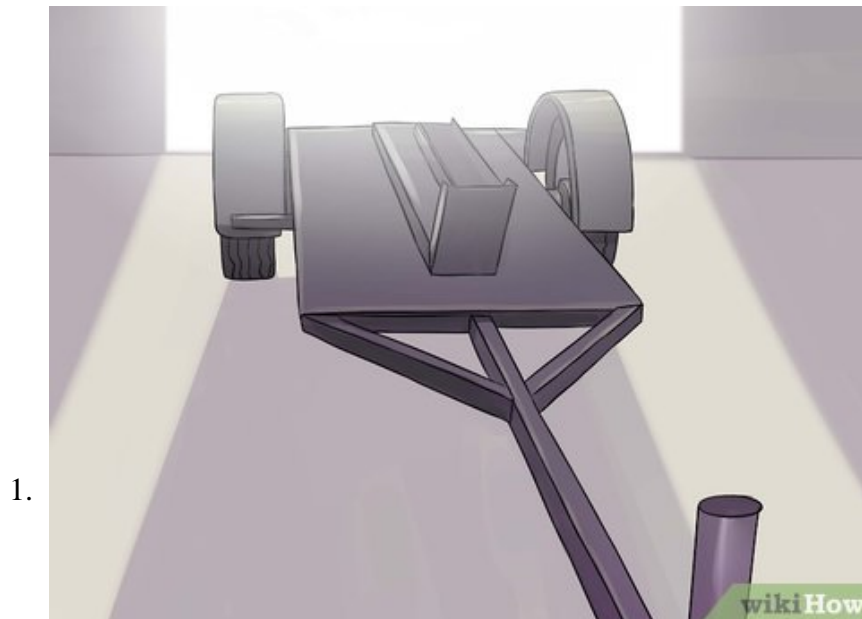


How to Trailer a Motorcycle

A motorcycle tied down incorrectly to your trailer could result in your motorcycle shifting or tipping over during a trip down the highway, or even falling out of your trailer. To keep your motorcycle tied down safely on a trailer during...

Part 1 of 3:

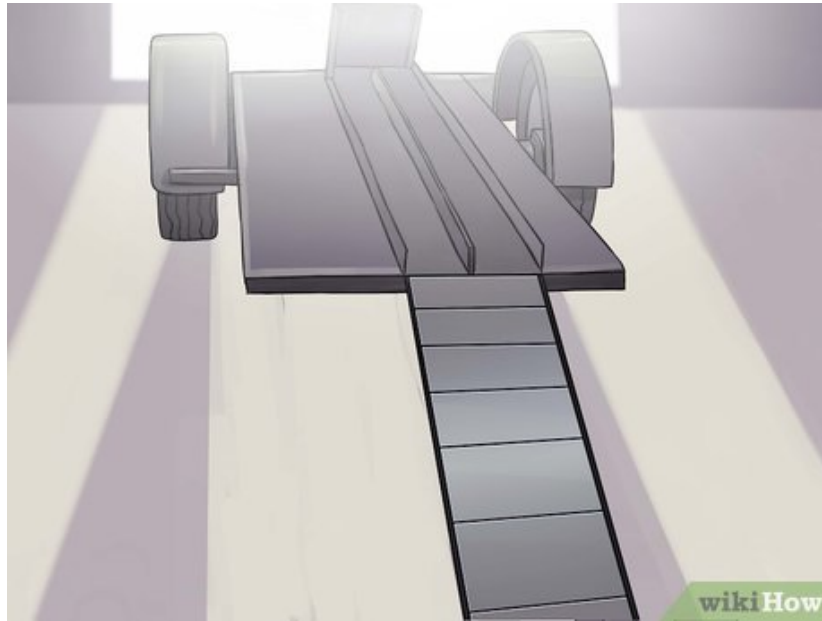
Picking a Trailer



Pick a trailer that suits your needs. Depending upon how often you plan to move your bike, what kinds of conditions you expect to encounter, how handy you are with tools, and your budget, there are a variety of different trailers that will be appropriate for your purposes.^[1] A variety of trailers are made to fit certain models or brands of bikes. Check with your bike retailer for specific trailer suggestions for the model.

