



## Mini Trucks Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. What is a Mini Truck?

A mini truck is a motor vehicle meeting the requirements of the Japanese "Kei Jidosha" classification or designation, used or maintained primarily for the transportation of property and having four wheels, an engine displacement of 660cc or less, an overall length of 130 inches or less, an overall height of 78 inches or less, and overall width of 60 inches or less.

### 2. What are the concerns with Mini Trucks?

Mini trucks are currently being imported into the US after they no longer meet vehicle safety standards in their home country, and since they are at least 25 years old at the time of importation they are exempt from having to meet the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) here in the U.S. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has advised that their agency does not endorse the use of mini trucks on public highways since these vehicles are not manufactured to meet U.S. safety standards. A mini truck less than 25 years old cannot be legally imported into the U.S. as an on-road vehicle unless the vehicle is brought up to FMVSS compliance.

Additionally, a mini truck imported to the U.S. must also meet EPA on-road vehicle emissions standards unless the vehicle is 21 or more years old at the time of importation. Mini trucks are not certified by their manufacturers as meeting EPA emission standards; therefore, only mini trucks 21 years old and older may be imported due to being exempt from this requirement.

Mini Trucks can be imported to the U.S. as off-road vehicles; however, they must be permanently modified to have a maximum speed of 25mph and be certified as meeting applicable non-road emission standards. They do not meet required North American safety or emission standards.

It is also important to note that there are concerns with the safety of these vehicles and the crash protection that they provide – mini trucks manufactured prior to 1998 were not subject to crash testing. Furthermore, if the mini truck cannot pass inspection in its home country, it may not be operated on public roads, and the vehicle must either be repaired, disposed of or exported. These

vehicles are most likely another nation's cast-offs that no longer meet that nation's vehicle safety or emission standards.

### **3. What are the common types of Mini Trucks?**

- Honda Acty
- Diahatsu Hijet
- Suzuki Carry
- Mitsubishi Minicab
- Mazda Porter Cab or Scrum
- Subaru Sambar
- Isuzu Mini Truck
- Nissan Clipper
- Toyota Lite Ace or Town Ace

### **4. How can I register my Mini Truck in Pennsylvania?**

Pennsylvania will only allow registration of a mini truck one of the following three ways:

1. Off Road Title – This type of title has a one-time title fee, and the vehicle is not subject to an annual vehicle safety or emission inspection. This title will only allow the vehicle to be operated on private property (no public roadways).
2. Farm Exemption – Pennsylvania law allows any farm vehicle used exclusively upon a farm or farms owned or operated by the owner of the vehicle to apply for a farm vehicle, 2-year certificate of exemption. Once the certificate of exemption is obtained, the vehicle may then qualify for an exemption from annual registration. The certificate of exemption must be renewed every two years. Farm exempt vehicles are not subject to an annual vehicle safety or emission inspection. For more information on these restrictions and this type of exemption, please visit our resource on Titling, Registration and Exemptions.
3. Antique Registration – This type of vehicle has a one-time registration fee, and the vehicle is not subject to an annual vehicle safety or emission inspection. The vehicle must be at least 25 years old, used for occasional transportation needs, and is not used for commercial purposes or for general daily transportation.

Note: Mini Trucks in Pennsylvania may not hold an unrestricted registration for on-road use unless the vehicle owner holds a letter of grandfathered status dated December 1, 2021 from PennDOT. However, once the grandfathered vehicle is sold and ownership is transferred, that vehicle may no longer apply for an unrestricted on-road registration.