Trailer components often fail more frequently than vehicle components because:
- Organizations often keep trailers longer, so they have more wear and fatigue.
- External storage leads to moisture problems: corrosion, electrical connections, etc.
- Empty trailers bounce around more, causing additional stress on components.

Key Inspection Points

- **Trailer/Truck Attachment**
  - Tongue
  - Coupler, ball/ring/pintle
  - Safety chains and hooks
  - Breakaway devices

- **Tires/Wheels/Brakes**
  - Tread depth
  - Wear, cracks
  - Lugnuts secure
  - Spare tire

- **Lights**
  - Brakes
  - Signals
  - Reflectors
  - Striping

- **Other**
  - Suspension
  - Trailer floor
  - Gate/Ramps
  - Jack stand

Develop a consistent inspection routine. For example, follow path 1-6

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (DOT)
- **Formal annual inspection**
  - Completed by qualified individual
  - Copy in vehicle or sticker on trailer
- **Post-trip** inspection required; documentation required if defects identified
- **Pre-trip**
  - Must validate (sign-off) that defects identify in prior post-trip have been corrected
  - Must ensure vehicle is in safe operating condition
- **Enroute** cargo must be checked within first 50 miles, then every 150 miles or three hours thereafter; whichever comes first