

FAQs on towing a broken down vehicle

Can I use my vehicle to tow a broken down vehicle? Yes. But only to bring it to the nearest place of safety or repair.

Can I use an A-Frame/dolly/drawbar etc. to tow a broken down vehicle? Yes. But by law towing a broken down vehicle is the same as towing a trailer, so the following rules apply:

- **Carrying capacity:** The weight of the broken down vehicle cannot be more than the carrying capacity of the towing device, if one is used (e.g. A-Frame, Dolly, Drawbar etc.)
- **Towing capacity:** The weight of both the broken down vehicle and the towing device cannot be more than the manufacturer's rated towing capacity for your vehicle.
- **Licence:** The driver of the towing vehicle must be the holder of a BE Driving Licence and the driver steering the broken down vehicle must also hold the appropriate licence for that vehicle.

Where can I find information on the following?	
My vehicle's towing capacity	Consult your owner's manual or contact the original manufacturer (or authorised distributor) for this figure. Please note that each vehicle has a different towing capacity (ability). These are the max weights your vehicle can tow. If you exceed this you are breaking the law.
The weight of the broken down vehicle	Consult the Owner's Manual or contact the original manufacturer
The max carrying capacity of the towing device	Consult your Owner's Manual or contact the original manufacturer

What is the definition of drawbar? Any drawbar, chain or other towing device and includes any special fitting for the attachment of such drawbar, chain or towing device.

Can I use a rope/wire rope/chain to tow a broken down vehicle? There is no law against towing a broken down vehicle using a rope/chain, provided it is strong enough to withstand the demands of towing a vehicle and it is only used to bring the broken down vehicle to the nearest place of safety or repair. The driver of the towing vehicle must also hold the [appropriate driving licence](#).

What if the garage is far away? If the broken down vehicle is blocking traffic or likely to cause an accident it should immediately be towed to the nearest place of safety/repair. Then contact a recovery operator who will use a vehicle transporter to bring the vehicle safely to the place of repair.

What is the definition of a broken down vehicle? A vehicle which is being towed as a result of a breakdown. However it should only be towed in the event that no professional towing service is available.

Do the lights and brakes have to be working on the broken down vehicle? Legally, no, because it's broken down.

What if the tyre is punctured on the broken down vehicle. Can it still be towed? Yes, but the speed must not exceed 32k.p.h. and only to the nearest convenient place of safety or repair.

Can I tow a broken down vehicle on the motorway? We advise against this. If a vehicle breaks down on the Motorway try to move your vehicle to the hard shoulder, switch on your hazard lights and telephone a vehicle recovery operator.

Is there a speed limit for towing a broken down vehicle? Any vehicle towing, whether it be a trailer or broken down vehicle, must not exceed 80 km/h. If a lower speed limit sign is posted this must be obeyed at all times.

Can I tow a vehicle using a spectacle frame? Yes it is legal to tow a vehicle using a spectacle frame. The towed vehicle will be treated as a trailer. However, Regulations for lifting devices falls under the remit of the [HSA](#) and they should be contacted for more information in this regard.

What licence is required to tow a broken down vehicle? Please refer to the table below:

B Licence	BE Licence
If the weight of both the towing device and broken down vehicle is no more than 750kg, or	If the weight of both the towing device and broken down vehicle is no more than 3,500Kg, or
If the combined weight of the towing device, broken down vehicle and towing vehicle does not exceed 3,500kg.	If the combined weight of the towing device, broken down vehicle and towing vehicle does not exceed 7,000kg.
If you need further clarification on this please contact our Licensing Section on 1890 41 61 41 or (096) 25000	

What do I require to become a recovery operator? Contact the [International Federation of Recovery Specialists](#)

Where do I find info on safe work practices when using a recovery vehicle? Please contact the [Health and Safety Authority](#) or [the National Standards Authority of Ireland](#)