

## Mirrors

When driving, it is always a good idea to be able see clearly in front, to the sides and to the rear. When towing a trailer or fifth wheel, the inside rear view mirror becomes useless, so you must rely on your outside mirrors to see what is behind you. When towing a pop-up, how well you can see out of any mirror will depend on the height of the mirror, and the height and width of the trailer.

### Do you need “towing” mirrors?

As mentioned before, it will depend on where and how high the mirror is compared to the height and width of the trailer. Ideally, you want to be able to see what is behind and along side the trailer.

First, let's see how high and how far apart the outside mirrors are on the tow vehicle. With the front driver and passenger side windows rolled down, use a tape measure to see how far apart the mirrors are. Measure to both the inside (A) and outside (B) of the mirror glass. Now measure the distance from the ground to the bottom edge of the mirror glass. Compare these measurements with the height and width of the trailer. (If the trailer is equipped with an awning, the support poles may also block your rear vision on the passenger side.)

If the trailer width is less than the mirror measurement A, then you will probably not need any additional mirror extensions.

If the trailer width is between mirror measurements A and B and the trailer does not have an awning, you may or may not need mirror extensions. If the trailer does have an awning, you will probably need an extension on the passenger side.

If the trailer width is more than mirror measurement B, you will need mirror extensions. If the trailer has an awning, you may need an extra-long extension on the passenger side.

For pop-up trailers, you may be able to use the inside rear-view mirror to see what is behind you better than the outside mirrors. Check the maximum height and width of the trailer and compare to the mirror positions. Different mirrors than what are listed here may be required to give you adequate rear vision. Ask your dealer for other recommendations.

## **Mirrors**

After-market mirrors or mirror extensions are available to fit most vehicles and range from \$20 to \$500 a pair. Below is a list and description of the most commonly used or available mirrors and mirror extensions. Links to manufacturer websites are also included.

### **Clip-on mirrors**

Prime Products (<http://www.prime-products.com/cat-TOWMIRRORS.html>) and Cipa Mirrors (<http://www.cipamirrors.com/>) are leading manufacturer of this type of mirror. These mirrors should strap on to most standard mirrors and are the least expensive type at \$15-\$20 per pair.

Pros: Inexpensive. Lightweight. Incorporates stock mirror break-away feature.

Cons: Some complaints of excessive vibration. Some complaints that the brackets interfere with mirror glass movement.

### **Slip-on mirrors**

Cipa Mirrors (<http://www.cipamirrors.com/>) makes mirror extensions that slip over your existing mirror. Actual size depends on the vehicle, but mirror glass ranges from 4"-5" in height and width. Extends outside edge of mirror about 6" from stock mirror. Cost is \$25-\$40 depending on the vehicle.

Pros: Easy on/off. Fewer complaints of vibration. Incorporates stock mirror break-away feature.

Cons: Slightly smaller mirror glass size.

### **Accessory mirrors**

This type of mirror would be attached to the vehicle separate from the stock mirror.

McKesh Mirrors (<http://www.hensleymfg.com/mckeshmirrors.html>) are probably the widest known for this type of mirror. Special hooks clamp over the window openings at the top and another hook on a strap attach to the bottom edge of the door. Turn a lever to tighten the strap and you're all set. These mirrors offer probably the most extension of

any mirror on the market and should fit any vehicle without much trouble. \$110-\$120 per pair.

Pros: Simple on/off. Large mirror glass.

Cons: Some complaints about vibration. No break-away feature which could damage door. Some complaints about hooks scratching windows. Some complaints about adjusting device scratching vehicle if not installed correctly.

### **Replacement mirrors**

There are several manufactures of this type of mirror.

Cipa Mirrors (<http://www.cipamirrors.com/>) also makes replacement mirrors as well as the slip-on and clip-on types. The replacement mirror glass is large, 10"x10", and comes in manual, electric and electric heated. Passenger side glass is flat glass, not convex, as most stock mirrors are. These mirrors manually extend 4-1/2", or from 19" to about 25" from the vehicle. Has fold-away/break-away feature. \$275-\$350.

Power Vision Mirrors (<http://www.powervisionmirrors.com/>) are replacement mirrors that electrically extends 5", or from 16" to 21" from the vehicle. Glass size is 10-1/2" x 6-1/2", and are available in electric and electric heated. Passenger side glass is flat glass, not convex, as most stock mirrors are. Installation of an additional switch is required for electrical extension feature. Has fold-away/break-away feature. \$430-\$500.

Telescopic Trailer Tow (TTT) Mirrors (<http://www.ttt-mirror.com/>) by Schefenacker are replacement mirrors that manually extend 4-1/2", or 17-1/2" to 22" from the vehicle. This mirror incorporates a built-in manually adjustable blind spot mirror (convex, 3-1/2" x 4-1/4") along with the regular mirror glass (8-3/4" x 7-1/4"). They are available in electric and electric heated, and can also come equipped with rear-facing turn signal indicator lights and forward-facing marker lights (additional wiring may be required). Interchangeable color-matched covers are also available. Has fold-away/break-away feature. \$300-\$450.

Pros: Retain most if not all electrical functions as stock mirrors. Extendable from non-towing to towing modes. Uses stock mounting holes and wiring (for most features).

Cons: Price!

This is a general sampling of what you may find on the market. Prices vary widely, so shop around. Ask about return policies.

