



RVLifestyleExperts.com

September 2018 Issue #368

RV Lifestyle Experts eZine

RV Pre-Purchase Inspection



Never has an RV inspection been more important than right now. There are so many dangerous new RVs rolling off the manufacturer's lot, that spending the money to have it checked out is not only a wise decision but possibly a life-saving one.

Do not let your excitement override your common sense. Make the dealer set up the new (or used) RV so you can check the appliances, hydraulics and electronics. Keep in mind that the salesperson shows many models and is not that familiar with your choice. You may have to come back another day, so add that extra visit into the plan.

Hiring a professional inspector pays off because a thorough check takes at least 3 hours. The big plus is that they know what to look for and give you a full report. They crawl under the rig to inspect the suspension and the pipes for leaks. They also climb up on the roof to make sure no obvious punctures or other signs of leaks are present. Recently, brand new roofs have been peeling off at freeway speeds. That is just one example of horror stories happening to the unsuspecting buyer.

Choosing the Right Vehicle

The first recreational vehicle we buy has an important bearing on our enjoyment of the RV lifestyle. This is even truer when this RV is our retirement home for several years. If we bought a "lemon," and certainly if we got juiced twice when the dealer worked out a solution, the whole dream melted away. If only we had hired someone to check it out first (gosh, we did that when we bought our home).

Since pre-purchase inspections are not routine, we wind up searching for someone to carry out this role. RV dealers, like auto dealers, generally do not

suggest or support this inspection process. Until 2014, there was no organized training and review in place for RV inspectors.

8 Inspection Tips

Check this list against the services quoted when you get that pre-purchase inspection.

1. Fit and Finish: Open and close all doors, drawers and windows. Check for proper latching. Doors especially get “out of whack” during transport from the manufacturer to the dealer and need re-adjustment.

2. Operate all Heating and Cooling Systems. Check that air flow is adequate from all vents. A kinked line can greatly decrease air flow. Heating systems are usually reliable, but air conditioners often have issues. Since most camping is done in the summer months, make sure the A/C is blowing strong and cold. Let it run for at least of ten minutes.

3. Electronics: Turn on the TV, the stereo, GPS, and test all buttons. We hear numerous times a year that brand-new TV’s do not work. Just because it’s new don’t assume everything is working—or even connected!

4. Plumbing: Most RV systems are dry at the dealer and there’s not much you can do to test it at that moment, but leaks are possible on first time trips. If the dealer refuses to hook it up to water, make an appointment to come back when water is available. If not, once you get set up for the first time, check under the sinks and under the RV itself for signs of leakage. You do not want to discover a leak a week after it starts.

5. Leveling Systems: More and more RVs are equipped with hydraulic jacks. The reliability is excellent but make sure they extend and retract smoothly, and you thoroughly understand how to operate them. Now is the time to ask questions.

6. Slideouts: Always open and close the slideouts several times. I cannot emphasize this enough. Listen for bumps or grinding. Someone can operate the slides while you watch them from underneath the RV. They should travel freely both ways without hesitation.

7. Roofing: Roofs on RV’s today are good, but leaks are possible. If the leaks drain into interior walls, they often do not become obvious for months. Climb up and give the roof a good visual inspection. Look for gouges, cuts, and tears, anything that may enable rainwater to access the interior. Check the trim around the perimeter of the roof to make sure it is attached securely.

8. Tires: Most RVs sit for weeks or months on a dealer’s lot. It’s expected that tires will lose some tire pressure. Low tire pressure is not always visually evident, and dealers don’t always check this like they should. Bring a tire pressure gauge and check the tires for proper pressure. This is the simplest part of an inspection but may have the largest impact on your safety.

My addition to this list: Check and note the **age** and **condition** of the tires. Make sure this request is written into the inspector’s checklist. Tires are an expensive replacement. Use this angle to adjust the asking price if applicable.

