



Older Used RV Pre-Purchase Checklist

This checklist is designed to help you evaluate an older used RV before purchase and help you make a purchase decision. Print it and bring it with you to evaluate the unit.

- Maintenance History & Records? Receipts?
- Low Miles or High Miles?
- Set of manuals for the RV and interior components?
- Any known recalls?

Signs of Water Entry

Any notable signs of water damage or leaks not sufficiently repaired would be reason to walk away from a potential purchase. This kind of thing can be quite expensive to repair.

- The Roof:
 - Any stains on the inside surface of the ceiling?
 - Fabric or ceiling material hanging?
 - Soft spots?
 - If rubber roof, any tears in the rubber membrane on top?
- Inside all cabinets and closets
 - Softness in ceilings
 - Signs of water damage on cabinet woodwork
- Under all Windows
 - Water stains on carpet.
 - Soft spots around perimeter of window.
- Around Windshield
 - Any movement on the windshield?
 - Holes in adhesive holding the windshield?
- Floors
 - Soft spots
 - Walking on floor, look for soft spots in flooring
 - From outside, looking up inside basement doors, inspect floor under-surface
- Mildew signs in interior

- Bad musty smell
- Water staining or mildew stains on upholstery or curtains

Signs of the Potential For Water Entry

Even if it appears free of water damage, a change in the normal environment of the RV can lead to leaks you didn't know would happen. For instance, an RV which was covered being newly subjected to heavy rains. So, it is important to inspect seals and roof for potential issues that could lead to new leaks. This isn't a reason to avoid the motorhome, but would be items you'll want to fix very soon.

- Dried out seals on the windows
- Holes or dried/cracked sealant around the windshield
- Cracks in caulk around anything that protrudes from the roof
 - A/C
 - Vents
 - Handles
 - Antenna
- Cracked caulk on exterior walls

Exterior/Structure

- DOT codes on tires indicating suitable age (less than 5 years)
 - Check all 6 tires
- Dryrot on sidewall of tires?
- Slide-outs (if any) go in and out properly?
- Rubber seals around slide-outs look fresh and not dried out?
- Signs of water leakage around slide outs?
- Hydraulic levelers working properly (if any)?
- Rear camera working?
- Awnings extend properly?
 - Awning fabric free of holes?
 - Also check slide toppers
- Basement doors open properly
- Basement door support struts properly hold door open
- Entry door handle works properly, locks functional
- Headlines and running lights working?
- Caulk on exterior sides free of major cracking?
- Fiberglass Exterior
 - Signs of waviness in material
 - Delamination
- Oxidation on fiberglass?
- Full set of keys that work
 - Entry door
 - Driver side door (if applicable)
 - Basement storage doors
 - Fuel cap lock (if applicable)
- Entry door steps extend and retract properly

- Entry door steps tight and secure and don't collapse when you step on them.

Test Drive

- Oil level is adequate? (Pull dipstick and check level and color)
- Transmission fluid proper color (red translucent)
- Other fluids look proper levels
 - Brake fluid
 - Washer fluid
 - Power steering
 - Engine coolant
- Starts properly?
- Belt squeaking?
- Oil leaks
 - Look underneath vehicle while running
 - Inspect engine with flashlight and look for oily wetness
- Dashboard air conditioning functional?
- Engine hesitation upon acceleration?
- Transmission slippage?
- Engine temperature in normal range?
- Brakes working
 - Not pulling to either side
- Windshield wipers working
- Front cap shift
 - Windshield movement when you take a corner
 - Visible shifting of the glass on bumpy surface
- Any strange noises from engine or chassis? (Keep in mind that all rigs make noise when in motion)

Testing The Coach

- Water heater is working
 - Off propane
 - Off electric (if applicable)
- Refrigerator is cold, freezer is cold
 - Off electric
 - Unplug and ensure it properly switched to propane (if two-way)
- Microwave works
- Stove lights properly, all burners
- Sinks are working
 - Pipes beneath sink are leak-free while water is turned on
- Shower works
 - Check caulk around shower/tub enclosure to ensure it is keeping water from going through
- Roof A/C(s) cooling properly
- Furnace fires up and produce heat through the vents
- Ventilation fans turn on properly

- Above stove
- In bathroom
- In public areas
- Generator
 - How many hours on the generator?
 - Good fluid levels?
 - Does it start properly?
 - Maintenance records?
 - When was last oil change? Last fuel filter change?
 - Does it power the coach under load? Unplug coach and run with A/C and test.
- No abnormally foul order from toilet when not in use.
- Tank Gauges - Check for accuracy (if you have any ability to check actual level)
- Tank flush valves
 - Any leakage?
 - If cable operated valves, are cables working? Properly open/closing valves?
- City water hookups leaking when water pressure on?
- Water pump producing water pressure?
 - Pump turns off quickly when sink is turned off
 - Water pump is not occasionally turning on when faucets off (occasionally pump activity indicates a leak)
- TV antenna extends properly
- TVs turn on properly
- Drawers all working properly
- Overhead cabinet doors secure properly and support struts are working
- Interior lights working

REMEMBER:

No used RV is going to be in perfect condition. Look hard enough and you're going to find something. That's just the nature of the beast. The point is to minimize the things that will need to be dealt with.