

# 12 RV MAINTENANCE TIPS





# WELCOME

The systems in your RV are not the same as the systems in your stick and brick home, having a basic knowledge of these systems, and how to maintain them will improve your adventure and your pocketbook.

As an RV park manager and campground host, I have had a number of occasions to talk to campers that tell me that they do not use this and that in their RV because they were not shown how to use it. All I can say to them is YouTube and the internet is your friend. Research the issue, this is the information age. Sign up to the RV Repair Club for videos on doing these Maintenance tasks.

So, a brief mention of the systems in an RV can be invaluable for all types of RVs. This is not an exhaustive listing of everything that should be on your checklist, you can add your own. We all know that there are many different types and manufacturers of RVs. It is imperative that all RV owners consult the maintenance suggestions that come in the Owner's Manual.

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**Refrigerator-** An RV refrigerator often costs a lot more than a home one does. Then again, a home refrigerator does not work with propane and electricity. To maintain the refrigerator, open the access door on the side of the RV, clean all dirt and debris from the inside of the access. Look for rust, clean the flue. Make sure that you do not get debris in the burner area. Then take the access cover off the top of the refrigerator, located on the roof, clean all debris from the screen. If the screen or the access cover is damaged, replace them right away. Make sure there is nothing blocking circulation on the inside of the refrigerator.



**Water Heater-** If you are getting rotten egg smells from the water in your sink, the likely culprit is the anode rod. You can purchase an anode rod at your local hardware store, Amazon.com, or at CampingWorld. You may need to have a pipe or similar breaker bar in order to get the anode rod to budge when attempting to replace it. If your water heater stops functioning, an easy fix is to replace the board on the water heater, I have had to do this twice.



**Furnace-** Your furnace is a great attractor of pet hair, dirt, and other debris. If you are lucky enough to have access to your furnace, blow out all the debris that you can get to, especially on the main board to prevent shorting out components. If your furnace stops operating, there are a few items that you should think of replacing, the high limit switch, the sail switch, and the Ignitor board. Kind of in that order. One other item that has given me problems is the Two Stage Propane Regulator, located by the main propane tank on my motorhome.



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The Propane System- Propane powers the refrigerator, cooking stovetop, water heater, and the furnace in most RV types. Propane is a gas that can cause asphyxiation if it leaks inside your RV. There is a sensor near the floor that should beep if there is a propane leak, test this alarm on a regular basis and replace the batteries when needed. It is also recommended that an RVer replace the unit every five years, this may save your life. In some RVs, if this alarm unit is turned off, the propane system will not operate, as a safety measure.



The Electrical System- In an RV, there are three types of electrical systems that you should know about and understand the difference between them. The lights, refrigerator pilot, furnace pilot, and water heater pilot are all part of the Direct Current or DC electrical system. This system takes power from what is referred to as the coach battery (not to be confused with the vehicle starting battery). If your coach battery is not charged, appliances like your refrigerator or furnace will not operate. The AC or Alternating Current electrical system can be referred to as Shore power or if you prefer, Edison power. This is the AC electrical outlets that power your television, microwave, and air conditioners. When you plug in at an RV Park, we use the term in an RV, Shore Power to differentiate between AC and DC. The last system comes from the engine of the motorhome or the tow vehicle, the alternator. This can charge batteries while you are on the road.



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**Plumbing-** Most of the plumbing systems in an RV are PECS, instead of PVC or copper that you have in a stick and brick home.

**The Water System-** There are three tanks on all RVs that comprise the water system. The freshwater tank is considered City Water, meaning drinking water. This tank will supply water for showers, dish washing, and drinking water. The Grey water tank is what your sink and shower water go in to. The Black water tank is connected to your toilet. To maintain the tanks: fresh water, use a sanitizer that is specially made for your fresh-water system, once a year to clean it out. The black water tank can be cleaned by putting a 5 pound or more of ice in the tank with 5 gallons of water, and drive around, dump when you get to your next location. The grey water tank just needs a drop in deodorizers to keep the odors down.

**Tires-** If you are traveling in your RV, a regular check of the inflation on the tires on the tow vehicle and any towed unit (trailer, fifth wheel, tow dolly, or car trailer), to prevent blowouts. Keep an eye on wear, bubbles, cracks, or age of the tire.

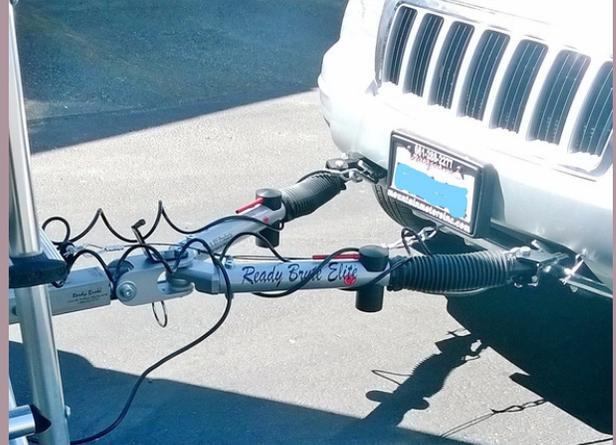
**Brakes-** This is part of your checklist, but it also is an important maintenance item. Keep track of when you replaced or checked your brakes on your maintenance record.



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**Fluids-** This also is a part of your road trip checklist, but oil changes are part of your maintenance record.

**The towing system-**This not an easy subject because there are several different types of towing systems. Let's just look at the four down or flat-towed vehicle system. Here you will need to have your car set up with a special bracket welded to the front of the car ( these base plates are designed to not be seen, so don't worry that your car will lose its curb appeal), a wiring system needs to connect the vehicle lights (like the brake, driving, and turn signals) to the tow vehicle. And you need a tow bar. The tow bar you purchase will be dependent on the weight of the vehicle that you plan to tow and the tow capacity or GVWR (Gross Vehicle Weight Requirements) of the tow vehicle or motorhome,



**RV Roof-** Roof maintenance is probably the most important of all of your maintenance tasks, especially if you live in your RV Full Time like I do. If your roof leaks it can damage the structure of your RV. You must stay on top of maintaining the roof. RVs have different materials covering them. You should consult your owner's manual for proper care of the roof or take it to a reputable RV shop. Two years ago, I redid the seals around all of the apparatuses on the roof of my motorhome using a 4" EternaBond RoofSeal tape, it works wonders.



While you are doing roof maintenance, take the shroud cover off of the Air Conditioners, and clean all of the leaves and debris from them. If you wash the roof you can nearly eliminate the streaks that RVs get when it rains.



# CHECKLIST



Clean the refrigerator vents

Replace the Propane regulator if needed.

Replace the Anode Rod in the Water Heater

Service the batteries

Clean the lint and debris from the furnace

Check for leaks in the plumbing and fix it

Replace switches in furnace, if needed.

Check tire inflation and age or the tires.

Check to make sure there are no leaks in the Propane System.

Inspect and clean the roof

You must maintain your RV if you want to have a trouble free camping experience.

If you suddenly and unexpectedly  
feel joy, don't hesitate.  
Give in to it.

MARY OLIVER



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If you see anything on this report that needs to be updated or needs more information added to it, please feel free to contact us.

# Thank you



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# 6 Steps to the Full Time RV Lifestyle

Inside the 5 D Full Time RV Framework, you'll get everything you need to create your Strategy Plan to start your Full Time RV adventure in as little as 30 days.

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