1. Renting a trailer is usually the most common option since most companies that provide the equipment usually keep it very well-maintained, and in compliance with federal and state law in terms of registration, plates, and lighting.
2. Size-wise, a 5' X 9' open trailer with a fold-down ramp is ideal for one or two cruisers. It's also good to have tie-down rings in the front corners, on the floor.
3. Some trailers made specifically for motorcycle trailers have very small tires, which bounce uncontrollably as you drive. If the bike is worth towing, use a heftier trailer.

2.



Get a corresponding ramp for the trailer. Measure the wheelbase and the ground clearance of the bike, to make sure you get a ramp that's big enough for your purposes. Most trailers should come with a pull-down ramp, but if you're going to rent one, or try to trailer a bike in your truck, you'll want to be sure it'll work.^[2]

1. Wheelbase is measured from the center of the front wheel to the center of the rear wheel of your bike.
2. Ground Clearance is measured from the lowest point of the motorcycle, halfway between the front and rear wheels.
3. You also want to measure the height of the trailer or the truck bed, in which you're trying to load the bike.

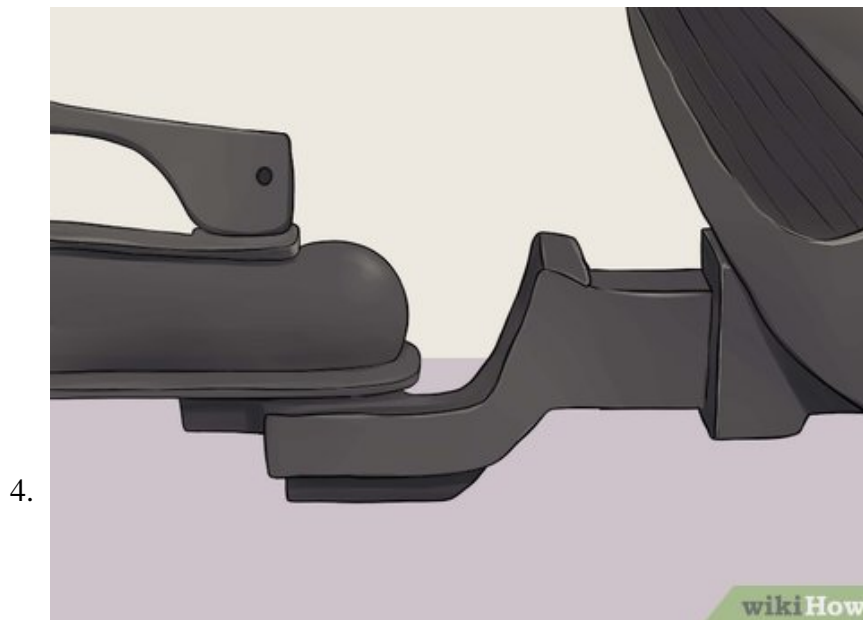
3.



Learn the trailer permit laws in your area. Laws vary from state to state, so it's always a good idea to investigate any special permits, laws, rules of the road, or licenses that you might need in order to stay in

compliance with local law enforcement.

1. Most rental companies will offer a temporary insurance policy, which may cover only their equipment and which may require you to pay a deductible.
2. Check with your insurance company to see whether the rental insurance will be sufficient, just to be on the safe side.



Make sure you have an appropriate vehicle with a hitch. To pull a trailer with weight up to a ton, you'll need something with rear-wheel drive rated to tow two thousand pounds. Crown Victorias or Chevy Caprices work great.

1. Hitches are rated based on the tongue-weight of different trailers, and you'll need an appropriate hitch for the trailer you use. For motorcycles, Class 1 or 2 hitches are usually fine.^[3]
2. Smaller cars can work for smaller trailers, but anything more than a ton needs a heftier vehicle. Trucks and SUVs, from Ford Rangers to Chevy Colorados are usually better than any car.
3. If you're going to tow a much bigger trailer, in excess of two tons, you'll need at least a half-ton truck like an F-150 or a Silverado. a half-ton truck like a Ford F-150 or Chevy Silverado.^[4]

Part 2 of 3:

Securing the Bike

1.



Get some ratchet straps.^[5] There are several varieties of these straps but the ratchet type is easier to compress the suspension than the pull strap type, and they are available at most home centers and discount stores.

