

# RV Travel Checklist

Checklist · 106 items · 8 sections

A full pre-trip, departure-day, on-the-road, and arrival checklist for RV travel. Built from Good Sam, RV Travel, KOA, Escapees, FMCA, AAA, and OEM manuals (Coachmen, Winnebago, Forest River) so the rig leaves the driveway with no surprises and gets level at the campsite without a fight.

Open the editable, AI-powered version online:

<https://genechecklist.com/checklist/rv-checklist>

## PRE-TRIP PLANNING (1-2 WEEKS BEFORE)

- Map the full route in an RV-aware app (RV Trip Wizard, RV Life, CoPilot RV)  
**HIGH**
- Reserve campsites through KOA, Recreation.gov, Hipcamp, Harvest Hosts, or Good Sam Campgrounds  
**HIGH**
- Confirm rig length, slide count, and electric service (30A or 50A) match each site's hookups  
**HIGH**
- Check every bridge, tunnel, and underpass on the route for 12-13 ft height clearance  
**HIGH**
- Flag propane-restricted crossings (Lincoln, Holland, Baltimore Harbor Tunnels)  
**HIGH**
- Identify diesel or gas stations with high-clearance canopies and pull-through pumps (GasBuddy, AllStays)
- Verify RV insurance covers full-timer use, towed vehicle, and personal belongings  
**HIGH**
- Confirm RV registration, plates, and license endorsements (some states require non-commercial Class B or A)  
**HIGH**
- Enroll in or verify roadside assistance (Good Sam, AAA RV Plus, Coach-Net, FMCA Tech Connect)  
**HIGH**
- Print or save offline a paper backup of reservations, route, and emergency contacts
- Notify a contact of full itinerary, stop dates, and check-in times

## MECHANICAL PRE-TRIP

- Check tire pressure cold on every tire including the spare against the sidewall PSI by axle  
**HIGH**
- Inspect tire age on the DOT code; replace any tire over 7 years regardless of tread depth  
**HIGH**
- Inspect tread for cracks, sidewall bulges, and uneven wear  
**HIGH**
- Test brakes on tow vehicle and trailer, including the breakaway switch  
**HIGH**
- Verify brake controller gain setting on towables before loaded driving  
**HIGH**
- Check engine oil level and condition  
**HIGH**
- Check coolant level in the overflow reservoir  
**HIGH**
- Check transmission fluid (drive vehicle for diesel pushers per OEM procedure)  
**HIGH**
- Check brake fluid and power steering fluid  
**HIGH**
- Top off washer fluid; inspect wiper blades
- Test the chassis battery with a multimeter (12.6 V at rest minimum)  
**HIGH**
- Test house batteries; confirm water levels on flooded lead-acid cells  
**HIGH**
- Cycle every slide-out fully in and out to check seals and motors  
**HIGH**
- Extend and inspect the awning for tears, mildew, arm function
- Inspect the hitch ball, coupler, weight distribution bars, and sway control  
**HIGH**
- Confirm ball mount class matches trailer GVWR (Class III, IV, or V)  
**HIGH**
- Verify tow vehicle GVWR, GCWR, and tongue weight against loaded trailer numbers  
**HIGH**
- Lubricate hitch ball, jack, and locking pins
- Inspect safety chains, breakaway cable, and 7-pin trailer cord for fraying  
**HIGH**

## INSIDE THE RV PRE-TRIP

- Fill the fresh water tank with potable water if boondocking or in transit  
**HIGH**
- Sanitize fresh water lines with a bleach solution annually or after winter storage
- Inspect propane tanks for date and required recertification (12 yrs ASME, 10 yrs DOT)  
**HIGH**
- Run a propane leak test with soapy water on all connections  
**HIGH**
- Open propane valves; confirm pilots light on stove, furnace, water heater  
**HIGH**
- Pre-treat the black tank with Aqua-Kem, Happy Camper, or equivalent enzyme treatment  
**HIGH**
- Pre-cool the refrigerator on shore power for 24 hours before loading  
**HIGH**
- Level the RV before running the absorption fridge on gas (protects cooling unit)  
**HIGH**
- Test the furnace on both propane and 12 V power
- Test both roof and dash air conditioners
- Test the water heater on both electric and propane modes
- Replace batteries in smoke, carbon monoxide, and propane detectors  
**HIGH**
- Verify fire extinguisher gauge reads in the green; pin is intact  
**HIGH**

## LOADING (DAY BEFORE)

- Load bedding, pillows, towels, and clothing into closets and bins
- Pack kitchen cookware, dishes, utensils, coffee maker into non-skid drawers
- Stock non-perishable food in upper cabinets with positive latches
- Load fresh and frozen food into the cold refrigerator and freezer with bin dividers
- Pack a tool kit: socket set, screwdrivers, pliers, multi-tool, duct tape  
**HIGH**
- Pack a stocked first aid kit and any prescription medications  
**HIGH**
- Load camp chairs, outdoor table, and an outdoor rug or mat
- Load grill, propane bottles, lighter, fire starter, matches

