GENERAL KNOWLEDGE KEY FACTS
CDL

1. When the roads are slippery, you should make turns as gentle as possible.

2. The heavier a vehicle or the faster it is moving, the more heat the brakes have to absorb to stop it.

3. Truck escape ramps help avoid damage to vehicles.

4. You are starting your vehicle in motion from a stop. As you apply power to the drive wheels, they start to spin. You should take your foot off the accelerator.

5. The distance that you should look ahead of your vehicle while driving amounts to about 1/4 mile at highway speed.

6. Defensive driving suggests that you lightly tap your horn, drive carefully to avoid a crash, and assume the other driver does not see you when you pass a vehicle.

7. When you downshift for a curve, you should do so before you enter the curve.

8. Turning too sharply, not enough weight on the front axle, and over acceleration can cause a vehicle to skid.

9. The following emergency equipment should always be carried in your vehicle: fire extinguisher(s), spare electrical fuses (if the vehicle uses them), warning devices for parked vehicle.

10. Use of controlled substances can lead to accidents and/or arrest.

11. All of the following tell you that the shipment contains hazardous materials: The name of a hazard class on the shipping paper; a four-inch, diamond-shaped hazardous materials label on the container; a hazardous materials placard on the vehicle.

12. To avoid a crash, you had to drive onto the right shoulder. You are now driving at 40 MPH on the shoulder. If the shoulder is clear, stay on it until your vehicle has come to a stop. Then move back onto the pavement when it is safe.

13. You can use water to put out a tire fire.

14. You should use your mirrors to check: the condition of your tires, where the rear of your vehicle is while you make turns, traffic gaps when merging.

15. These statements are true about speed management: on a wet road, you should reduce your speed by about one-third; on packed snow, you should reduce your speed by at least
one-half; when the road is slippery, it will take longer to stop and it will be harder to turn without skidding.

16. Your vehicle is in a traffic emergency and may collide with another vehicle if you do not take action. You should remember that you can almost always turn to miss an obstacle more quickly than you can stop.

17. You should inspect your tires every two hours or every 100 miles when driving in very hot weather.

18. If the wheels are skidding, you cannot control the vehicle.

19. To correct a drive-wheel-braking skid, you should stop braking, turn quickly, and countersteer.

20. All of the following are a sign of tire failure: steering that feels heavy, a loud “bang”, and vibrations.

21. The proper way to hold a steering wheel is with both hands, on opposite sides of the wheel.

22. You are driving a 40-foot vehicle at 35 MPH. The road is dry and visibility is good. The least amount of space that you should keep in front of your vehicle to be safe is 4 seconds.

23. Keep your speed slow enough that you can stop within the range of your headlights.

24. Winds are especially a problem when coming out of tunnels.

25. To help you stay alert while driving; you should take short breaks before you are drowsy.

26. You do not have a Hazardous Materials Endorsement on your Commercial Driver’s License. You can drive a vehicle hauling hazardous materials when the vehicle does not require placards.

27. The road you are driving on becomes very slippery due to glare ice (black ice). Stop driving as soon as you can safely do so.

28. Retarders can cause the drive wheels to skid when they have poor traction.

29. You are driving a new truck with a manual transmission. What gear will you probably have to use to take a long, steep downhill grade? A lower gear than you would use to climb the hill.

30. Valve clearance is not part of the pre-trip inspection of the engine compartment.
31. You can see a marking on a vehicle ahead of you. The marking is a red triangle with an orange center; it may be a slow-moving vehicle.

32. High beams should be used when it is safe and legal to do so.

33. An enroute inspection should include checking for: tire overheating, brake overheating, and cargo securement.

34. You should avoid backing whenever you can.

35. Alcohol first affects judgement and self-control, which are necessary for safe driving. The chance of a crash is much greater for drivers who have been drinking than for drivers who were not. A driver can lose his/her license for driving while drunk. Tires of mismatched sizes should not be used on the same vehicle.

37. Underinflated tires, loose fuel connections, electrical short circuits can cause a fire.

38. Turning the wheel back in the other direction after steering to avoid a traffic emergency is countersteering.

39. You are driving a vehicle that could safely be driven at 55 MPH on an open road. But traffic is now heavy, moving at 60 MPH though the speed limit is 55 MPH. The safest speed for your vehicle is most likely 55 MPH.

40. An “A:B:C” fire extinguisher can be used on electrical fires, burning liquids, and burning cloth as well.

41. State laws dictate legal weight limits.

42. When turning, you should signal early.

43. You can use the tachometer to tell you when to shift.

44. Light, steady pressure best describes how you should use the brake pedal on a steep downhill grade.

45. You should choose a speed that lets you stop within the distance that you can see ahead.

46. The center of gravity of a load can make a vehicle more likely to tip over on curves if it is high.

47. If a hill or curve keeps drivers behind you from seeing the vehicle within 500 feet, the rear reflective triangle should be moved back down the road to give adequate warning.
48. You are checking your brakes and suspension system for a pre-trip inspection. Brake shoes should not have oil, grease, or brake fluid on them. Brake pads should not have brake fluid on them. One missing leaf in a leaf spring can be dangerous.