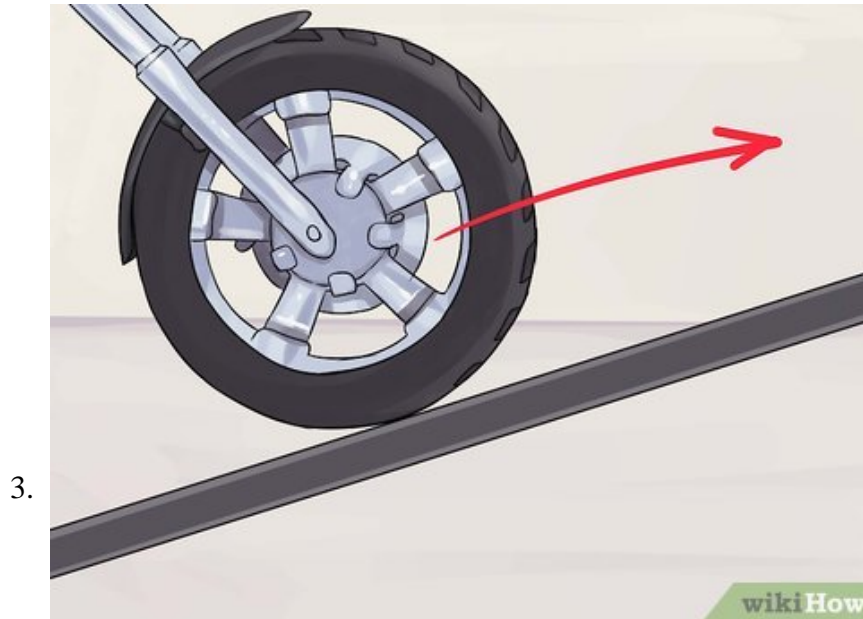
1. Pay attention to the Working Load Limit of the straps you get and choose a strap that has a working load limit of at least half the weight of your motorcycle. For instance, if your bike weighs 650 pounds, find a strap with a working load limit of at least 325 pounds each. Most one-inch nylon straps will have this rating.

2.

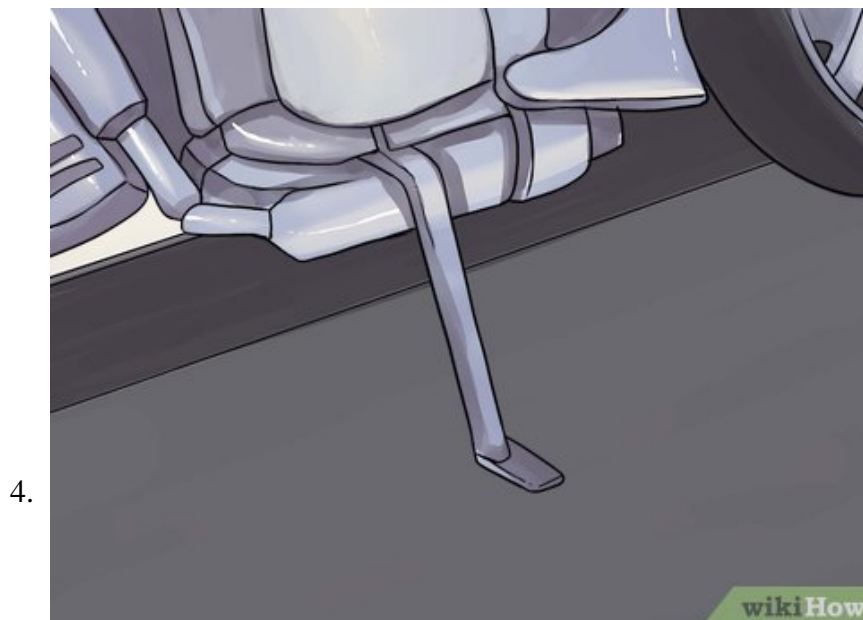


Get a wheel chock for the front of the trailer. A wheel chock is a sturdy material made of metal or hard plastic that is placed around the front wheel of the motorcycle to inhibit it from moving. While the wheel chock is not a requirement to trailer your bike, it certainly makes the chore much easier, especially if you are loading and strapping without the assistance of a friend.

1. If you do not have a chock then park the bike at the very front of the trailer. If there is a rail on the trailer your front tire should be pressed against the rail.



