FLATBEDDISPATCHERS

Load Photo Checklist

Flatbed, step deck, double drop, RGN and lowboy. Take every shot, every load. Same order every time.

BOL #: _____ Shipper: _____ Date: _____ Truck/Trailer: _____

01 Empty deck at the shipper, before loading

- [ ] Whole deck from the rear and from each side: clean, no loose dunnage or old banding.
- [ ] Deck boards or floor, winch track, stake pockets: show their condition before freight goes on.

02 Placement on the deck

- [ ] Load from each side and from the rear once it is set, before you strap anything.
- [ ] Tape measure on the front of the load to the headboard or neck, and on any overhang (rear and sides).
- [ ] Height stick or tape at the highest point if the load is near the legal or permitted height.
- [ ] Dunnage, blocking and friction mats under and around the load.

03 Securement (49 CFR 393 Subpart I)

- [ ] Every tiedown, one shot each, front to back on the driver side, then back to front on the other side.
- [ ] Close-up of the WLL tag or chain grade mark on a sample of each gear type you used.
- [ ] Binders locked and handles secured. Winches tight.
- [ ] Edge protection at every point where a strap or chain bears on an edge (393.104).
- [ ] Machinery: each of the four or more tiedowns, and the bucket, blade or boom lowered and secured (393.130).

04 Tarp

- [ ] All four sides of the strapped load before the tarp goes on. Anything hidden under the tarp is proved here.
- [ ] Tarped load from each corner: no loose flaps, bungees and tarp straps secured, drops covering what the shipper asked.

05 Paperwork

- [ ] BOL, signed, with piece count, weight and any exceptions the shipper wrote on it. Every page.
- [ ] Scale ticket if you scaled. Seal number, if the load has one. Permit on board for oversize.

06 Flags, signs and lights

- [ ] Overhang flags on the load: rear projection over 4 ft or side projection over 4 in needs red or orange fluorescent flags at least 18 in square (393.87).
- [ ] Night runs with projecting loads: lamps and reflectors on the projection (393.11, Table 1, row H). Photo them lit.
- [ ] Oversize banners and amber lights if the permit calls for them.

07 On the road

- [ ] One shot of the load at each securement re-check: first 50 miles, then each change of duty status or every 3 hours or 150 miles (392.9).
- [ ] Anything that moved, loosened or tore, before you fix it, and again after.

08 Delivery

- [ ] Load on arrival from each side, still tarped and strapped, before the receiver touches it.
- [ ] Seal intact (if there is one) and the seal number in the frame.
- [ ] Load untarped, before unloading. Close-ups of any damage, with a tape for scale.
- [ ] Signed POD with any exceptions the receiver wrote. Empty deck after unloading.

Name every file the same way

`YYYYMMDD_BOL#_SHIPPER_STEP-##.jpg`

Date the load picked up, BOL number, short shipper name, step code from this sheet, then a shot number.

EXAMPLE file name	What it shows
20261102_BOL481207_SHIPPERNAME_03-07.jpg	Step 03 securement, 7th tiedown photo
20261102_BOL481207_SHIPPERNAME_04-02.jpg	Step 04 tarp, 2nd corner shot
20261104_BOL481207_SHIPPERNAME_08-01.jpg	Step 08 delivery, first arrival shot

Store them so you can find them

- [ ] One folder per load, named like the files: YYYYMMDD_BOL#_SHIPPER.
- [ ] Back up to cloud storage the same day. A phone that falls off the catwalk takes your proof with it.
- [ ] Keep the originals. Do not edit, crop or filter them; the date and time stamp in the file is part of the proof.
- [ ] Keep them at least until the load is paid and no claim is open. Ask your cargo insurer how long they want them.
- [ ] New authority? Pick five clean loads and keep a short set (placement, tiedowns, tarp) to send brokers who ask how you secure freight.

Sources: 49 CFR 393 Subpart I incl. 393.104 and 393.130; 393.87 (warning flags); 393.11 Table 1 row H (lamps on projecting loads); 392.9 (cargo inspection). eCFR, checked November 2, 2026: ecfr.gov/current/title-49

General information, not legal or insurance advice. Ask your cargo insurer and the broker what photo records they want kept and for how long.