49. When driving through work zones, you should: turn on your flashers; drive slowly; and use your brake lights to warn drivers behind you.

50. You are driving a vehicle at 55 MPH on dry pavement. You need about the length of a football field to bring it to a stop.

51. You must park on the side of a level, straight, four-lane, divided highway. Place your reflective triangles; one within 10 feet of the rear of the vehicle, one about 100 feet to the rear, and one about 200 feet to the rear.

52. You should limit the use of your horn because it can startle other drivers.

53. Rough acceleration can cause mechanical damage.

54. If a straight vehicle (no trailer or articulation) goes into a front-wheel skid, it will go straight ahead even if the steering wheel is turned. Unstable loads such as hanging meat or livestock can require extra caution on curves.

55. You are driving a heavy vehicle. You must exit a highway using an off-ramp that curves downhill - you should slow down to a safe speed before the curve.

56. Turning on your headlights during the day when visibility is reduced due to rain or snow. Flashing your brake lights to warn someone behind you of a hazard that will require slowing down. Flashing your brake lights to warn someone behind you that your are going to stop on the road. All are proper use of a vehicle’s lights.

57. A key principle to remember about loading cargo is to keep the load balanced in the cargo area.

58. You are driving on a straight, level highway at 50 MPH. There are no vehicles in front of you. Suddenly a tire blows out on your vehicle. Stay off the brake until the vehicle has slowed down.

59. Heavy vehicles need larger gaps in traffic than cars.

60. Sleep is the only thing that can overcome fatigue.

61. There are “blind spots” that your mirror cannot show you.

You are checking your steering and exhaust systems in a pre-trip inspection. You find steering wheel play of more than 10 degrees; leaks in the exhaust system; and a small leak of power steering fluid. All of which should be fixed before the vehicle is driven.
62. Your vehicle has hydraulic brakes. While traveling on a level road, you press the brake pedal and find that it goes to the floor. Pumping the brake pedal may bring the pressure up so you can stop the vehicle.

63. Brake “fade” can be caused by the brakes getting very hot.

64. You are driving on a two-lane road. An oncoming driver drifts into your lane and is headed straight for you. Steering to the right may be your best action.

65. You should never remove the radiator cap on a pressurized system until the system has cooled.

66. You are driving a heavy vehicle with a manual transmission. You have to stop the vehicle on the shoulder while driving on an uphill grade. Use the parking brake to hold the vehicle until the clutch engages.

67. Don’t turn any more than needed to clear what is in your way when steering to avoid a crash.

68. You are checking your wheels and rims for a pre-trip inspection. Rust around wheel nuts may mean that they are loose.

69. You do not have a hazardous material Endorsement on your Commercial Driver’s License. You are asked to deliver hazardous materials in a placarded vehicle. You should refuse to haul the load.

70. As the Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) goes up, judgement and self-control are affected.

71. If you need to leave the road in a traffic emergency, you should avoid braking until your speed has dropped to about 20 MPH.

72. You should stop driving whenever you become sleepy.

73. You should avoid driving through deep puddles or flowing water. But if you must, gently putting on the brakes while driving through the water can help to keep your brakes working.

74. Escape ramps are used to stop runaway vehicles; designed to prevent injury to drivers and passengers; and designed to prevent damage to vehicles.

75. Avoiding high-speed driving, making sure the engine has the right amount of oil, and proper v-belt tightness will help keep an engine cool in hot weather.
76. When driving at night, you should adjust your speed to keep your stopping distance within your sight distance.

77. Cargo securement, wiper blades, and whether all vehicle lights are working and are clean should be checked in a pre-trip inspection.

78. Backing is always dangerous. You should back and turn toward the driver’s side whenever possible. You should use a helper and communicate with hand signals.

79. During cold-weather driving windshield washer antifreeze should be used.

80. Controlled braking is used to keep a vehicle in a straight line when braking.

81. You correct a rear-wheel acceleration skid by stop accelerating.

82. When caring for injured at an accident scene you don’t want to keep the injured persons cool.

83. For your safety, when setting out reflective triangles you should hold the triangles between yourself and oncoming traffic.

84. The purpose of retarders is to help slow the vehicle while driving and reduce brake wear.

85. You should look 12-15 seconds (1/4 mile) ahead of the vehicle while driving.

86. Hydroplaning is more likely if tire pressure is low.

87. If you are being tailgated, you should increase your following distance.

88. The weight of a vehicle changes its height.

89. A burning tire should be cooled with water.

90. Cargo that is not loaded or secured properly can cause vehicle damage by overloading; other highway users to hit or be hit by loose cargo, and injury to the driver during a quick stop or crash.

91. If you must drive on a slippery road, slow down gradually.

92. You are driving a vehicle that makes wide turns. You are driving on a two-lane, two-way street and you want to turn left onto another two-lane, two-way street. You should turn into the left lane of the new street and then move to the right.