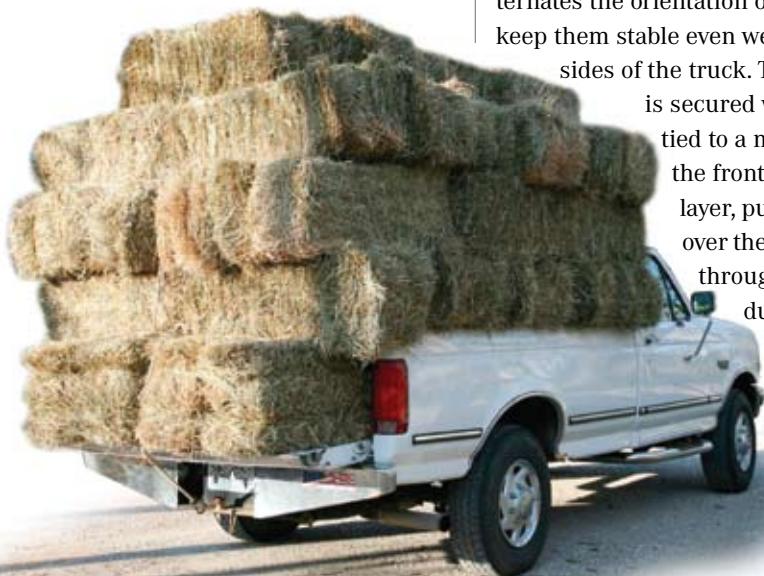


Stacking hay for a short haul

This simple method for arranging small bales in the bed of a pickup truck makes good use of space and maximizes stability.

This load of 53 bales was transported seven miles on a state highway.

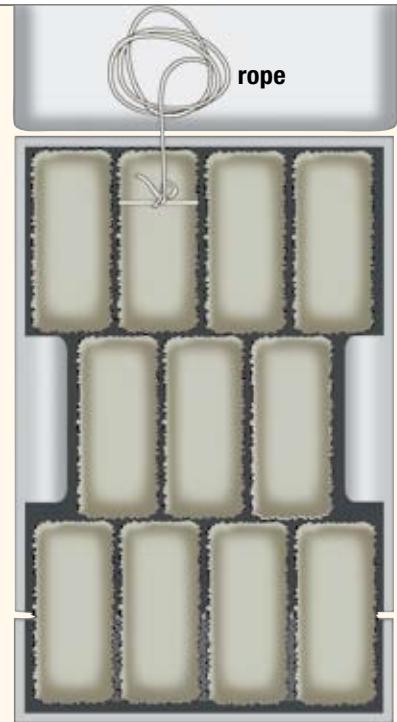


If you purchase several hundred bales of hay at a time, it's nearly always easiest to have them delivered by the supplier. But if you need only a few dozen bales, you may be able to save on the shipping fee by picking them up yourself—provided you have a pickup truck and a helper or two.

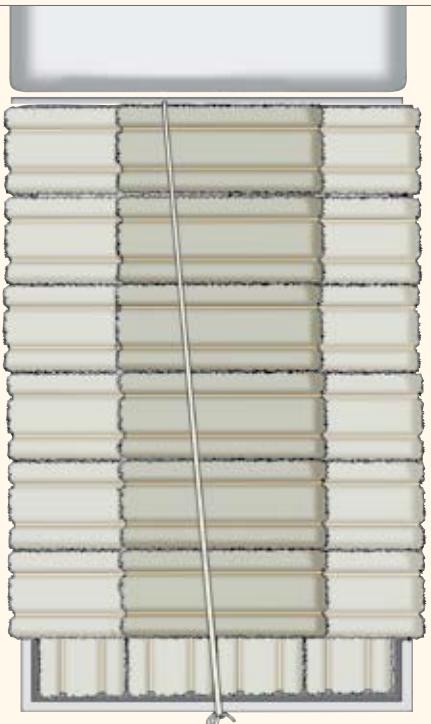
However, safely hauling hay requires careful loading and cautious driving. Before attempting your own hay transport, check the load capacity of your truck (small bales can weigh anywhere from 60 to 130 pounds each) and review state and local laws governing how materials under transport must be secured. There may also be requirements for marking the load with signs or flags.

Once you're ready to give it a try, consider using this method for stacking small bales in the back of a standard pickup truck, recommended by hay grower Daniel Houlihan of Wildwood, Missouri. Taking care to avoid obstructing the driver's sideview mirror, he alternates the orientation of the bales to keep them stable even well above the sides of the truck. The entire load is secured with a rope tied to a middle bale at the front of the bottom layer, pulled up and over the load and tied through a heavy-duty snap on the truck's hitch.

