SIZE AND WEIGHT LIMITS

All roads in Illinois have standardized weight limits based on what is called the Federal Bridge Formula. That formula establishes both a gross weight limit and an axle weight limit for roads and bridges. The formula varies the allowable gross weight based on axle spacing. But allowable weights can also be influenced by reduced weight limit postings, license plate limits, manufacturers' weight ratings of equipment, and more. Allowable dimensions of vehicles, too, are generally restricted and must be heeded when on public roads.

SIZE AND WEIGHT LIMITS [625 ILCS 5/15-111]
1. The allowable width, height, and weight of trucks and trailers operating in Illinois is based on uniform standards but can vary by road system if restrictions are posted. Allowable lengths vary.
2. **Federal bridge formula** allows 20,000 pounds per single axle, 34,000 pounds per tandem axle, and 80,000 pounds maximum Gross Vehicle Weight (GVW).
3. The **number** of axles and their **spacing** determines the allowable gross weight.
4. **Width** limit is 102 inches on all roads unless a narrower restriction is posted.
5. **Length (semi)**
   a. Class I routes: overall unlimited; trailer 53’.
   b. Class II: overall 65’; trailer 53’.
   c. Other Local Roads: overall 65’; trailer 53’.
6. A **tandem axel** is defined as any two or more single axles whose centers are more than 40 inches and not more than 96 inches apart (on-centers).
7. The **registered (licensed)** weight of the vehicle also imposes an enforceable weight restriction.


LICENSE PLATES

Single trucks must be registered (licensed) to cover the gross weight of vehicle and its load.

When trucks and trailers are used in combination, it is not necessary to have the license plate on each vehicle cover the weight carried by the individual vehicle. Illinois’ “marriage of licenses” provision means that when two licensed vehicles are used in combination, the sum of their licensed weights must meet or exceed the sum of their gross weights. [625 ILCS 5/3-401[c-1][3]].

DESIGNATED ROUTES

There are three classes of routes:
1. **Class I** – Interstates, expressways, tollways, and others deemed by the department.
2. **Class II** – State highways and designated local roads.
3. **Non-Designated Highways** – State highways not designated I or II and local highways not designated Class II.

SCALE PROGRAM

1. The Illinois State Police and IDOT jointly operate semi-portable scales among 21 state police districts.
2. Many state troopers carry portable (“pancake” or “wheel load weigher”) scales in their squad cars.
3. There are approximately 32 permanent scale sites operated by the State of Illinois.
4. An IDOT team is generally assigned to a state police district for five days per week and assists officers by setting up the scale. The officer-in-charge determines a scale’s location, and the police enforce weight regulations, not IDOT staff.
5. IDOT’s portable and semi-portable scales are recalibrated by IDOA two times each year – twice as often as required of commercial scales.
6. State law provides a “tolerance” for vehicle overweight to accommodate uncertainties in loading.
7. Vehicles registered for 73,280 pounds or less are allowed 2,000 pounds tolerance for axle weight and 2,000 pounds tolerance for gross weight.
8. Vehicles registered for more than 73,280 pounds are allowed 2,000 pounds tolerance for axle weight but only 1,000 pounds for gross weight. The gross weight tolerance jumps to 2,000 pounds when weighed on portable scales.
9. Tolerance does not apply to the registered (licensed) weight of the vehicle.
10. If overweight but within the tolerance, the vehicle must be parked so the weight can be shifted or removed. Once within legal limits, the vehicle will be allowed to proceed, and no overweight ticket will be issued.

DRIVER’S RIGHTS

1. A police officer checking a truck’s weight may direct the driver to the nearest available scale certified by the Illinois Department of Agriculture. [625 ILCS 5/15-112]
2. State Police generally favor using state-owned scales. The driver may request, but not demand, an alternate location.
3. Portable and semi-portable scales should be placed in a location that does not present a traffic hazard and that is relatively level and firm. Up to a 3% grade is generally within the scale’s tolerance but in no case should the vehicle roll due to the slope of the scale.

4. The vehicle’s brakes should not be applied, and no on-board mixing equipment should be operating while being weighed.

5. Accumulations of mud, snow and ice generally may be removed from the outside of the vehicle before it is weighed, but not once on the scale.

FINES [625 ILCS 5/15-113]

1. When police issue an overweight citation, the driver generally will not be allowed to move the vehicle until bond is posted in the amount of the fine (perishable loads may be excepted).

2. The circuit clerk in each county usually determines the form of acceptable bond. Most accept some form of certified check or money order, but not all accept personal checks or even cash.

3. Generally, fines start at about $70 per 500 pounds overweight for lesser violations and incrementally increase. For overweight violations of 5,001 pounds or more, the fine is $1,500 plus $150 for each additional 500 pounds or portion thereof.

FARM EQUIPMENT

Implements of husbandry generally enjoy an exemption.
### Maximum Legal Dimensions of Motor Vehicles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Highway or Street</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>G</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>J</th>
<th>K</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class I</td>
<td>8'-6&quot;</td>
<td>13'-6&quot;</td>
<td>42'</td>
<td>N.S.</td>
<td>53'</td>
<td>45'-6&quot;</td>
<td>N.S.</td>
<td>N.S.</td>
<td>28'-6&quot;</td>
<td>N.S.</td>
<td>60'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class II</td>
<td>8'-6&quot;</td>
<td>13'-6&quot;</td>
<td>42'</td>
<td>N.S.</td>
<td>53'</td>
<td>45'-6&quot;</td>
<td>N.S.</td>
<td>N.S.</td>
<td>28'-6&quot;</td>
<td>65'</td>
<td>60'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-designated</td>
<td>8'-6&quot;</td>
<td>13'-6&quot;</td>
<td>42'</td>
<td>65'</td>
<td>N.S.</td>
<td>42'-6&quot;</td>
<td>N.S.</td>
<td>60'</td>
<td>N.S.</td>
<td>N.S.</td>
<td>60'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(8) 65 feet overall (bumper-to-bumper) and/or 55 feet from center of front axle to center of rear axle.

(9) Applies on semi-trailers longer than 48 feet.

(10) Tandem is defined as any 2 or more single axles whose centers are more than 40 inches and not more than 96 inches apart, measured to the nearest inch between extreme axles.

(11) Does not apply to trailers and semi-trailers used for transportation of livestock defined by section 18b-101.

From most weight limits in Illinois; however, farm wagons are limited to 36,000 pounds GVW. There is no weight restriction on axles, and it does not matter how many axles the wagon has – the GVW limit remains at 36,000 pounds.

That 36,000-pound GVW restriction also applies to fertilizer buggies, sprayers, auger wagons, liquid manure wagons, liquid fertilizer carts, NH, nurse tanks (also limited to 3,000 gallons capacity), water wagons, and virtually any other cargo-type farm equipment.