



# RV CHECKLIST

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**N**ow that summer is in full swing, it's about time to hit the road with the recreational vehicle (RV). Before embarking on a trip, be sure to do a little maintenance. Taking the time now will go a long way to ensure that your RV will work properly during your travels. Before driving off, you should complete this basic RV prep checklist.

## UNDER THE HOOD

Perform a fluid and connections check on motorhomes and tow vehicles. First, look beneath the vehicle for signs of leaking fluids such as oil, coolant, gas, power steering fluid, transmission oil or wiper fluid. If you see a puddle, determine where it's coming from and what color it is. Oil and fuel leaks are the biggest concerns. Next, open the hood and check all fluid levels and colors. Look for insect and rodent nests. Check connections, and look for any chewed wires and hoses. Change the oil and filter, and perform all recommended services according to the owner's and maintenance manuals. Batteries should be checked for electrolyte level, and the terminals should be removed, cleaned, and treated with an anticorrosive product. If you don't feel qualified to do these steps yourself or you encounter any major problems, take your vehicle to a qualified mechanic.

## EXTERIOR

Start up and test the generator to make sure it is working properly. Fill and check the LP gas tank. Check the house battery.

Tighten all lug nuts, and check tires for wear, cracks and other damage. Use a penny to check the amount of tire tread and inflate tires to the proper pressure. Grease wheel bearings and check trailer axles and springs.

Test the water pump and water heater. Drain and flush the freshwater tank by adding 1/4-cup of household bleach for each 15 gallons of capacity. Fill the tank almost to capacity, and drive or tow the RV to mix. Run the hot water to get the bleach through the water heater, then drain the tank. Refill and repeat the process, this time with 1/4-cup of baking soda per 15 gallons.

Drain and fill with fresh water. Check the freshwater hose, sewer hose and shore power cord for wear.

Thoroughly inspect the exterior, including the body, window seals and roof. Look for cracks, holes and separation. Some cracks may be too small to detect, so be sure to look inside for stains on the ceiling or walls which would indicate a leak.

Once you have determined that there are no exterior leaks, go ahead and wash the RV with a specially formulated soap. This soap will help remove stains and bugs, and prevent discoloration. Wash the tires and shine all the chrome. It is a good idea to work in the shade, since washing a hot surface can result in hard-to-remove spots and streaks.

## INTERIOR

An RV that's been stored needs to be aired out and cleaned. It is a good idea to leave the doors and windows open while cleaning for fresh air circulation. Vacuum or shampoo the carpets, and clean the floors and other surfaces as needed. Wash any dishes that may have been left inside, and clean the shower, shower curtain and toilet. Add necessary chemicals to your black water tank.

Check and/or replace all batteries. Test smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors. Check the fire extinguishers and refill your first aid kit.

Test all appliances for proper functioning. Check all interior lights and electrical outlets to be sure they are in working order.

## EMERGENCY KIT

Before you begin your journey, make sure you have an emergency kit stocked with these essentials: flares, a gas can, reflective triangles, duct tape, jumper cables, wheel chocks, flashlights and water.

Being properly prepared and taking these extra steps will help ensure that your next trip is filled with fun. Happy motoring!

For more information about this topic, log on to [Motorhome.com/tech/diy/get-ready-for-summer-rv-trips/](http://Motorhome.com/tech/diy/get-ready-for-summer-rv-trips/).

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