Top view



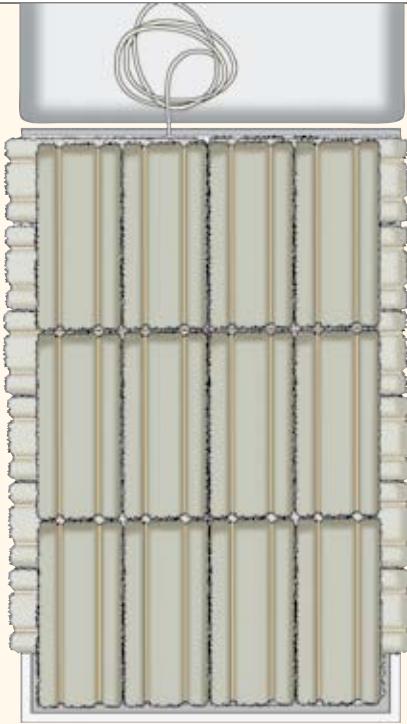
1. Arrange the first layer of 11 bales, positioned on their edges, in this pattern. Tie the end of a 25-foot rope securely around a bale in the center of the first row and place the excess rope on the roof of the cab.



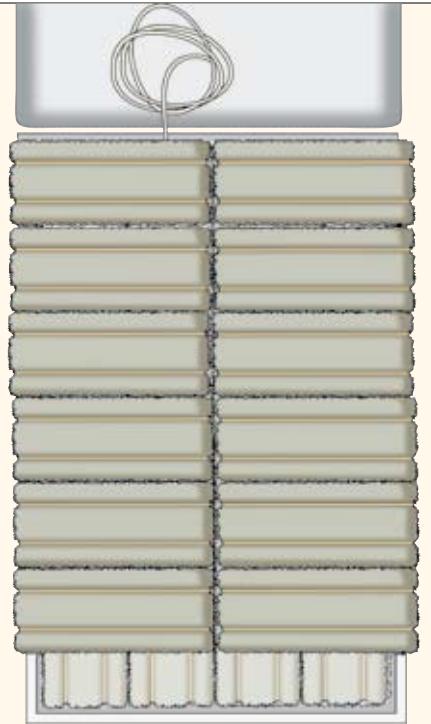
5. Place the final layer of six bales, strings down, along the center of the load. Then pull the rope over the top of the entire load and tie it through a heavy-duty snap in a chain hole on the hitch.



2. Stack the second layer in two six-bale rows on their string sides. The bottom edges of the outside bales will rest on the edge of the truck bed.



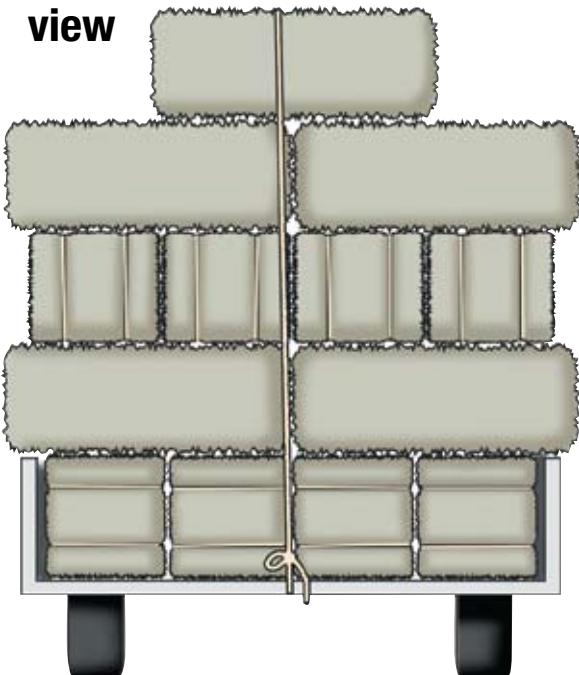
3. Arrange the next layer of 12 bales like this, placing three rows of four bales on their strings, centered over the bed of the truck.



4. Stack the third layer of 12 bales in the same manner as the second layer.

DIAGRAMS BY CELIA STRAIN

Rear view



When the load is secured, drive only a short distance—just down the driveway—then stop and check the rope. It's not uncommon for the load to settle. You may need to retie or tighten the rope. It should snap back into place when plucked. 🐾



PHOTOS BY HAYEXCHANGE.COM

To see the knots and technique hay supplier Daniel Houlihan uses for tying down a load of hay, visit EquusMagazine.com.