

Getting afloat with your boat

There are many advantages to having a boat and trailer combination. You save on mooring fees, it's more secure and, if one of the joys of ownership is working on your boat, then it's more accessible. Maintenance is easier, you don't need antifouling and the boat will stay in better condition. Larger craft with a cabin can be your home from home when you're on the move. But the biggest benefit of all has to be the flexibility that trailing offers. With a boat you can transport easily, the choice is yours as to where and when you can get on the water.

Choosing the correct launching site with convenient access for your vehicle and the trailer is made much easier if you can plan ahead. A pre-launch recce is ideal allowing you to see approach roads and inspect the slipway, facilities and parking. For unfamiliar areas local knowledge is invaluable and boat clubs in the vicinity are usually a friendly source of advice. A call to the harbour master will tell you about slipway access in relation to the tides and any other relevant navigational information. Information on launch sites can also be obtained from published guides and websites.

Launching tips:

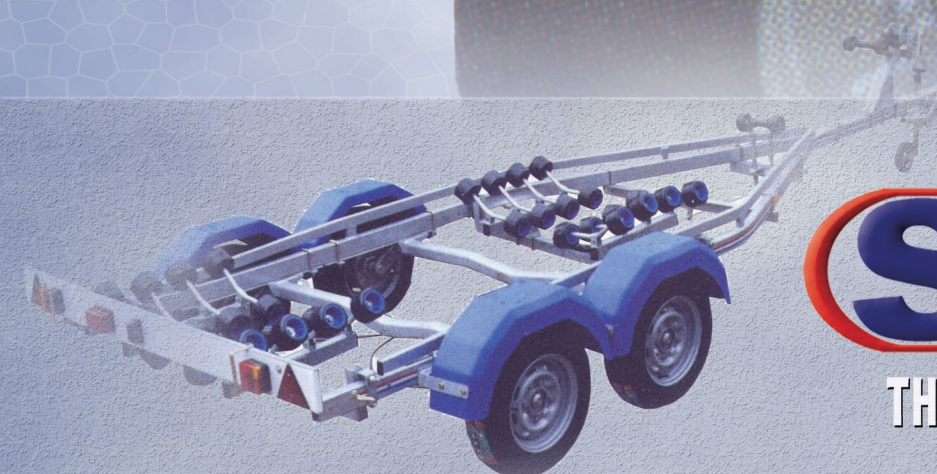
- Prepare everything before you start
- Remember to undo all straps and electrical cables
- Always have a safety line attached to the boat
- For steep slipways use a rope attached to the car
- If the winch handle spins out of control keep hands clear
- If a slipway is weedy or slippery take care underfoot
- If you are behind the trailer make sure the vehicle driver can see you

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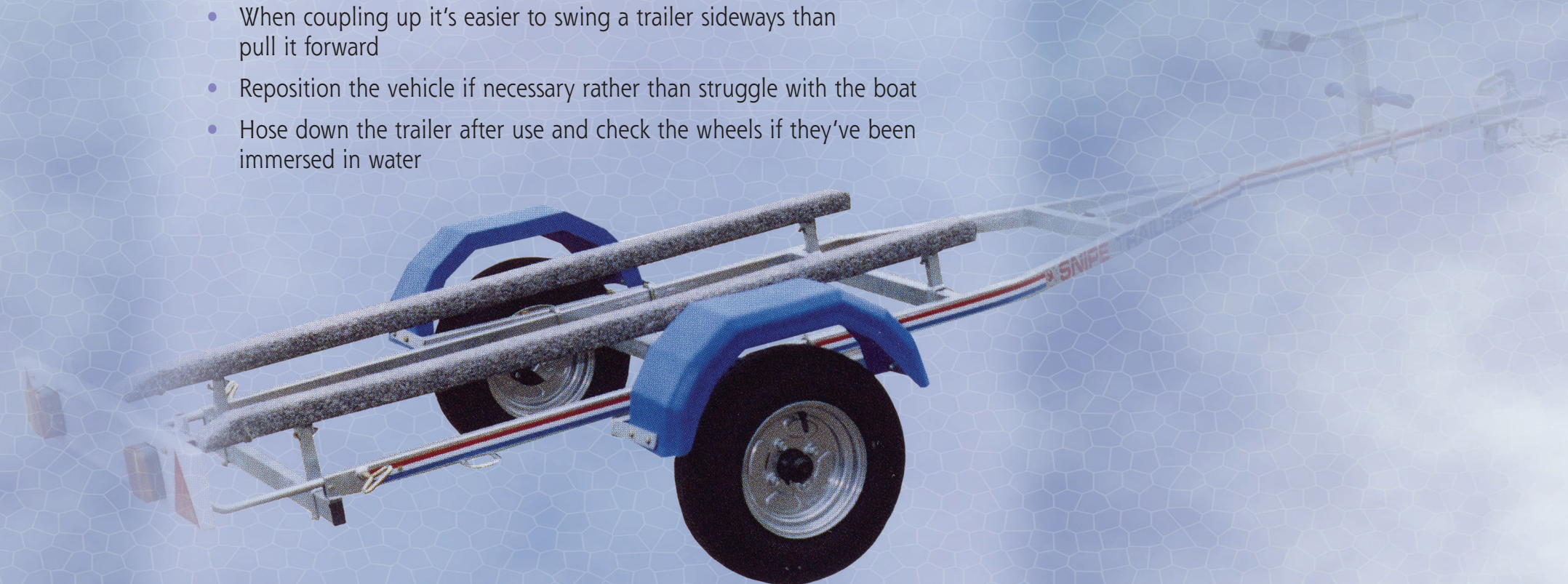
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Top Towing Tips

