



# Loading and unloading pigs



ANIMAL TRANSPORT GUIDES

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For full guides and more information:  
[www.animaltransportguides.eu](http://www.animaltransportguides.eu)



## Preparation of loading: 'What to do?'

**Maximum transport time of pigs, including (un)loading, is 24 hours!**

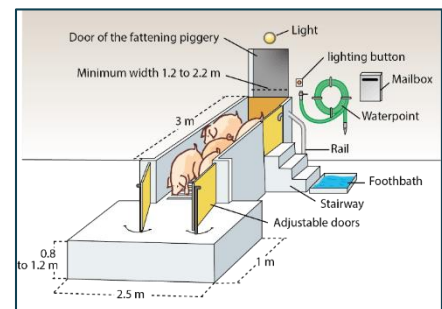
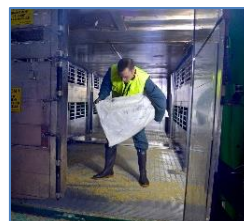
- 1 **Farmer:** check number, weight and fitness of pigs to load and inform transporter. Fitness check should be done according to '*Practical Guidelines to Assess Fitness for Transport of Pigs*'
- 2 **Transport company:** prepare written loading plan
- 3 **Driver:** use '*Live Animal Transport Driver Checklist: Are You Prepared?*'
- 4 **Driver/attendant:** align the truck ramp with the loading quay avoiding gaps. Reduce the slope as much as possible (max. 36% or 20°)
- 5 **Driver/attendant:** spread sawdust or other bedding material on the ramp and on the truck decks if needed (e.g. slip, humidity, slope)
- 6 **Loading should be done as calmly and smoothly as possible**

### Recommended space allowances per pig

Piglets (6 – 10 kg)	0,07 m <sup>2</sup> /piglet or 14 piglets/m <sup>2</sup>
Piglets (25 – 30 kg)	0,18 m <sup>2</sup> /piglet or 6 piglets/m <sup>2</sup>
Finishing pigs (110 – 120 kg)	0,5 m <sup>2</sup> /pig or 2 pigs/m <sup>2</sup>
Pigs (> 120 kg)	0,7 m <sup>2</sup> /pig or 1,4 pigs/m <sup>2</sup>



**All pigs should be able to lay down or stand at the same time**



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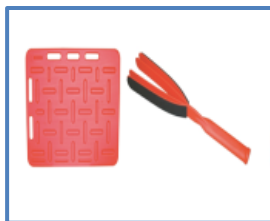
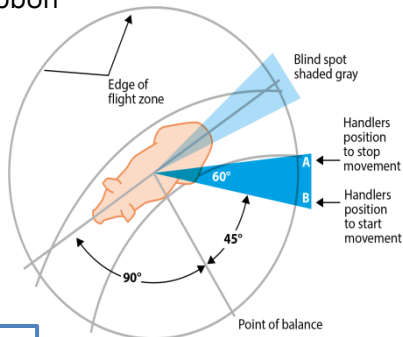
*Ready to load!*



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## Loading

1. Allow pigs to move at their **regular walking speed** to the loading ramp
2. Handle pigs in **groups**
3. Noise should be **limited** to minimize stress
4. **Respect space allowances.** During transport, all pigs should be able to lie down or stand up in their natural position
5. Use **corridors** with solid (especially curved) walls
6. Have in mind the specific **vision** of the pig (*see the picture below*)
7. Use a **sorting board** or a **panel** when moving pigs, encourage them by using for example:
  - Auditory stimulus (whistle)
  - A plastic rattle or shaker paddle (noise)
  - A nylon flag
  - A matador cape
  - Plastic ribbon



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### If a pig stops and refuses to move, follow this procedure

- Let the pig calm down and check that it isn't unfit to transport. If so, take relevant procedure
- Check for any obstacle and take it out if possible or change lighting. Not possible? Give the pig some time to get used to the obstacle to overpass. Correct the issue before next (un)loading
- Use passive methods to move animals (board, flag, etc.)
- Pigs can be (un)loaded in batches following the leader
- Stimulate the animal to make it move by whistling or talking. Never hit or drag the animal!
- Sexually mature sows and boars shall be handled separately and transported in separate compartments

## Unloading

1. In case of **delay at unloading**, assure good ventilation in the truck at stop (lateral shutters open, use force ventilation if available, try to park the truck in the shade)
2. Use the maximum width of the **corridor** for unloading at arrival
3. Unload pigs in **batches** adapted to pen size at arrival place
4. If a pig is **unfit** at arrival, advise the slaughter house to isolate and protect it
5. **Report** the number of pigs injured or death at the end of the journey