

# "HOW TO SHIP A CAR ACROSS THE COUNTRY"

Taken from:

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Subject: Re: car hauling info needed

The first thing I'd like to point out is that this is a good thing to do, in lots of circumstances. \$1,000 doesn't buy much rust-repair bodywork these days, but one grand will transport a rust-free car from the southwest or west coast back east. Or maybe you're looking for that "certain" car, that you can't find locally.

For the purposes of my discussion, I'll assume we're talking about a classic car or a project car, not just the problem of moving your daily driver across the country (while I'd certainly treat \*my\* daily driver with the same respect... :-). This rules out some advertised options like "driveways". (Would you let someone you don't know take your car on a cruise across the country?)

I've always used trucking companies to move my cars. There are railway options, which usually require terminal-to-terminal service.

## **THE BAD NEWS:**

For some reason, there are a lot of shabby operators out there. I've had a couple bad experiences, and other people I know who've done this have had about the same luck.

- Don't always pick the lowest bid.
- Don't send your car with somebody you don't have a reference for.
- Don't send your car with somebody who doesn't take your car seriously.

## **HOW TO FIND A CARRIER:**

- A classic car source, like Hemmings Magazine.  
This is the valuable lesson I've learned. Find somebody who moves cars like yours for a living. They will know how to take care of it. From my experience, it doesn't cost any more, and may cost less, to hire a dedicated classic auto transport company.
- Personal recommendation from somebody you trust.  
This is a great way. If you don't know anybody with personal experience, check around. Your mechanic, car club member, etc. might know. Even if you get a recommendation, check them out.
- The Yellow Pages.  
I think this is a bad way. Maybe if you can check them out, but it's kind of a crap shoot.

## **RANDOM TIPS:**

- Most places have a "no-run" fee, which can be \$25 to \$500. The variety depends directly on the kind of truck they use (how much pain it is if the car doesn't run)

- Most places can do it cheaper if you are more flexible about schedule. It usually takes a few days to a week to schedule a pickup, and a few days to a week to get across the country.
- The best places are bonded and insured. Don't give your car to somebody who isn't. Check this out.
- Get it in writing.
- Think about the pickup and drop off. The kind of person you want moving your car will be worried about getting in and out, around trees, tight corners, etc. Usually if they can't get to your driveway, they will want to meet you someplace nearby that's big and flat to load/unload.
- Covered vs. uncovered. The difference in cost is not as much as you'd think, a couple hundred bucks, usually. For a project car with no paint, you could go with uncovered. I'd never send one of my nice cars through the sandstorm of the desert...
- Ask how they secure your car. One of my cars got chained down to the trailer using the non-load-bearing rear axles on the front wheel drive car (!) Six months later, I figured out I had bent rear axles and pigeon-toed wheels (\$1 K damage, plus tires!). Guess what the carrier said that much later? Ha. I've heard horror stories of chains rattling across the hood, damaged wheels and tires, etc.
- Think security. Lots of places won't cover loss to things in the car, especially on open trailers. I've shipped cars with trunk loads of parts, but you usually assume some risk if you do that.
- Ask them how long they've been moving cars (classic cars). Long is good.
- Detail the condition of your car, before and after. Video is good.

As for a specific recommendation, I have used Passport Transport Ltd., (800) 325-4267. They are *\*great\**. They specialize in classic cars, so they do it right. And they are the same price as the random companies I called in the local yellow pages.

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