

UNDERSTANDING LIFE ON THE ROAD

Truckers are an essential part of life. They work long hours and leave their families for extended periods of time so we can have the comforts of whatever lifestyle we are living.

Truckers are a necessity of life. But have you ever thought about what life on the road is like for these drivers? Is it glamorous because they get to travel and see different and exciting places all the time? Or is treacherous and grueling and hard work?

The answer is a little bit of everything. Here are a few things about life on the road, through the eyes of a truck driver:

- **Mandatory breaks aren't just for sleeping.** During a layover for 34 hours, some truckers might take time to have a little fun. After all, they have earned it, right? This is when the traveling pays off for certain lifestyles. It's a way to experience things you normally wouldn't have the chance to and learn about things you might not have learned about had it not been for life on the road. Truckers also meet people from all walks of life, making them well-rounded individuals.

- **Driving assignments sometimes are less than favorable.** Pickups and deliveries to isolated locations often are the norm.

However, some drivers find the off-beaten path to be one of adventure.

- **You are alone 90 percent of the time and away from your loved ones for extended periods.** Most truckers drive alone, but some do have companions or partners accompany them on trips. Drivers could be gone for weeks or months.

- **Truckers tailor their lifestyle completely around their job.** Meaning that their habits, food choices, sleep patterns and social life are dictated entirely by their work environment, all the time. However, this also means a truckers' life is his/her own and is what they make it. They live life as they see fit, which makes the job enjoyable and fun.

- **Training and schooling are skills learned best by doing.** Getting a CDL license is typically less time consuming than traditional trade classes. Workshops and hands-on training are combined so drivers can get a feel of how trucks handle and makes drivers feel comfortable.

- **Truckers have mandatory breaks.** They don't get to stop at cool places they like or even whenever they want. They have strict guidelines they must adhere to. According to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, drivers may drive a maximum of 11 hours after 10 consecutive hours off-duty. They may not drive beyond the 14th consecutive hour after coming on duty. Truckers also may not drive after 60/70 hours on duty in 7/8 consecutive days. Drivers must take 34 hours off if 60/70 hours has been reached. This is called a layover. They must pull over and stop for 34 hours before continuing their trip, no matter where on the route they are.