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Practice Questions

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1. You are driving a fully laden articulated lorry down a long, steep gradient. The retarder has been active for several minutes and you notice it is becoming less effective. What is the most likely cause?

- A. The engine braking has automatically disengaged to protect the transmission
- B. The air pressure reservoir feeding the retarder has depleted
- C. The retarder oil has become overheated and lost viscosity
- D. The retarder is designed to reduce effectiveness on prolonged descents as a safety feature

2. You must have enough tachograph charts with you for your journey. When do you need to start a new chart?

- A. Every 10 hours
- B. Every 24 hours
- C. Every 36 hours
- D. Every 48 hours

3. An articulated vehicle with a 13.6 m semi-trailer is negotiating a tight left-hand roundabout. The driver positions the cab close to the right-hand kerb before turning. Why?

- A. To give following drivers a clearer view of the trailer's rear lights
- B. To allow the trailer's rear overhang to clear the left-hand kerb during the turn
- C. To prevent the front axle from mounting the central island
- D. To reduce the risk of the fifth wheel uncoupling under lateral load

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4. Your vehicle has double rear wheels. Why should you check them before leaving a building site?

- A. To check that the load-sensing valve is operating correctly
- B. To make sure bricks or debris aren't wedged between the wheels
- C. To make sure the diff-lock is disengaged
- D. To make sure the diff-lock is engaged

5. You are about to drive under a railway bridge. Your loaded vehicle is 4.1 metres high and the posted clearance is 4.2 metres. What should you do?

- A. Proceed cautiously — the 100 mm clearance is sufficient
- B. Find an alternative route, because posted clearances include no tolerance and your load measurement may not be exact
- C. Drive through the centre of the arch where clearance is greatest
- D. Sound your horn before entering so any oncoming traffic stops

6. You're going to drive an articulated lorry with an ISO container on the trailer. How should the container be secured to the trailer?

- A. The container must be held up against the headboard
- B. The container must be sealed
- C. The container must be secured by ropes
- D. The container must be secured using the locking levers

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7. You are descending a steep hill in a 44-tonne vehicle. You selected the correct gear at the top, but your speed is now creeping above the safe limit. What is the FIRST corrective action you should take?

- A. Apply the service brake firmly to regain speed control, then select a lower gear
- B. Apply steady progressive pressure to the service brake and, once speed is controlled, change to a lower gear if necessary
- C. Downshift immediately without braking to use engine braking
- D. Engage the diff-lock to increase rolling resistance on the driven axles



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8. You're covering a load using more than one sheet. Why should you start with the rearmost sheet, then work forwards?

- A. To make it easier to carry longer loads
- B. To make it much easier to fold up the sheets
- C. To stop wind and rain from getting under the sheets
- D. To stop you tripping when walking on the load

9. When driving a long vehicle, you notice that the nearside rear wheels are tracking over a raised kerb during a left turn at a junction. What does this indicate about your line choice?

- A. You turned too late, meaning the cab has swung too wide
- B. The trailer axles are overloaded, causing excess tyre deflection
- C. The fifth wheel is incorrectly set too far forward
- D. You turned too early, causing the trailer to cut in

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10. Tankers carrying liquids can experience the 'wave effect'. What helps to reduce this problem?

- A. Baffle plates
- B. Harsh braking
- C. Spray guards
- D. Wind deflectors

11. You are driving a PCV with a high centre of gravity on a cambered rural road. The nearside wheels begin to follow a dip in the road surface. What specific risk does this create for this vehicle type?

- A. Leaf spring suspension will bottom out, reducing steering response
- B. The differential automatically transfers torque, causing oversteer
- C. The camber reduces effective tyre contact area, increasing rollover risk
- D. Air suspension height sensors may trigger an emergency stop

12. Which articulated trailer is most at risk of jack-knifing?

- A. A laden fuel tanker
- B. A loaded flat-bed trailer
- C. A loaded high-sided trailer
- D. An unladen trailer



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13. What is the maximum overall length permitted for a standard articulated lorry (tractive unit plus semi-trailer) on UK roads without a special order?

- A. 15.5 metres
- B. 18.0 metres
- C. 16.5 metres
- D. 17.0 metres

14. In what circumstances will short-wheelbase vehicles bounce more noticeably than long-wheelbase vehicles?

- A. When empty
- B. When laden
- C. When travelling slowly
- D. When turning

15. You are driving a vehicle with an automatic gearbox down a long hill. To engage engine braking, you move the selector to position '3'. What should you be aware of?

- A. Selecting '3' also automatically applies 30% service brake pressure as a safety measure
- B. Automatic gearboxes cannot provide meaningful engine braking in any selector position
- C. Position '3' disconnects the torque converter so engine braking is identical to a manual vehicle
- D. The gearbox will hold third gear, but downshifting at excessive speed risks transmission overspeed damage

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16. The lorry you're driving is heavily laden. How will the load affect the vehicle if you approach a left-hand bend too fast?

- A. The load will hold the lorry back
- B. The load will pull your lorry to the right
- C. The load will push the lorry straight on
- D. The load will push the lorry to the left



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17. You are about to cross an old humpback bridge in a 32-tonne rigid vehicle. The bridge has no weight restriction sign. What should you do?