- Confirm outdoor fire extinguisher is mounted and accessible  
HIGH
- Pack the drinking-water-rated fresh water hose (white or blue, not green)  
HIGH
- Pack sewer hose, clear elbow, sewer support, disposable gloves  
HIGH
- Pack a 50A-to-30A dogbone adapter and a 30A-to-15A adapter  
HIGH
- Pack a surge protector or EMS rated for the rig's amperage  
HIGH
- Pack leveling blocks (Lynx Levelers, Camco) and wheel chocks (X-Chock or rubber)  
HIGH
- Verify spare tire, jack, and lug wrench are stowed and accessible  
HIGH
- Pack pet food, bowls, leash, vaccination records, crate or tie-out

## DEPARTURE DAY WALK-AROUND

- Retract every slide-out fully; confirm flush against the body  
HIGH
- Roll up and lock the awning, including any slide toppers  
HIGH
- Lower the TV antenna and stow any satellite dish  
HIGH
- Retract entry steps; confirm the step lock if equipped  
HIGH
- Close and latch every exterior compartment door  
HIGH
- Stow the power cord and any hoses in their bays  
HIGH
- Couple tow vehicle: drop coupler, lock, insert safety pin  
HIGH
- Cross safety chains under the tongue in an X pattern  
HIGH
- Clip the breakaway cable to the tow vehicle frame, not the safety chain  
HIGH
- Plug in the 7-pin electrical cord; confirm a tight seat  
HIGH

- Run a full lights test: brake, left/right turn, running, marker lights  
**HIGH**
- Adjust side mirrors for the widest loaded view including trailer corners  
**HIGH**
- Recheck tire pressure on every tire cold one final time  
**HIGH**
- Stow loose items; latch refrigerator; lock cabinet doors
- Close roof vents; turn off ceiling fans
- Switch the refrigerator to LP or auto mode per OEM guidance
- Turn off the inverter if not needed underway
- Lock all entry doors; confirm windows are latched  
**HIGH**

## ON THE ROAD

- Hold speed at or below the rig's tire speed rating (typically 65 mph for ST tires)  
**HIGH**
- Plan fuel stops every 150-200 miles at RV-friendly stations (AllStays)
- Obey propane restrictions in tunnels and on posted bridges by routing around them  
**HIGH**
- Stop every 2-3 hours to walk, hydrate, and recheck tires by touch for heat
- Keep generator off while driving if propane-fed (per most state regs)  
**HIGH**
- Check mirrors for shifted load, swaying trailer, or smoking wheels every 15 minutes  
**HIGH**
- Use lower gear or tow/haul mode on descents to spare the brakes  
**HIGH**
- Maintain 4-6 second following distance at highway speed  
**HIGH**

## ARRIVAL AND SET-UP AT CAMPSITE

- Walk the site for low branches, fire rings, water faucets, stumps before backing in  
**HIGH**
- Position RV so hookups reach, door opens to a clear area, shade falls on the slide side  
**HIGH**
- Chock the wheels before unhitching or releasing the parking brake  
**HIGH**
- Level side to side using leveling blocks, then front to back  
**HIGH**

HIGH

- Lower stabilizing jacks until firm but not lifting the rig  
**HIGH**
- Deploy slide-outs AFTER leveling and stabilizing  
**HIGH**
- Connect water hose with inline pressure regulator set to 40-50 PSI  
**HIGH**
- Plug in shore power through the surge protector after confirming pedestal voltage  
**HIGH**
- Connect sewer hose with downward slope and a secure twist-lock at both ends  
**HIGH**
- Open propane tank valves; relight any appliances needed
- Deploy the awning, set up chairs, place outdoor mat
- Verify refrigerator switched to shore power and is cooling

### **BEFORE DEPARTURE FROM CAMPSITE**

- Empty the black tank FIRST, then the grey tank to flush the hose  
**HIGH**
- Rinse the black tank with a built-in flush or wand if equipped, then close both valves  
**HIGH**
- Disconnect, rinse, and stow the sewer hose with gloves and sealed caps  
**HIGH**
- Disconnect the water hose, drain it, and stow the pressure regulator  
**HIGH**
- Unplug shore power; stow cord and surge protector  
**HIGH**
- Close propane tank valves at the bottle  
**HIGH**
- Retract slides, awning, stabilizers, and steps in that order  
**HIGH**
- Walk the site for trash, gear, chocks, leveling blocks left behind  
**HIGH**
- Repeat the full departure walk-around before pulling out  
**HIGH**