

# Shipments via Road and Rail - Understanding the Scenario



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## Introduction

Road and rail are the two biggest pillars of land transportation. Road and rail shipping is the oldest way of transportation that people are using till now. However, road shipment was introduced first in comparison to rail shipping. Once rail technology came into existence in the 18th century, it changed the way of transporting goods over a long distance. It was much speedier and efficient for long-distance transportation. Even now, as the technology is reshaping every industry so how will rail and road shipping stay behind! In this article, we will discuss everything about road and rail shipping.

**Basically, there are many different types of shipment methods -**

- Air shipping
- Train/ Rail shipping
- Ocean shipping
- Truckload shipping
- Less than Truckload shipping

**The article illustrates in-depth information on road and rail shipping -**

❑ Shipments via Road



Shipping via road is a kind of shipping in which goods or products get transported from one place to another by using roads. The cost which is required in road shipping is very low as compared to other modes of transportation. The operational and maintenance cost of road shipping is less than rail shipping. Different vehicles are being utilized for the cause of transporting the shipment from one place to another via road.

**Some of the most used types of trucks for road shipping are -**

- Refrigerated Trucks
- Flatbeds
- Box Trucks
- Liftgate trucks
- Semi-Trailer Trucks
- Jumbo Trailer trucks

## Top benefits of road shipping covers -

- **Fast delivery**

Your shipment will get delivered fast even before the scheduled time using the road shipment. Talking about air, rail, and water shipment then all these requires too much documentation and are tedious to manage. On the other hand, road transport is a hassle-free option and supports fast delivery of products.

- **Affordable option**

For short distances, road shipping is a cost-effective medium for transporting products. It requires less capital investment and the cost of operation and maintenance also are much less.

- **Door-to-door shipment**

Road transport supports a complete door-to-door movement of shipments. Through road shipment, you can deliver the item directly to the destination. In the case of a rail or air shipment, it undergoes several checks and then ships to the destination. With road transport, you will be able to easily load and unload the items right to the destination.

- **GPS and satellite tracking**

Road transport allows easy GPS and satellite tracking for the cargo movement. This keeps track of your product throughout the journey, in case of some accident or delay, you will be able to get an instant notification. So that you can take some action and save your item from getting destroyed.

- **Suited for long and short distance both**

Road shipping is commonly used for long as well as short-haul and on the border movements. It is the best transportation that is considered safe and fast by people when it comes to saving time and affordable rates.

## Points to consider while choosing road shipping

- **Expensive for longer distances**

It may not be cost-effective for longer distances of shipping. It all depends on the fuel and petrol consumption that will require while traveling from one place to another. Due to some weather conditions, there might be some kind of damages to the fleet that may add extra cost to your bill.

- **Slow speed**

For longer distances, road shipping is slower as compared to rail shipping. The reason behind slow speed may include vehicle speed which can be moderately slow and limited depending on the destination.

- **Natural calamities**

Road shipping has certain limitations because of the road and weather conditions while moving the vehicle from one place to another. There may be any kind of natural calamity while the transportation which is not safe for your shipment. All such threats are attached to road shipping.

- **Not an environment-friendly option**

It is not an environment-friendly option as compared to rail shipping. The vehicles that are used in road shipping consume fuel and petrol which is not good for the sake of the environment.

- **Limitations for the size and weight of cargo**

There might be some limitations for the size and weight of cargo depending on different states. It may happen that if your shipment is too large or heavy then it becomes difficult to ship it through road transport.

Majorly, there are three types of road shipping transport -

- **Road transportation of heavy goods**

If there is a need for heavy loading then it will need strong equipment like hoisting platforms and cranes for transporting goods. With the best equipment and supervision from road shipment industry experts, you will always get the right assistance. Professionals will handle all the road transport work that covers industrial and construction materials. The experts provide a full guarantee of carrying your heavy load road shipment to get it arrived safely to the destination.

- **Road transportation of bulk cargo**

Bulk cargo is cargo that gets transported in a large number of quantities and that too without packaging and packaging. Specialized companies are well aware of the road transport technique when dealing with bulk cargo. For reducing the cargo loss, there will be a need of careful stowage for both solid and liquid bulk vessels.

