Hand over a hire ute to a customer

Standard Operating Procedure · Example Hire Co. — a made-up business, for illustration only

SOP ID	HIRE-001	**Version**	1.0
Business	Example Hire Co. (fictional)	**Process owner**	Yard Supervisor
Approved by	Owner (example)	**Time to complete**	About 15 minutes
Effective date	16 Nov 2026	**Next review**	16 Nov 2027

1 Purpose

Every customer drives away in a clean, fuelled, safe ute and knows how to use it. Both sides agree on its condition before the keys leave the counter, so the return check is quick and there are no arguments about damage.

2 When to use this SOP

- **Trigger:** a customer arrives to collect a booked ute.
- **Applies to:** yard staff and front counter staff.
- **Does not cover:** the return check (HIRE-002), cleaning between hires (HIRE-003), or taking bookings.

3 Roles

Role	Responsible for
Front counter	Checks the booking and licence, signs the hire agreement, takes the bond.
Yard staff	Preps the ute, does the walk-around with the customer, shows the basics.
Yard Supervisor	Decides on any problem found before release (damage, warning lights, licence issues).

4 What you need

- [ ] Hire app on the yard tablet (camera on)
- [ ] Keys with fleet tag (e.g. UTE-03)
- [ ] Tyre gauge and a clean cloth
- [ ] Customer's driver licence (sighted only)

5 Safety and important notes

> As described by the business owner. This SOP is not a SWMS or risk assessment. Follow your business's WHS procedures.

- Wear hi-vis in the yard at all times.
- **Never** hand over keys before the licence is checked.
- **Never** release a ute with a warning light on.

> **About this example.** Example Hire Co., its staff and its process are made up to show what a TalkItOnce SOP looks like. It is not a real client or a real business's procedure.

6 Steps

#	Do this	How / standard ("done when...")	Who	Notes
1	**Check the booking and licence**	Licence is current and the name matches the booking. Record the expiry date in the app. **Done when:** "Licence checked" is ticked.	Front counter	Don't photocopy or photograph the licence.
2	**Prep the ute**	Fuel full, cab wiped, tray empty, tyres at the pressure on the door placard.	Yard staff	Do it the afternoon before for early pickups.
3	**Walk around with the customer**	Start at the driver's door and go clockwise. Take photos of each side, front, rear, roof, tray and windscreen. **Done when:** at least 8 photos are in the app.	Yard staff + customer	Customer walks with you, not waiting inside.
4	**Mark existing damage**	Mark every scratch or dent on the app diagram. Customer initials the condition report.	Yard staff	If in doubt, mark it.
5	**Record fuel and kilometres**	Ignition on, photo of the dash. No warning lights showing.	Yard staff	Warning light? See section 9.
6	**Show the basics**	Lights, hazards, tie-down points, spare and jack, fuel type (diesel sticker on the cap).	Yard staff	Ask: "Any questions before you go?"
7	**Sign the agreement and take the bond**	Customer signs in the app. Explain when the bond is released, as written in the hire agreement.	Front counter	Don't promise anything not in the agreement.
8	**Hand over the keys**	Only when steps 1–7 are ticked. Note the time out in the app.	Yard staff	Wave them off from the gate.

7 Quality check

- [ ] At least 8 walk-around photos are uploaded and visible in the app
- [ ] Customer has initialled the condition report
- [ ] Fuel level and kilometres are recorded with a dash photo
- [ ] Agreement was signed before the keys left the counter

8 Common mistakes and how to avoid them

- **Rushing the walk-around when it's busy:** the photos protect the customer and the business. Never skip them; ask the next customer to wait.
- **Forgetting the roof and tray:** the clockwise route ends at the tray, so finish there and look up.
- **Photos left on a personal phone:** only use the yard tablet, and upload before the customer leaves.

9 If something goes wrong

Problem	What to do	Who to tell
Licence expired or name doesn't match	Don't release the ute. Offer to add a different licensed driver to the booking.	Yard Supervisor
Warning light on the dash	Don't release. Swap to another prepped ute if one is free.	Yard Supervisor
Customer disagrees with marked damage	Take a close-up photo and write their comment in "Customer notes".	Yard Supervisor

10 Related documents

- HIRE-002 Return check (example)
- HIRE-003 Clean and prep between hires (example)
- Hire agreement terms

11 Revision history

Version	Date	Change	By
1.0	16 Nov 2026	First issue	TalkItOnce from owner recording (fictional example)

CHECKLIST · HIRE-001

Ute handover

Date _____ Fleet no. _____ Done by _____

- [ ] 1 Booking and licence checked (expiry recorded)
- [ ] 2 Ute prepped: fuel full, cab clean, tray empty, tyres OK
- [ ] 3 Walk-around done with customer (8+ photos)
- [ ] 4 Existing damage marked; customer initialled
- [ ] 5 Fuel and km recorded; no warning lights
- [ ] 6 Basics shown: lights, hazards, tie-downs, spare, fuel type
- [ ] 7 Agreement signed; bond explained
- [ ] 8 Keys handed over; time out noted
- [ ] 9 Quality check passed

Signed off by _____

Issues noted _____