- Check the nose weight with a bathroom scales and blocks at the coupling height
- Carry wheel chocks to help manoeuvre the boat on steep slipways
- Regularly inspect the lighting board, cables and 7-pin plug
- Keep electrical contacts clean and treat with moisture repellent spray
- Keep the ball and coupling well greased
- Always properly fit the breakaway cable or secondary coupling
- Use cable ties to secure the electrical cable clear of the road
- Always check your lights before leaving
- Stop shortly after beginning your journey to re-check the load
- Use the gears to assist braking when going down steep hills
- Check the wheel hubs for heat to ensure the brakes are not binding
- To protect wheel bearings allow them to cool before immersing them in water
- When coupling up it's easier to swing a trailer sideways than pull it forward
- Reposition the vehicle if necessary rather than struggle with the boat
- Hose down the trailer after use and check the wheels if they've been immersed in water



Legal requirements

Snipe always want to ensure that their customers have worry-free trailing so they can enjoy their boating. As a trailer professional your Snipe dealer will be able to explain to you in simple language what the law requires so that you, your family and other road users are safe at all times.

Here are some general guidelines you need to remember: The maximum permissible length of a trailer is normally 7 metres excluding the drawbar and coupling and the maximum permissible width is 2.3 metres. The maximum height of the load is 3 metres and any permitted projecting loads must have markers and be lit at night. You must be able to see past both sides of the load with your mirrors.

It's essential when towing that the centre of gravity of the load be as low as possible and that boat and trailer are correctly balanced. Always secure the boat and any items stowed in it properly. Ensure that the vehicle, trailer and tyres are in good condition and carry a spare trailer wheel. Never exceed any weight limits for the vehicle, trailer or combination and if your trailer is supplied with brakes never disconnect them.

If you obtained your car driving licence before January 1 1997 you can drive a vehicle and trailer with a combination weight of up to 8.25 tonnes. If you passed your test after this date, there are restrictions if you wish to tow a trailer above 750kg. For further information on what you are allowed to tow call the DVLA on 0870 2400009 and have your driving licence details handy. Remember to check your insurance and any foreign legal requirements if you're towing abroad.

SNIPE service centres

Snipe has a nationwide network of over 200 service centres throughout the UK offering full maintenance facilities for your trailer. Proper trailer maintenance is necessary to ensure that your trailer remains safe, in good condition and within the law. Regular servicing prevents minor jobs becoming major ones and can eliminate problems before they happen. Snipe engineers are happy to advise on what is required to guarantee that your trailer will give you many years of trouble free use.

Snipe recommend that a trailer is serviced annually and usually this is done at the beginning of each boating season. As boat trailer specialists Snipe fully understand the rigours of operating in and around the marine environment. During the service the whole trailer will be thoroughly inspected to make certain that all components are kept in tiptop condition and nothing is overlooked. In addition to the specification plate each Snipe trailer also has a unique serial number stamped on it. This identification number records where each trailer was manufactured and bought. It allows the owner to maintain a full service history for spares and insurance purposes.

Buying a trailer

When it comes to buying a boat trailer your Snipe dealer is your one-stop shop for expert advice. Snipe manufacture boat trailers exclusively. Their in depth knowledge and reputation as specialists leads them to work with many boat builders and importers. This means they remain at the forefront of trailer design adapting and developing new trailer models as required.

Whatever your boat, Snipe have a trailer to suit it and cater for craft throughout the range of power and sail. There are many standard designs available in all sizes but Snipe also offer custom builds for specific requirements. Whether you own a dinghy or dayboat, a fishing craft or a fast cruiser Snipe will have the perfect trailer to suit it.

Before you buy your trailer, your Snipe dealer will discuss with you key questions such as the weight of your existing boat or your proposed purchase and the vehicle to be used for towing. The transportation, launch and retrieval of your craft will be made as efficient and effortless as possible with the right Snipe trailer for your boating requirements.