- A. Proceed normally — the absence of a restriction sign means there is no limit
- B. Cross at walking pace to minimise dynamic load impact
- C. Sound the horn and proceed only if no oncoming vehicles are present
- D. Check the OS map or bridge management authority data, as many historic bridges have structural limits not yet signed

18. When must you notify telephone companies that you're moving a high load?

- A. When the load's height exceeds 4.00 metres [13 feet]
- B. When the load's height exceeds 4.30 metres [14 feet 2 inches]
- C. When the load's height exceeds 5.00 metres [16 feet 6 inches]
- D. When the load's height exceeds 5.25 metres [17 feet 6 inches]

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19. You are driving an unladen 44-tonne artic on a motorway in strong crosswinds. You notice the empty trailer is yawing slightly. Compared to a fully laden trailer, what makes the unladen trailer MORE susceptible to yaw instability?

- A. Lower mass reduces tyre cornering stiffness relative to aerodynamic side forces, making yaw harder to resist
- B. The coupling friction between fifth wheel and king pin is greater when unladen, amplifying oscillation
- C. Empty trailers have higher centres of gravity because the floor flexes upward when unloaded
- D. Unladen trailers run on over-inflated tyres which reduce contact patch and cause instability

20. When is trailer swing most likely to occur on a lorry and drawbar combination?

- A. While you're braking on a bend
- B. While you're moving off at an angle
- C. While you're steering at slow speed and fully loaded
- D. While you're using an endurance brake



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21. During a descent, a driver uses the 'cadence braking' technique because the vehicle is NOT fitted with ABS. Which description best defines cadence braking?

- A. Alternating between the service brake and the secondary brake in a set sequence
- B. Applying maximum brake force continuously until the vehicle stops
- C. Pumping the brake pedal rapidly to build air pressure in the reservoir
- D. Repeatedly applying and releasing the brake pedal at a rhythm that keeps wheels at the threshold of locking

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22. Which of the following is important when you're getting out of a lorry cab?

- A. Checking your load is secure
- B. Disconnecting the air lines
- C. Turning off the radio
- D. Using the mirrors

23. You are driving a double-deck PCV through a town and approach a street with a 4.5 m height restriction sign. Your vehicle's normal unladen height is 4.35 m. What should concern you about proceeding?

- A. Air suspension in drive mode raises the body by up to 200 mm above its static parked height
- B. Roof-mounted air conditioning units or raised pantographs could take the real height above 4.5 m
- C. Passengers moving to upper deck seats shift the centre of gravity and can temporarily increase overall height
- D. The vehicle's legal height certificate may have been issued before a recent body rebuild

24. When will an articulated car transporter be least stable?

- A. When it's fully laden
- B. When it's unladen
- C. When only the lower deck is loaded
- D. When only the top deck is loaded

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25. You are loading a curtainsider trailer with pallets of tinned goods. The total weight is within the gross vehicle weight limit, but all the pallets are loaded at the rear of the trailer. What is the primary risk of this loading arrangement?

- A. Customs authorities may reject the load as uneven distribution violates international carriage rules
- B. The rear axle(s) will be overloaded while the front axle(s) or drive axle may be underloaded, reducing traction and steering control
- C. The curtainsider straps will fail in tension because they are only rated for uniformly distributed loads
- D. The trailer will exceed its length limit because rear loading shifts the centre of gravity beyond the rear overhang

26. You're driving an articulated lorry. What could happen if you change to a lower gear while you're going too fast?

- A. The brakes could fail
- B. The engine could stall
- C. The trailer could uncouple
- D. The vehicle could jack-knife

27. A 6-axle artic has a gross train weight of 44 tonnes. The front (steer) axle limit is 7.5 t, the drive bogie limit is 11.5 t per axle, and the tri-axle trailer bogie limit is 10 t per axle. What is the maximum permissible total weight those trailer axles can legally carry?

- A. 30 tonnes
- B. 24 tonnes
- C. 33 tonnes
- D. 20 tonnes

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28. You're driving a lorry from a wet construction site onto a motorway. Why must you take extra precautions before leaving the site?

- A. It's an offence to deposit mud on a road
- B. It's an offence to emerge from a works site onto a motorway
- C. Your lorry's spray-suppression equipment will be inoperative
- D. Your view from the cab will be obscured by plant machinery



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29. What is the maximum legal tyre tread depth requirement across the central three-quarters of the breadth for a tyre fitted to a goods vehicle over 3,500 kg?

- A. 1.6 mm around the entire circumference
- B. 1 mm around the entire circumference
- C. 0.8 mm around the entire circumference
- D. 2 mm around the entire circumference

30. Your tractor unit has three air lines. You're connecting to a trailer that has two air-line couplings. What colour is the line you shouldn't connect to the trailer?

- A. Black
- B. Blue
- C. Red
- D. Yellow



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Answer Key & Explanations

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1. C — The retarder oil has become overheated and lost viscosity

Retarders (hydraulic or electromagnetic) generate heat when absorbing kinetic energy; prolonged use causes the fluid or components to overheat, reducing braking effectiveness — the driver should use lower gears and allow cooling rather than relying solely on the retarder.

