection, exceptions, people, and time.
[]	Pre-departure inspection Confirm distribution, securement, vehicle components, tarps, equipment, visibility, movement, emergency access, and carrier-required conditions.
[]	Reexamination plan Plan inspections and adjustments under current 49 CFR 392.9 and any stricter carrier, commodity, permit, customer, or jurisdiction requirements.
[]	Driver handoff Provide route and permits, inspection schedule, tools, weather and stop-work triggers, contact chain, document process, and escalation authority.

WORKFLOW 6 OF 6

Gate 6 - Record decision and actual result

The worksheet organizes review; the authorized carrier retains the decision and operating responsibility.

[]	Carrier decision Record approval, rejection, conditions, open questions, owner, time, exact equipment, sources, and documents reviewed.
[]	In-transit exceptions Preserve shift, looseness, damage, weather, route, permit, delay, securement, tarp, equipment, inspection, and communication events.
[]	Delivery evidence Record arrival, cargo and securement observations, unloading condition, signed documents, authorized photos, exceptions, and disposition.
[]	Planned versus actual Compare miles, time, fuel, permits, escorts, loading, supplies, accessorial recovery, service, exceptions, and estimated versus actual cost.

PRINT FLATBED LOAD PLANNING RECORD

Preserve the original estimate or review. Add actual results separately so the decision process can improve.

Field	Working value
Source / load ID / recheck time	_____
Cargo / pieces / weights / dimensions	_____
Pickup / delivery / appointments	_____
Trailer / axle configuration	_____
Available payload / usable deck	_____
Placement / loading method / site	_____
Securement rule / qualified reviewer	_____
Devices / ratings / blocking / protection	_____
Route / jurisdictions / permits / escorts	_____
Loaded / deadhead / reposition miles	_____
Gross rate / cost per mile / trip costs	_____
All-mile RPM / estimated margin	_____
Inspection / adjustment plan	_____
Carrier decision / owner / time	_____

FINAL REVIEW

☐	Current source and complete cargo facts preserved
☐	Exact trailer, payload, usable deck, placement, and condition reviewed
☐	Applicable general and commodity-specific rules reviewed
☐	Qualified securement plan and device condition reviewed
☐	Route, size, weight, permits, escorts, and weather reviewed
☐	Loading record, photos, documents, and exceptions prepared
☐	Pre-departure and in-transit reexamination plan prepared
☐	Carrier decision and actual-result review recorded

SOURCES AND BOUNDARIES

Use current authoritative records

These links are starting points for current official information. Requirements and records can change. This resource is not legal, tax, insurance, accounting, safety, or financial advice. It does not replace source terms, qualified professional review, carrier approval, or a counterparty's current requirements.

FMCSA Cargo Securement Rules	https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/regulations/cargo-securement/cargo-securement-rules
Current 49 CFR part 393, subpart I	https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-49/subtitle-B/chapter-III/subchapter-B/part-393/subpart-I
Official CFR edition containing 49 CFR 392.9	https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CFR-2025-title49-vol5/pdf/CFR-2025-title49-vol5-part392.pdf
FHWA oversize and overweight permit contacts	https://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/freight/sw/permit_report/
FMCSA SAFER Company Snapshot	https://safer.fmcsa.dot.gov/CompanySnapshot.aspx

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