- **Road transportation of dry goods**

The goods that do not require any kind of special equipment or condition for the transportation need, all such cargoes are transported in pallets or packages. The dry goods can be divided into different sections as they have their own packagings like boxes, units, and sacks.

**After explaining road shipments, have a look at the details of rail shipments -**

## ❑ Shipments via Rail



Shipments via rail make use of trains and rail roads for transporting goods. Rail vessel shipping is majorly used for shipping bulk cargo and consumer goods like paint, household products, and batteries. Rail shipments provide cost-effective and environment-friendly transportation. If we compared train shipping with road sipping then a single shipping train can carry a huge amount of cargo as compared to a single truck. Also, it is a fast medium for the transportation of goods. You can transport different commodities using railway cars which is again a cost-effective way of transporting.

***“Rail is 3 times more efficient as compared to Truck”***

## Advantages of Rail Shipping

- **An eco-friendly option**

Rail shipping is an eco-friendly option for transporting goods as trains do not consume much fuel as compared to road vehicles. Through rail shipping, you can save around 10-40% as compared to road shipping.

- **Capable of carrying huge loads**

Trains can carry a lot of goods on one train as compared to road transport. Rail shipping is beneficial for large load shipping as a single double-stacked train has the capability to carry as much weight as 280 trucks can carry.

- **Cheaper for long-distance shipments**

For long-distance ship movement, rail shipment is a cheaper option that will deliver your goods fast.

- **Reliable and efficient**

Rail shipments are reliable as well as an efficient way of transportation. Railways keep track of the train timetable and run it accordingly. There is no hindrance to traffic in railways just like road shipping.

- **Safety of goods**

Rail shipping ensures the full safety of your items as the train once started, stops at the destination only. On the other hand, in road transport, the driver can stop the vehicle at any point in time which may evoke the risk of goods damage.



## Drawbacks of Rail Shipping

- **Requires huge capital investment**

Rail shipment sometimes requires extra cost for moving a container from the source point to the defined destination. It may be the construction cost or maintenance or some overhead expenses as compared to other transportation.

- **Less flexible option**

Rail shipments run as per the set timetable and defined routes. That's why rail shipment is a less flexible option as you can not match the exact route and timings as per your requirement.

- **Not a good option for fragile items**

Rail shipping is unsafe for transporting fragile items. For example, glass or any other sensitive item may break due to sudden and unexpected halts and train speeding.

- **Not a good match for shorter distances**

Talking about shorter distance transportation then rail shipping is not a good option as road transport can be a real fit for this cause.

- **Not a door-to-door shipping service**

Railways have their own stoppage stations where trains stop and hence they are not a good option for door-to-door shipping. Unlike road transport, it provides door-to-door shipments.

Many different types of railways include

- Mountain railway
- Heavy railway
- Medium-capacity railway system
- Heavy rail
- Plateway
- Rack railway
- Tourist railroad and the list is long ...

Moving towards, we will take a look at types of goods that are being transported via railway -

- Special cargoes
- Hazardous materials
- Consumer goods
- Textile industry products
- Vegetables and fruits
- Hand sanitizers
- Nuts, etc.

## Comparison Table of Rail vs Road Shipment

<b>Specifications</b>	<b>Road</b>	<b>Rail</b>
Cost	Depends on the cargo type and destination	Affordable rates for shipment
Distance	Road shipping is good when goods are being transported in the same continent	A good option for cross-continent transportation
Cargo Types	Versatile transport mode with diverse types of goods	Majorly used for shipping natural resources
Transit Time	Fast delivery based on product deliveries	Long delivery time as compared to road shipment
Security	There are chances of road accidents but you can track your road shipment	Less chances of rail accidents as your goods can get transported safely
Environmental Impact	The environment gets affected because of noise and air pollution that occurs by the road vehicles	Lower fuel consumption keeps the environment safe in rail shipping

### Conclusion

We had tried our best to portray every information on rail and road shipments. If you are looking to hire such services, then this article is highly recommended. There are so many things under road shipments and rail shipments that you must know before stepping into this industry. In the coming future, there will be more beneficial changes in both rail and road shipments because of the innovative technology trends.