Use the ramp to load the bike. Push the bike up the ramp into the bed of the trailer, placing the front wheel into the wheel chock. Place the front wheel of your motorcycle into the wheel chock.



Put the side stand down and attach the straps.^[6] A general rule for strapping anything is to attach the straps as high as possible on the bike and as low as possible on the trailer for the greatest holding power. Use an "X" pattern for maximum stability.

1. Start with the front left strap (as viewed from a sitting position on the bike). Secure one end of the strap to the trailer and the other to a rigid point on the frame or triple tree.
2. Tighten the front left strap until it is taut. Next, attach the front right strap in the same manner as the front left strap. Since your bike is on the side stand it will be leaning to the left but in the end, we want the bike to be perfectly vertical when secured.

3. You may want to use some soft loops on the motorcycle end of the strap, to protect the bike, then attach the ratchet strap to the soft loop.

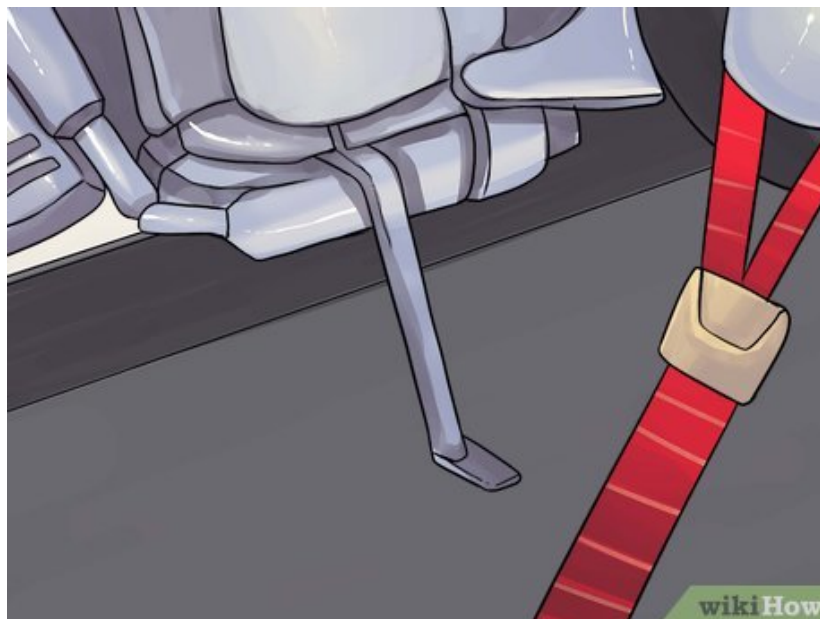
5.



Secure the straps to the trailer and ratchet them down.^[7] Secure the other hook end of the strap to a secure spot in your truck or trailer, preferably on an angle. Pull the slack out of the strap and ratchet it a few times. Repeat this same process for the right side. Tighten each ratchet strap so that the bike will sit in the upright position on its own.

1. You will notice the bike start moving into a vertical position and your front suspension compressing. Once the bike is vertical you will want to tighten the left and right sides equally until the suspension is completely compressed.
2. Don't strap the handlebars. Most manufacturers say that it's not safe to attach ratchet straps to the handlebars because they are simply not designed to take the pressures that will be exerted by the straps and a bouncy road.

6.



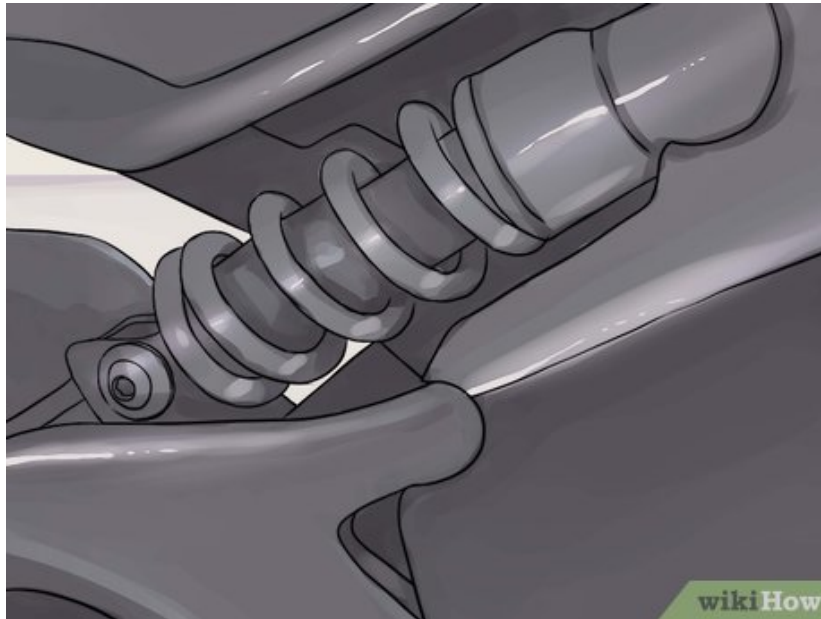
Strap the rear of the bike.^[8] Remember to secure the straps rearward of the motorcycle so that the rear straps put counter tension on the front straps, making your bike an immovable fixture on the trailer.