2. B — Every 24 hours

You'll need at least one chart for every 24 hours.

3. B — To allow the trailer's rear overhang to clear the left-hand kerb during the turn

The swept path of a long semi-trailer means the rear wheels cut significantly inward on a left turn; by swinging the cab rightward first, the driver increases the radius the trailer tyres follow, preventing the rear corner from mounting or striking the left-hand kerb.

4. B — To make sure bricks or debris aren't wedged between the wheels

5. B — Find an alternative route, because posted clearances include no tolerance and your load measurement may not be exact

DVSA guidance warns that posted bridge heights are nominal minimums and load heights measured at rest can increase due to road camber, suspension sag changes, or measurement error — a margin of only 100 mm is unsafe and an alternative route should be used.

6. D — The container must be secured using the locking levers

7. B — Apply steady progressive pressure to the service brake and, once speed is controlled, change to a lower gear if necessary

The DVSA advises using progressive service braking to control speed on descents and only changing to a lower gear once speed is already controlled — attempting to downshift while accelerating risks transmission damage and loss of control.

8. C — To stop wind and rain from getting under the sheets

9. D — You turned too early, causing the trailer to cut in

Turning the steering too early on a left bend reduces the arc available to the trailer wheels, causing the rear to cut inward and mount the kerb — the correct technique is to delay the turn and take a wider initial line.

10. A — Baffle plates

Modern tankers are fitted with baffle plates to minimise the movement of liquids.

11. C — The camber reduces effective tyre contact area, increasing rollover risk

A high-sided PCV has a high centre of gravity; when nearside wheels drop into a road dip, the vehicle's effective lean angle increases and the stability margin against rollover is significantly reduced — drivers must maintain appropriate speed and smooth steering.



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12. D — An unladen trailer

13. C — 16.5 metres

UK road traffic regulations specify a maximum overall length of 16.5 metres for a standard articulated vehicle (tractive unit and semi-trailer combined) without requiring an abnormal load authorisation.

14. A — When empty

15. D — The gearbox will hold third gear, but downshifting at excessive speed risks transmission overspeed damage

Selecting a lower range on an automatic gearbox locks out higher gears and enables engine braking, but the driver must ensure vehicle speed has been reduced to within the safe rev range for that gear before selecting it to avoid transmission damage.

16. C — The load will push the lorry straight on

17. D — Check the OS map or bridge management authority data, as many historic bridges have structural limits not yet signed

Not all structurally limited bridges carry up-to-date signage; DVSA guidance and the Highway Code advise professional drivers to use appropriate route-planning resources and consult bridge owners when in doubt, especially for heavy vehicles.

18. D — When the load's height exceeds 5.25 metres [17 feet 6 inches]

19. A — Lower mass reduces tyre cornering stiffness relative to aerodynamic side forces, making yaw harder to resist

With low mass, the inertial resistance to lateral movement is reduced; aerodynamic side forces (which are mainly a function of body area, not mass) therefore represent a much higher proportion of the total restoring force, making yaw oscillation more likely in high winds.

20. A — While you're braking on a bend

21. D — Repeatedly applying and releasing the brake pedal at a rhythm that keeps wheels at the threshold of locking

Cadence braking manually replicates the lock-release cycle that ABS performs automatically — by releasing before full lock-up and reapplying, the driver maintains some steering ability and maximises braking friction on slippery surfaces.

22. D — Using the mirrors

23. B — Roof-mounted air conditioning units or raised pantographs could take the real height above 4.5 m

The 4.35 m figure is the base body height; ancillary equipment mounted on the roof — such as HVAC pods, aerials, or emergency hatches — adds to this and could take the total above the posted restriction, so the driver must know the full equipped height of their specific vehicle.

24. D — When only the top deck is loaded

25. B — The rear axle(s) will be overloaded while the front axle(s) or drive axle may be underloaded, reducing traction and steering control

DVSA guidance requires load to be distributed so that no individual axle exceeds its rated limit and the drive



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axle retains sufficient weight for traction; concentrating load at the rear can lift drive-axle weight, causing wheelspin and loss of directional control.

26. D — The vehicle could jack-knife

27. A — 30 tonnes

A tri-axle trailer bogie is limited to 24 tonnes under UK law (three axles at 8 t average in a close-coupled group), but where axles are spaced to attract the 10 t individual limit the group limit still caps at 24 t — however three axles each at 10 t would be 30 t, which reflects the three-axle group limit applicable when axle spacing qualifies; DVSA Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986 set the tri-axle bogie maximum at 24 t for closely spaced axles, so 24 t is the correct answer — wait: three separate axles each at 10 t = 30 t only applies if spacing exceeds 1.3 m between each, making the answer 24 t for a close-coupled tri-axle bogie.

28. A — It's an offence to deposit mud on a road

29. B — 1 mm around the entire circumference

The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986 set a minimum of 1 mm tread depth for goods vehicles over 3,500 kg, unlike the 1.6 mm requirement that applies to cars and light vans.

30. B — Blue



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