

Understanding Weight Restriction Signs for Bridges in Virginia

Manufacturers are building freight vehicles and emergency vehicles capable of carrying heavier legal loads, and updated federal legal weight standards for bridges take into account these heavier vehicles. Due to these changes, the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) is installing new weight restriction signs at some bridges and culverts beginning in September 2019. Previously existing signage will remain at some bridges.

The new weight-restriction signage includes visuals that are familiar to commercial vehicle drivers. Drivers will distinguish weight restrictions by axle count and gross vehicle weight (see typical examples on page 2).

Weight restriction signs for bridges and other structures are in place to keep motorists safe and to maintain the integrity of the structure. An overweight vehicle could damage a bridge or cause it to fail, leading to serious injury or death. Per Virginia law, it is illegal for an overweight vehicle to cross a bridge or culvert, and doing so could result in significant fines.

It is the driver's responsibility to know the weight rating of their vehicle.

Bridges Maintained by Other Entities

VDOT maintains most bridges and culverts statewide. However, some structures are maintained by cities, towns, counties or toll road operators. VDOT works with these entities to promote consistent signage statewide, but it is possible that some signs may vary. Drivers must obey all weight-restriction signs.

Vehicle Types



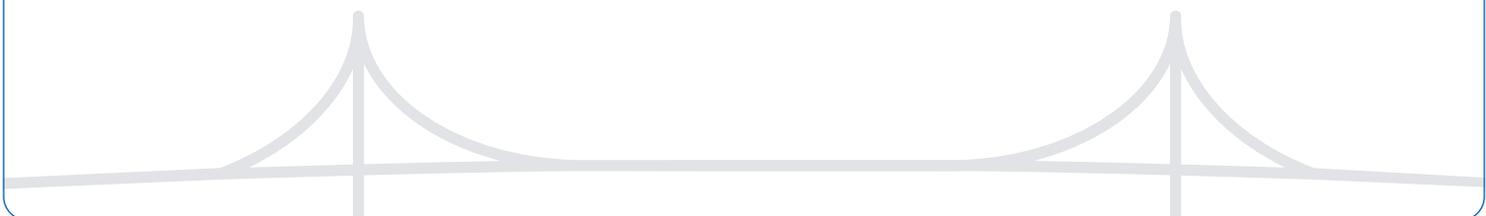
A **Single-Unit Vehicle** is any vehicle with a trailer permanently attached to the tractor, regardless of the number of tires, axles or axle configuration.



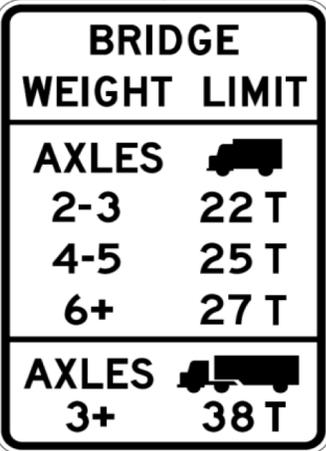
A **Multi-Unit Vehicle** is any combination of tractor and trailer that can be easily separated. These vehicles are also sometimes referred to as truck-tractor, semitrailers or combination vehicles.

Additional Information

To learn more about trucks, legal weight for different vehicle types and hauling on Virginia roads, visit www.dmv.virginia.gov/commercial or www.virginiadot.org/trucking.



Typical Weight-Restriction Signage

SIGN	APPLICATION
 <p>A rectangular sign with a black border. The text inside reads: BRIDGE WEIGHT LIMIT 10 TONS.</p>	<p>All vehicles, including attached trailers</p>
 <p>A rectangular sign with a black border. The text inside reads: BRIDGE WEIGHT LIMIT. Below this, there are two rows. The first row shows 'AXLES' with a silhouette of a single truck, '2+', and '22 T'. The second row shows 'AXLES' with a silhouette of a tractor-trailer, '3+', and '38 T'.</p>	<p>Single-unit vehicles with 2+ axles, any configuration Examples: cars, pick-up trucks, panel vans, box trucks, moving trucks, flat-bed trucks, buses, dump trucks, concrete trucks, crane trucks, etc.</p> <p>Combination vehicles with 3+ axles Examples: tractor-trailers/semitrailers, cars towing boats or trailers, pick-up trucks with fifth wheel trailers, flatbed trucks with trailers, etc.</p>
 <p>A rectangular sign with a black border. The text inside reads: BRIDGE WEIGHT LIMIT. Below this, there are three rows. The first row shows 'AXLES' with a silhouette of a single truck, '2-3', and '22 T'. The second row shows 'AXLES' with a silhouette of a single truck, '4-5', and '25 T'. The third row shows 'AXLES' with a silhouette of a single truck, '6+', and '27 T'. Below these, there is a fourth row showing 'AXLES' with a silhouette of a tractor-trailer, '3+', and '38 T'.</p>	<p>Single-unit vehicles with 2 - 3 axles, any configuration Examples: cars, pick-up trucks, panel vans, box trucks, moving trucks, flat-bed trucks, buses, dump trucks, concrete trucks, crane trucks, etc.</p> <p>Single-unit vehicles with 4 - 5 axles* Examples: dump trucks, concrete trucks, crane trucks, etc.</p> <p>Single-unit vehicles with 6+ axles* Examples: dump trucks, concrete trucks, crane trucks, etc.</p> <p>Combination vehicles with 3+ axles Examples: tractor-trailers/semitrailers, cars towing boats or trailers, pick-up trucks with fifth-wheel trailers, flatbed trucks with trailers, etc.</p> <p>*Movable axle configurations apply only if the axle is lowered. For example, a truck with four lowered axles and two raised axles must abide by the weight restrictions for four-axle trucks.</p>
<p>Note: The number of axles shown on each silhouette is not to be interpreted as the only possibility for that particular vehicle. Signage may or may not include the word 'bridge.'</p>	