

Finding the Correct Trailer Size for Your Pontoon Boat

Two things you need to know about your pontoon boat when selecting a trailer: The **length** of the pontoon tubes & the approximate **weight** of the boat & motor.

How to Choose a Pontoon Trailer

By Randal Thomas, eHow Contributor

http://www.ehow.com/how_6240736_choose-pontoon-trailer.html

Pontoon boats allow some of the best leisurely lake boating. If you own a pontoon boat, you know how difficult it can get moving it back and forth to the lake. You really can't have a pontoon boat unless you also own a quality trailer. Pontoon trailers, however, come in many different types and sizes. Just like anything else, the quality varies from trailer to trailer. Learn what to look for in a quality pontoon trailer and make your next trip to the lake safe and trouble-free.

Instructions

- **1** Match the size of the trailer to the size of your boat. For instance, you must size the length of the trailer to the tube length of the pontoon boat. If the tubes measure 28 feet, your trailer should measure at least 28 feet.
- **2** Match the trailer's number of axles to your boat's weight. The number of axles on a pontoon trailer indicates how much weight it can carry. A single-axle trailer carries small 14-foot to 20-foot boats that weigh up to 2,250 pounds. Dual-axle trailers carry mid-range 20-foot to 28-foot boats that weigh 2,250 to 4,800 pounds. Triple-axle trailers carry large 28-foot to 34-foot boats that weigh 4,800 to 6,000 pounds.
- **3** Match the tire type to the type of terrain that you drive on. For instance, you can select from radial and non-radial, ply tires. Radial tires wear longer, but ply tires work better for rough terrain. If you choose a ply tire, choose a multi-ply. A "ply" consists of one layer within the tire. Multi-ply tires support heavier loads than single-ply tires.
- **4** Choose a wide-diameter tire. Diameter indicates tire height from top to bottom. Tires with large diameters cover more ground per revolution than a smaller-diameter tire. Consequently, they suffer less wear and tear than small-diameter tires.
- **5** Inspect the electrical cords. For instance, you must hook your trailer to your truck's blinker system. Test all blinkers and lights and ensure they work properly. Look for signs of brittleness in the rubber wires.

Choosing the Right Type of Pontoon Boat Trailers

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What type of trailer?

1. **Scissor or up/down pontoon trailers** fit between the pontoon tubes for moving. This style of trailer is the least hassle for quickly getting the boat to and from the water. The pontoon boat rests on the trailer by sitting on the boats flooring crossbeams. This style of pontoon boat trailer can retrieve and launch in the shallowest of water. It is easier and quicker to position a pontoon boat over this style trailer as the placement over the trailer isn't as exact. This makes things faster and makes loading less of a hassle. The disadvantage of the scissor type pontoon trailer is stability on the highway. The pontoons hang outside of the wheels on the trailer so the entire unit is made less stable. It is possible to get the boat to rocking as you travel down the highway. This is probably not the type of rocking you had in mind when you purchased the boat. This is definitely important to consider if you're going to be traveling for any distance to enjoy your pontoon boat. The more weight to the boat and the more of an overhang there is, the larger this problem might become.

2. **The bunk style or float-on pontoon trailers** fit directly under the pontoons. The pontoons sit directly on and are supported by the trailer. The pontoons sit over the wheels for a calmer ride. Also available are tandem wheels for additional stability. There is a lot less motion when towing a pontoon boat with this type of trailer. This is the type usually preferred by those that want to haul their pontoon boats for long distances. This is also the trailer of choice for anyone who may have a nervous spouse who has to be present while towing.

These bunk style trailers are a little more difficult to unload or load. The pontoon boat has to be lined up more exactly over the pontoon bunks to load onto the trailer. There are guides you can add that help with maneuvering the boat onto the trailer. The boat also will have to be launched in deeper water as the entire trailer is under the boat. These trailers are somewhat wider so that they occupy more space when being stored without the pontoon boat.

There are some other things to think about when deciding on purchasing a pontoon boat trailer. Some trailers now come with braking systems that can be beneficial and offer you piece of mind. The wiring should operate all of the lights necessary to make the trailer highway legal wherever you take it. Make certain that all of the lights needed to make your trailer road legal are connected. Planning ahead for these eventualities may improve your entire pontoon boat purchasing experience.

Other considerations: Single, Double or Triple axle, Painted frame, Galvanized frame (for salt water launching), tires (long or short distance trailering). Consult with your local marina for additional considerations.