

Should I Put A Plasma or LCD TV In My RV?

By Alan Wiener

I was recently asked this question: “I am replacing the old standard TV in my RV. Is it best to go with a Plasma or LCD TV?” I remember reading somewhere that altitude changes and temperature swings were not good for plasma TVs. Is it okay to use either a plasma or LCD TV while the RV is being driven?

I would suggest very strongly that you go with an LCD TV over a plasma TV. Here is why:

1. What you have heard about Plasma TVs being affected by altitude is correct. A plasma TV screen is comprised of tiny little chambers containing compressed gasses such as argon, neon and xenon. When you turn on your TV these gasses create the colors that you see on the TV screen.

When you are above the 6000 foot level; the pressure changes in these chambers cause the plasma TV to work harder to excite (activate) these gasses to create a picture. In fact, you can actually hear a buzzing sound from the screen, just like the buzzing you can hear when you stand close to a large neon sign.

Because the TV components are working harder to produce a picture, it also shortens the lifespan of the plasma TV.

The liquid crystal screens on an LCD TV are not affected by altitude. That is why the airlines use LCD TVs for their in-flight entertainment. LCD screens have been used for TVs, laptop computers, outdoor electrical equipment, etc. for years because of their durability.

2. Plasma TVs are usually heavier than LCD TVs and their glass screens are far more fragile than the screens on LCD TVs.

3. Lifespan is not a factor. It used to be that people chose LCD TVs over plasma TVs because LCD TVs had a longer lifespan than plasma TVs. That advantage is no longer the case, the new generation of plasma TVs last just as long as LCD TVs. The average lifespan of both TVs should average out to about 60,000 hours. That means if you watched TV for 8 hours every day, these TVs could theoretically last 20 years.

4. One other disadvantage of a plasma TV is picture burn-in. If you leave a static image on the screen for too long it could permanently leave that image on the screen. But the newer generations of plasmas have gotten better at preventing picture burn-in. LCD TVs are much less prone to burn-in. So, if you have children or grandchildren who love to play video games and pause their games for hours on end, then you are better off with an LCD TV.

5. How about picture quality? Videophiles swear that plasma TVs have a superior picture quality. To be honest, the only time I have noticed a better picture quality on a plasma versus an LCD TV is on TVs that have screens 50 inches or larger. The same thing holds true for the resolution of the TVs. Whether you get a 720p or 1080p LCD TV, you will not notice a difference between the two resolutions until you get into the 50” and larger screens.

Can you use your TV while driving down the road?

Yes, you can as long as you have a generator running or are using an Inverter to provide 120 volt power to the TV, you can watch DVDs, play video games or watch satellite TV (if you have a self tracking satellite dish on the roof of your RV).

Alan Wiener and his family have over 35 years of RVing experience under their belts. They share their knowledge and passion for RVing on Everything-about-rving.com.

It's on this website where they describe the different types of RVs that are available, provide tips on renting an RV, tips on buying an RV, tips on financing an RV, information on things to see and do while traveling in the USA and Canada, how to inspect an RV prior to purchase and much, much, more.