



LOADING: KNOW YOUR LIMITS



Did you know?

- A driver can be fined up to £300 or get a court summons if their van exceeds its maximum permitted axle weight.
- Exceeding the manufacturer's load limit can put serious strain on the vehicle and may invalidate insurance cover.
- Overloaded vans are a common issue in the UK, 89% of vans stopped by DVSA are overloaded.

Remember it's easy to overload the front axle of a van by removing load from behind the back axle. Think of it like a seesaw! It is the responsibility of a van driver to stay within the weight limits.

When loading a van, it is not the size of the boxes/load or how full the van is that matters – it is the weight of the boxes/load and where they are placed that is important.



A driver should not exceed their van's legal maximum loaded weight.

If the vehicle is overloaded to the point where it is a hazard to other road users, the driver can be charged with dangerous driving and the offence may carry a prison sentence.

Best practice tips:

- Drivers should know their van's axle weights as it is extremely important that any load is distributed correctly across both axles.
- Each axle has a weight limit. If the vehicle exceeds either front or rear axle weights, it is breaking the law.
- Drivers should regularly get their van weighed at a local weighbridge.



A van has a 'gross vehicle weight (GVW)' or 'maximum authorised mass' (MAM) which can be found on the VIN plate. This is the maximum weight that a van is legally allowed to weigh when loaded. It includes: the van, the fuel, the driver and any passengers and any load being carried. It will be listed in the owner's manual and is normally shown on a manufacturer's plate or sticker fitted to the vehicle. The position of the plate does vary but the most common location is inside the front door panel.

When a van is empty but fuelled, its weight is called the 'unladen weight' or the 'kerb weight'.

The 'payload' is any load carried by a vehicle. It is the total weight of what a driver can safely load into the van and includes all passengers, luggage, tools, etc.

A van's performance and safety will be affected when a driver overloads it or its individual axles.

Calculate your payload

To calculate a payload while staying within the legal GVW limit, drivers can do a simple calculation by subtracting the van's unladen weight from the van's gross vehicle weight (GVW). An example of this would be:

GVW of 3500kg minus the unladen weight of 2210kg = a payload of 1290kg.