1. Do not tie the straps to guards on saddle bags or trunks as it is likely you will pull the guards off during transit. Again you will want to compress the suspension as you ratchet the straps.

Part 3 of 3:

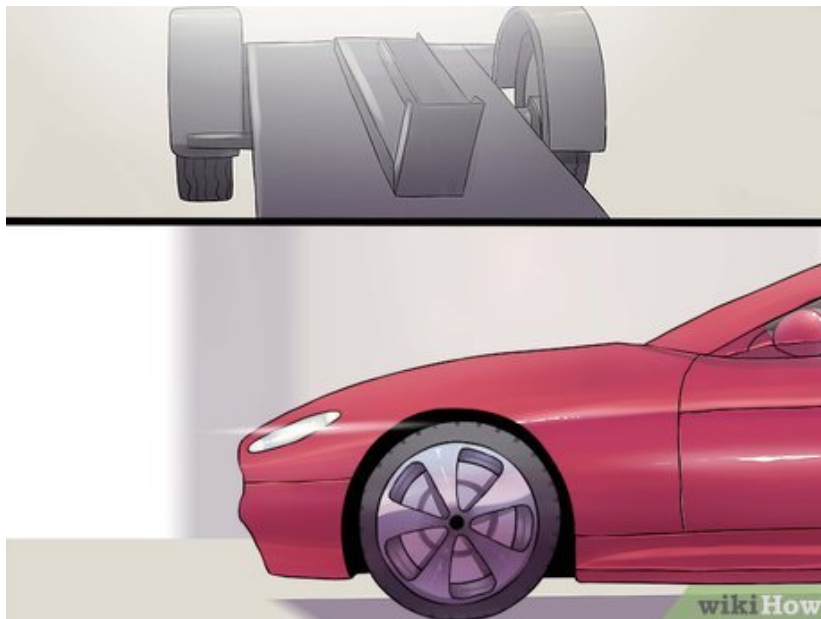
Driving With a Trailered Bike

1.



Make sure the suspension is compressed. As you ratchet the straps down, you need to make sure the suspension is compressed fully. If it is not compressed it is possible that your straps can come loose as the bike rebounds, bouncing around from bumps and dips in the road.

2.



Practice driving around with the trailer attached to your main transport vehicle. You don't want the first time you drive with a trailer to be the first time you've got your prized bike strapped to it, driving at highway speeds in the elements. Practice hooking up your trailer and driving around a bit to get a feel for things.^[9]

1. Practice tight corners, driveways, and backing up specifically. Take it for a test run on a highway, at high speed. Get a sense of how you will need to adjust your regular driving habits to accommodate driving with the trailer attached.



Cover the bike with a tarp. After securing the bike to the trailer, use a canvas or vinyl tarp to cover it and keep it safe from the elements, or the cover you use for your motorcycle when you park it. The tarp doesn't need to be doing any load-bearing work, so just tie it firmly down to the straps, or to the bike.



Recheck the straps regularly. It's important to go back and check all the straps and make sure they are not rubbing any parts on your bike. Also recheck the tension on the straps. On a longer trip, do a walk

around every time you stop and re-check the straps again. It's always best to be on the safe side.

You finished reading the article "**How to Trailer a Motorcycle**" edited by the [TipsMake](#) team. We hope this article has provided you with many useful tech tips and tricks. You can search for similar articles on tips and guides. Thank you for reading and for following us regularly.
