

# Why Tow Chains?

I have seen all manner of installing the tow chains including:

1. Straight back to the tow vehicle
2. Crossed in the middle
3. Crossed twice in the middle because they were too long
4. The two chains twisted together along the entire length because that is how my Dad did it
5. No chains because they are not needed

The proper installation is with the chains crossed in the middle so that if the main hitch receiver should break or the ball mount fails the chains will catch the A-frame, support the trailer and prevent serious damage.

If the chains are too long get links removed so they do not ride too close to the ground. If they are too short get new chains and adjust them to the correct length. Just because they came from the dealer that way does not insure they have been properly set up.

Figure 1, shows what happened to one of the participants on the recent Southwest Adventure Caravan. Fortunately, this occurred as they were coming to a stop and all of the protections worked.

This is also a good time to check the breakaway switch cable. This cable should be attached to the car not the hitch. A good approach is to use an eyebolt that is securely bolted through the car bumper (usually one of the license plate mounting screws). The breakaway switch cable is then clipped to the eyebolt.

As part of your camping season begins, be sure and torque all of the hitch and receiver platform bolts before you get out on the road.

Figure 1

