

Truck Dash Cam Incident Preservation Checklist

A step-by-step workflow for preserving camera footage after an incident
backwatch.co.uk | Not legal advice — see your compliance officer for binding requirements.

Phase 1 — Pre-incident (routine configuration)

- ☐ Standardise resolution and bitrate settings across all fleet cameras
- ☐ Enable event-lock (G-sensor / manual button) and pre-buffer on each device
- ☐ Fit high-endurance SD cards (Class 10, V30/V60); schedule replacements every 12–36 months
- ☐ Choose storage architecture: SD-only / hybrid (SD + cloud events) / full cloud
- ☐ Document retention periods in your written retention policy

Phase 2 — Immediate (0–1 hour after incident)

- ☐ Ensure driver and scene safety — priority above all else
- ☐ Do NOT delete files, format the card or remove the device unless instructed by police
- ☐ Note incident time, vehicle ID and camera channel(s) involved

Phase 3 — Within 1–6 hours

- ☐ Lock the event clip on the device (G-sensor lock or manual lock via app/menu)
- ☐ Export a copy to phone, USB drive or NAS — do not rely on the lock alone
- ☐ Photograph: the camera unit, SD card slot and screen showing the locked clip
- ☐ Note the original MP4 filename and any on-device event ID

Phase 4 — Within 24 hours

- ☐ Upload the original clip to the central evidence store (cloud or secure NAS)
- ☐ Generate and record a checksum (MD5 or SHA256) for the uploaded file
- ☐ Log chain-of-custody entry (see template below)
- ☐ Notify: fleet manager, insurer and legal counsel per your policy
- ☐ If litigation is possible, issue a Preservation Notice and consult legal counsel

Phase 5 — Ongoing

- ☐ Restrict file access — log every person who views or copies the clip
- ☐ Preserve original SD card and export media until formally released
- ☐ Update chain-of-custody log at every access event
- ☐ Confirm with insurer/regulator before deleting any footage related to the incident

Chain-of-Custody Log Template

Field	Value / Entry
Filename	
Vehicle ID	

Driver name	
Incident date/time	
Event ID (on-device)	
Extracted by	
Extraction date/time	
Storage location	
Checksum (MD5/SHA256)	
Access log	Name Date Purpose

File Naming Convention

Template: YYYYMMDD_HHMM_vehicleID_eventID_camera.mp4

Example: 20260422_1430_VH123_EVT007_front.mp4

Include in an accompanying .txt metadata file: GPS coordinates, device serial, timezone, checksum.

Retention Quick Reference

Fleet type	Recommended minimum
Personal drivers	7–30 days
Rideshare / courier drivers	30–90 days
Small fleet (local delivery)	30–90 days
Medium fleet (regional haulers)	90–180 days
Large commercial / regulated carrier	180–365+ days
High-risk assets (tankers, PSV)	Multi-year for select incidents

Legal minimums vary by jurisdiction and insurer. Confirm retention obligations with your compliance officer.