*New RVs should have stamped dates on the tires (if not found on the front, check the inside of the tire) that show the current year (or within 6 months). Note the date on *used* RV tires to give you a heads-up about future replacement.*

Seven years is the current expected end date, but a lot depends on the earlier care and maintenance by the owner. Tire pressure, road heat, sun protection, and various other factors are at play.

[RVReviews](#) publishes a pre-purchase checklist (\$24.95) or download this [FREE](#) one.

If a certified inspector is not available, hire a mobile RV repairperson to do the inspection. If buying directly from the owner, take it to an RV repair shop for a thorough inspection. Download one of the checklists to take with you.



NRVIA.org is an association formed to train and certify RV inspectors. The RV National Recreational Vehicle Inspectors Association, Inc. tests and certifies RV Inspectors in addition to connecting Inspectors with clients that need inspections done. To find an inspector for your pre-purchase check, [visit nrvia.org](http://visit.nrvia.org).

Geography Trivia

1. If you took a small boat 50 miles west of Haiti, what tiny place would you find?
a. Goat Island
b. Key West
c. Navassa
Hint: Few have heard of this “lost island.”

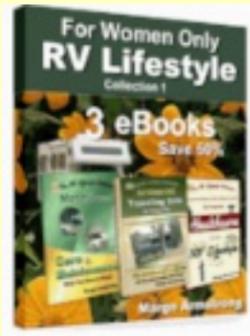
2. Name the world’s second largest lake.
a. Superior
b. Champlain
c. Onega
Hint: This lake has a shoreline in the United States and a shoreline in Canada.

3. Name the river that runs from Otsego Lake to Chesapeake Bay in Maryland.
a. Sabine
b. Susquehanna
c. Stikine
Hint: Otsego Lake is in Cooperstown, New York.

4. Name the place that recorded the highest temperature to date—134°F—in the United States.
a. Seymour, Texas
b. Volcano Springs, Calif.
c. Death Valley, Calif.
Hint: This spot also boasts the lowest point in the Americas.

5. At 412 billion gallons, this reservoir is the largest man-made reservoir in the world that is devoted solely to water supply.
a. Quabbin in Massachusetts
b. Lake Mead in Nevada and Arizona
c. Lake Shasta in California
Hint: The towns of Dana, Enfield, Greenwich, and Prescott were evacuated and submerged as part of the process to establish this reservoir.

1.Navassa. Columbus managed to find the American territory of Navassa in 1507, but today the 2-square-mile island remains virtually invisible to tourists and cruise ships that swarm the Caribbean.
2.Superior. Lake Superior, the largest, highest, and deepest of the Great Lakes, is also the world’s largest freshwater lake.
3.Susquehanna. In 1872, the normally quite shallow 444-mi long Susquehanna—swollen by the rains brought by Hurricane Agnes—flooded, causing one of the greatest flood disasters in U.S. history.
4.Death Valley, Calif. Death Valley’s high temperature of July 10, 1913, is bested only by the 136°F recorded in El Azizia, Libya.
5.Quabbin in Massachusetts. Two huge earthen dams were built in the 1930s, using the Swift River and, seasonally, the Ware River.



Just Released!
Look Inside. . .

For Women Only: RV Lifestyle Collection 1

Living full-time on the road for 23 years (the last 8 years as a solo) has given me some insight to share on the RV lifestyle. I am offering these experiences to you as 3 eBooks in 1 volume so you are better prepared to enjoy this great adventure than I was. The less stress the better!

For Women Only: RV Lifestyle Collection 1 contains everything you need to start your great adventure on the road. This electronic version allows you to jump from topic to topic quickly, find the answers to your questions, solve the problem, move on. Some of the topics the collection covers:

- **Traveling Solo**
- **Safety issues**
- **The Basics of Buying an RV**
- **Towing a car**
- **Care and Maintenance**
- **Healthcare on the Road**
- **Maintaining the RV Lifestyle**

So, what do you say, pick up a copy and let's hit the road.

Take a look inside . . .

