

“Truckonomics,” by Nancy Condon, associate editor of *EconSouth* and senior publications specialist

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### **Discussion questions**

1. Why is truck tonnage considered a key indicator of the economy’s health?
2. How was the trucking industry affected by the recent recession? How did the trucking industry’s link to the construction industry affect demand?
3. What happened to truck capacity during the recent recession? How have the factors of supply and demand at work here affected the prices that trucking companies can charge?
4. Now that the economy is recovering, what is happening to the demand for new trucks? If new trucks are put on the road, how do you predict this will affect shipping rates in the short run?
5. How has the trucking industry responded to rising fuel prices? In what ways are trucking companies trying to contain fuel costs? How will new government regulations affect the environment in which trucking firms operate? How do you predict prices will reflect the new regulations?
6. Now that economic recovery is underway, what has happened to the demand for truck drivers? What factors may make it more difficult for trucking companies to hire the drivers they need? How will these difficulties affect the wages paid for truck drivers?

### **Related links**

[“New Rules Put Brakes on Truck Drivers’ Schedules”: National Public Radio](#)

[Index of Truck Tonnage For General Freight Carriers for United States \(FRED data\): St. Louis Fed](#)

[Supply and Demand Online Course for Teachers and Students: St. Louis Fed](#)

[Supply and Demand podcasts: St. Louis Fed](#)

[Supply and Demand videos: St. Louis Fed](#)

[Oil Prices: Demand and Supply \(lesson\)](#)