

Taking Your RV Delivery

After your loan application has been processed, and any finishing touches are done on your RV, it's time to come into the dealership, sign the paperwork, and take your unit home. Plan on a whole day for this process, as the dealership should take you through the RV and show you how everything works in a detailed walk-through.

It's best not to plan a long-distance trip immediately after picking up your RV. This process can often get delayed, and disappointments abound when you can't head across the U.S. for your dozens of reservations on the day you planned.

Pre-Delivery Inspection

Before you arrive, your dealership should have completed a pre-delivery inspection and fixed anything that you or they noticed was wrong when you chose the unit. They should fill your water tank and test the plumbing, make sure all of the electrical features are working, install a battery, fill the propane, test the furnace and propane appliances, and clean the unit.

Walk-Through

The walk-through is where your dealer shows you how everything works on your RV. It's a great idea to use your cell phone to take a video of the walk-through. Most people leave the dealership overwhelmed with info, and have a hard time keeping track of it all. You can also take notes, and make sure to ask any questions you might have.

During the walk-through you may find new problems that need to be fixed. It's ok to tell the dealer you don't want to take delivery until they are fixed. At the very least, make sure that anything that still needs to be done is in writing before you drive off with the RV.

Consider camping near the dealership in order to do a "shakedown," making sure everything is working properly. This is especially important if you've driven a long way to get the RV. Some dealerships will even set you up at a campground on your pick-up day, walk you through everything, and make sure you can return in the next day or two for basic fixes of problems.



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If you purchased a trailer or will be towing a vehicle behind your motorhome, this is also when they'll set up your hitch for you. Make sure the dealer shows you how to hook up safely, and let you practice in front of them. Don't be afraid to drive it a bit and come back for a hitch adjustment if things aren't perfect.

License and Registration

The dealer will issue you a temporary license tag and file your registration with the state for you, along with the sales tax you paid. Any dealer in any state should be able to file properly in your home state if you aren't buying in your local area. No matter where you purchase, you should be paying the sales tax rate for your home state.

After you've purchased the RV and taken over the keys, you'll need to follow your home state's process to get it registered. This may be entirely taken care of by the dealership, or it may require a separate trip to the DMV with the title, bill of sale, and proof of insurance. If you bought the RV used, you'll pay the sales tax at this time, and apply for a new title in your name.

RV Insurance

You'll need to have secured insurance before leaving the dealership. Technically, trailers are covered by the tow vehicle's insurance when traveling, but this is dicey to rely on. Many insurance claims on trailers don't arise from towing issues. Motorhomes are legally required to have their own insurance.

If you plan on camping extensively, consider getting "full-timer's" insurance. You do not need to live in the RV to get this type of coverage, but it's required if you do. Insurance companies may deny claims if you didn't tell them you were full-time. Full-timer's insurance also covers belongings and liability at the campsite (in case someone falls down your stairs, or bangs their head on your slide).



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Driving Your RV Off the Lot

Plan your route from the dealership well if you've never driven an RV before, and consider hitting up a big empty parking lot to practice. Don't feel rushed or allow yourself to get frazzled when getting your new RV home, or when backing it up into your driveway with your neighbors watching—get used to that, it's a campground pastime.

If you bought used, in some states you need to get an "in-transit" permit to drive the RV without it being registered. In others, you merely have to carry the bill of sale for a period of up to 30 days.



I Related Reading

[A Guide to Finding the Best RV Insurance](#)

[What to Know Before Your First Shakedown Trip](#)

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Walk-Through Checklist:

- Does each key work in the appropriate lock?
- Know the proper function of the black and gray water valves.
- If a tank flush is installed, understand how it operates.
- Understand where the low-point drains are for the freshwater system.
- Understand how the propane regulator works and how it switches between cylinders.
- Understand the battery type provided and how to maintain the batteries.
- Understand the proper tire inflation pressure.
- Verify the torque of the lug nuts or have the pre-delivery inspector do it while you watch.
- Learn how to extend and retract each awning.
- Learn to extend and retract each slide.
- Learn how to manually retract a slide when it is not working properly.
- Use the monitor panel to check battery and tank levels.
- Understand any battery disconnect switches.
- Learn the features of any electronic control panels.
- Learn how to light the oven and range.
- Learn how to adjust the fridge temperature.
- Understand which outlets are on the GFI circuit or an inverter circuit.
- Learn how to turn the inverter on or off and how to properly use it.
- Learn how to run the generator (if equipped).
- Learn how to fill the water tank.
- Learn to connect the city water.
- Understand how the water pump works.
- Understand any winterizing features.
- Understand proper operation of the RV toilet.
- Learn to operate the washer and dryer (if equipped).
- Learn where to turn on the water heater's propane and electric functions.
- Exercise the furnace and air conditioners and understand which thermostats control them.
- Learn how to extend any antennas and turn their power on and off.
- Learn how to connect your truck to your trailer, or your motorhome to your towed vehicle.
- Learn how to operate any stabilizers or leveling system.

