



Easy RV Maintenance

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You are all set to get the RV on the road and enjoy the July 4th holiday. Have you forgotten anything? How about the RV maintenance you did last week?

Is the RV ready to go? If not, that trip may not happen as planned.

Success is in the Details

For all new RV owners (or renters) there comes a time to sit down and read a manual. Another choice is to do your own research on the web.

Details are important when your whole lifestyle is new, or maybe just occasionally new (as in seasonal). Here are a few suggestions to keep your maintenance on track:

1 Take the time to list all your RV components either in a computer file or on a form. Here is a [link](#) to the form I recommend: Make sure the serial and model numbers are included, along with the brand name. Include any filter numbers that may apply.

2 Find out the correct procedures for:

- Dumping the black and gray water tanks
- Hooking up and unhooking the electric cable to the park post

- Checking the batteries
- Cleaning the hot water tank
- Sterilizing the fresh water tank
- Lubricating the levelers (if applicable)
- Preparing the RV for storage
- Boondocking basics

3

Set up maintenance calendars on your computer so you never miss a date. Use a wall calendar too.

Make Maintenance Easy

Using a calendar reminder program on your computer keeps all the maintenance procedures organized with no effort on your part, except to read the calendar.

Now that you are aware that the batteries need to be checked for water every three months, keep distilled water on hand.

If you realize that the levelers need to be exercised every six months (six times up/down) to keep them lubed, you do this at one point when setting up in a new location.

The Onan generator needs to be exercised for 30 minutes every one to three months, so you make sure it is allowed to run in the park or schedule it to run roadside when you stop for lunch.

Money-saving Reasons for Maintenance



By preparing and adhering to a maintenance schedule, none of the RV components get overlooked. Not all repairs can be avoided by good maintenance habits, but the money saved by limiting or avoiding costly repairs runs into the thousands of dollars.

RV parts do have a limited life, exactly like other products. If your air conditioner lasts two more years because you keep the roof coils clean, how much do you think you saved here?

Maintenance and Self-Confidence

By collecting all the RV information and scheduling maintenance, you become familiar with your vehicle. It builds your confidence to know that when out on the road, it is going to perform well. In the six years I have been on the road solo, nary an on-the-road repair.

That does not mean I never need to replace parts or pay for repair service. It just means that those experiences take place in a controlled environment, like an RV park.

Problems that happen while traveling can often be avoided with proper maintenance practices. Fixing the problem before you hit the road is always the wisest option.

For Women and Men Who do not Perform Their Own Maintenance

It is very important that you follow the proper maintenance procedures. Make sure you know your vehicle at least on paper.

One of the best paths to follow is have your RV checked out every year by a certified mechanic. Do not wait until the odometer reaches the 3,000-mile mark for an oil change (or, in the case of synthetic oil, the 5,000-mile mark).

If you travel throughout the year, find a certified shop somewhere along the way. There are several review websites available to check for a shop in your area.

Here are a few reasons to spend that extra maintenance money:

- **Maintain the tires** at a certain pressure (psi) to get the true mileage out of them. Check them for bulges, cracks, and stress points.
- **Check the belts** and tubing on a gas coach, gas filters, air filters, and other small components at least once a year. If you spend time in the western deserts, remember to have the filters replaced if it is not in the standard service package. Air filters are a serious point on a diesel engine.
- **Check all the fluids** (power steering, radiator, transmission, and others).
- **Change the Oil.** You may not need an oil change, but I always have it done anyway (using non-synthetic is cheaper in this case) to offer the shop a profit incentive to be thorough.
- **Always tell the mechanic** you are traveling alone, and would he/she please check everything carefully.
- **Follow the mechanic around**, if you can, to learn where everything is located.
- **For reference**, have your *Components List* handy.

[**Tip 1:** Outlying towns near metro areas in the western states have the most reasonable prices, around \$180 for the oil change, lube, and systems check on a gas coach.]

[**Tip 2:** Off the subject here, but Family Motorcoach Association (FMCA) has a great connection with Michelin Tires for a huge savings on a new set of tires for your Class A or Class C motorhome.]

Maintenance Resources

Visit the [WheelingIt website](#) for a great post on Repair and Maintenance on the road:

The Basics = What Every RVer Should Have
The Details = Figuring Out What You Need Done
The Place = Figuring Out Where To Go
The Practical Aspects = Dealing w/ Pets & Home

RV service reviews all over the country:
rvcritic.com

Books:

[Conquer the Road: RV Maintenance for the Traveler](#)
eBook or Paperback Available at Bookstores Worldwide

[For Women Only: Motorhome Maintenance](#)
eBook Only

RV Park Resource for Repairs

Check with your local RV park for their favorite RV repair resource. Often these people are certified, fast, and reliable.

The RV Lifestyle Collection by Margo Armstrong



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