



Opening Swing Doors on 53' Trailers Policy

Purpose

To ensure all drivers safely open trailer swing doors and prevent injuries or product damage caused by shifting loads, falling freight, or unexpected door movement.

Scope

This policy applies to all Hunter Express US Inc. drivers, contractors, and yard personnel operating or handling 53-foot dry van or refrigerated trailers.

General Safety Principles

- **Always assume the load has shifted** during transit.
- **Never stand directly in front of doors** when opening.
- **Open doors slowly and under control.**
- **Use proper PPE:** safety boots, high-visibility vest, gloves, and hard hat (if required by site).

Responsibilities

- **Drivers:** Follow the procedure every time without exception.
 - **Supervisors:** Ensure training is completed and compliance is monitored.
 - **Safety Team:** Review incidents and update procedures as needed.
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Safe Opening of Trailer Swing Doors Procedure

1. Pre-Opening Inspection

Before touching the doors:

- Park on **level ground** whenever possible
- Set:
 - Tractor parking brake
 - Trailer parking brake (if applicable)
- Turn on **hazard lights**
- Check surroundings:
 - Ensure **no one is standing near the doors**
 - Verify **adequate lighting and space**
- Look for warning signs:
 - Bulging doors
 - Leaning trailer
 - Damaged hinges or locking bars

👉 If doors appear under pressure (bulging), **DO NOT** open normally—follow controlled opening steps below.

2. Positioning

- Stand behind the left door while opening the right door. Once right door is open, peek into the trailer to see if load is leaning against the left door. Open left door only if safe.
 - Keep your body **out of the door swing path**
 - Maintain **three-point contact** where possible
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3. Unlocking the Doors

- Carefully release:
 - Door latch handles
 - Locking bars and retainers
 - Keep a firm grip on the handle
 - Be alert for:
 - Sudden movement of the door
 - Pressure pushing the door outward
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4. Controlled Opening (Critical Step)

If load shift is suspected

- Open the **right-hand door first** (standard practice on most trailers). Stand behind the left door while opening the right door.
- Crack the door **2–4 inches only**

- Pause and observe:
 - Listen for movement inside
 - Look for cargo pressing against the door

👉 If cargo is pressing against the door:

- **Do NOT fully open**
 - Secure the door partially
 - Report to warehouse staff or supervisor
 - Use a **dock or forklift support method** if required
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If no load shift is observed

- Slowly open the first door fully
 - Secure it using the **door latch/hold-back**
 - Open the second door slowly
 - Secure the second door as well
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5. Maintaining Control

- Never let doors swing freely in wind
 - Always use:
 - Door hold-backs
 - Straps or retainers
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6. After Opening

- Visually inspect load:
 - Check for instability or leaning pallets
 - Do not enter trailer if:
 - Load is unsafe
 - Freight is loose or collapsed
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7. Hazard Conditions & Actions

Hazard	Required Action
Bulging doors	Open slightly from side; stop if pressure exists
Load shift	Seek warehouse assistance
Damaged hinges/locks	Do not open; report immediately
Strong wind	Maintain firm control or reposition trailer
Frozen or stuck doors	Do not force; inspect for internal pressure

8. Prohibited Actions

- **✗** Standing directly in front of doors
 - **✗** Swinging doors open quickly
 - **✗** Forcing doors open under pressure
 - **✗** Opening doors on uneven ground without caution
 - **✗** Ignoring signs of load shift
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9. Training Requirements

- All drivers must receive:
 - Hands-on demonstration
 - Annual refresher training
 - Incident-based retraining if required
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10. Emergency Response

If cargo falls or injury occurs:

- Move to a safe location immediately
 - Call emergency services (if needed)
 - Report incident to dispatch/supervisor
 - Secure the area to prevent further injury
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Quick Reference (Driver Reminder Card)

STOP – LOOK – POSITION – CRACK – CHECK – OPEN

1. Stop & secure vehicle
2. Look for hazards
3. Position to the side
4. Crack door slowly
5. Check for load shift
6. Open fully only if safe