Is your RV Ready for the Summer Heat, Inside and Out?

Watch: Newly Released RV Videos

Plus: Test your RV Batteries before it's too Late
## IN THIS ISSUE

**6 Is your RV Ready for the Heat?**  
10 hot weather tips to help prepare your RV for hot weather, inside and out.

**10 Downsizing RVs**  
There is nothing wrong with downsizing RVs, but before you do make sure you consider all the ramifications that come with the decision to downsize.

**12 RV Tire Pressure Tips**  
Do you know the correct inflation pressure for your RV tires? Get some tips to help clear up the confusion.

**16 How-To Test your RV batteries**  
Batteries are expensive. Testing your RV batteries is easy to do, and can save you from replacing the batteries before you should. Find out how to do it.

## DEPARTMENTS

**4 Editor’s Desk**

**15 Newly Released RV Videos**  
Watch some RV videos we produced since the last issue. How-to install an electric tongue jack, How-to level a travel trailer & How-to install a Central vacuum system.

**19 Balsamic Grilled Zucchini & Tomatoes**  
Here is another great recipe form our friends, The Cooking Ladies

**21 How-To Avoid Accidents at the Gas Pump**
For over 50 years the Equal-i-zer® hitch has been providing safe towing for families.

The Equal-i-zer hitch’s superior design makes it the best performing sway control hitch on the market. Four steel on steel friction points (known as 4-Point Sway Control™) and excellent weight distribution – provide unmatched resistance to your trailer’s attempts to sway. That’s the premium performance that keeps families safe, and the premium performance that keeps owners recommending the Equal-i-zer hitch to their friends.

Tell all of your friends.

“Last year I moved cross-country…across Alaska…to the East coast. [The Equal-i-zer hitch] performed flawlessly through the mountains, on the open road…and even in the tightest of campsites. I have told all my friends they need this hitch for their towing.”

- Devin T., Georgia

Get Superior Sway Control - Get the Original Equal-i-zer® Sway Control Hitch.
Happy Birthday America!

I don’t know about you, but I cannot believe 2015 will soon be half over. We have not used the RV as much as we would like this year, but the open road is calling. As soon as I get caught up on a few projects and deadlines we are hitting the road in the RV, starting with our annual trek to the Outer Banks later this month.

I hope you are enjoying the warm weather and the 2015 camping season in your RV.

Have a wonderful Fourth of July and enjoy this month’s issue. If you have RV friends and family tell them to subscribe too, and to like us on Facebook

Happy Camping,

~ Mark
Our digital RV Product Catalog puts all of our RV training products in one place, and we separate what products apply to what type of RV. For example if you own a travel trailer you can browse through the single DVD titles or go directly to the DVD value sets that apply specifically to travel trailers.

This helps accomplish two things; it eliminates the guess work as to which DVD titles go together, and it saves the RV consumer a significant amount of money with our DVD box set discounts. Our goal at RV Education 101 is simple, to help RV owners until they are comfortable operating and using their RV, and to make their entire RV experience safe, fun and stress free. [Browse the product catalog now]
Is your RV Ready for the Summer Heat, Inside & Out?

By Mark Polk

1) Checking Fluid Levels
For starters it’s a good idea to check all the fluid levels in the vehicle and make sure all service intervals are followed. This includes generators too. Engine oil lubricates moving parts and helps components run cooler. When the temperature increases the engine, transmission and axles are subjected to more heat than normal. Used oil and transmission fluid loses its lubricating qualities and the ability to help keep moving parts cool. Replacing fluids and filters can prevent heat related problems with your vehicles drive line components.

2) RV & Tow Vehicle Tires
Tires are directly affected by hot temperatures, especially underinflated tires. An underinflated tire creates a tremendous amount of heat and when you factor in hot summer temperatures the results can be disastrous. Inflate the tire pressure based on the load, and if a tire is overloaded try to redistribute some weight to correct the problem. Always check and adjust tire pressure when the tires are cold, and/or before traveling more than one mile.

3. Vehicle Cooling System
Hot temperatures affect a hot running engine. The vehicle’s cooling system is designed to prevent the heat producing...
engine from overheating and quite possibly seizing up. If you don’t maintain the vehicle’s cooling system rust, scale and corrosion build-up in the radiator, water pump and engine coolant passages resulting in an overheated engine. flushing the cooling system and replacing antifreeze at scheduled intervals can save your engine. Don’t forget to inspect the radiator and heater hoses too. Soft and/or brittle hoses can indicate potential problems.

4) Vehicle & RV Batteries
When temperatures increase lead acid battery life decreases. Heat is a battery’s enemy. Hot temperatures contribute to battery corrosion and to water evaporating from the electrolyte. Keep the battery connections clean and during hot weather or periods of high use check the battery frequently. Checking the water levels and adding distilled water as required can save your engine starting battery and your RV batteries. Caution: When working on batteries remove any jewelry, wear protective glasses and gloves, and avoid getting battery acid on your skin or clothing. If you are not comfortable working on or around batteries have the work done by a qualified repair facility.

Now that the vehicle is ready for the hot summer temperatures we can concentrate on staying cool when we arrive at our destination. Here are some more helpful hot weather camping tips.

Inside the RV:
6) Take Advantage of Shade
Strategically park your RV to take advantage of any shade that is available, especially on the side where the refrigerator vent is located. Don’t be afraid to ask for a shady site when you check-in at the campground. This will not only help keep the RV cool, but your refrigerator and roof air conditioner will work more efficiently too.

7) Air Conditioner
You can improve your air conditioner’s efficiency by keeping the A/C filters clean. In most cases you can wash the filters in warm soapy water, rinse thoroughly and allow them to dry before reinstalling. Another option is to clean the filters using a small hand held vacuum cleaner. I recommend you keep a new set of filters on hand in the event the old ones have seen better days.

8) RV Awnings
Use your main patio awning and any window awnings to assist in keeping the RV cool. In addition to using the awnings use your window blinds, or day/night shades to help keep the sun out and the cooler air inside. Proper ventilation helps prevent excess heat in your RV too. You can install vent covers, like Maxx Air vents, over the roof vents to allow for ventilation and air circulation. They are inexpensive, easy to install and they let the fresh air in, even when it’s raining.
9) Electrical Surge Protection
Campground voltage can fluctuate, especially during the hot summer months when all the campers are running their air conditioners. You should use a surge protector designed to protect your RV from improper wiring and in the event that voltage drops below 105-volts or spikes above 130-volts.

10) Refrigerator Efficiency
RV refrigerators are affected by outside temperatures too. To help the refrigerator work more effectively in hot weather try parking the RV with the side the refrigerator is on in the shade. Leave room between the foods for air to circulate. Avoid leaving the refrigerator or freezer door open for extended periods of time and use an inexpensive battery operated refrigerator fan to help circulate air.

Well there you have it, 10 quick and easy steps you can take to help prepare your RV for hot summer camping trips inside and out. ~ RV 101
EXPLORE AMERICA
ONE JOB AT A TIME

Take your RV lifestyle to the next level with Workamper News!

- Thousands of Workamping opportunities
- Articles and online resources to make your Workamping lifestyle successful
- Online tools to market yourself to employers, and do research to find a Workamping job that's a match
- Education and support for part-time or full-time RVers just like you!

www.workamper.com • 800-446-5627

Click Here To Join Today
Receive immediate access to job listings, resume builder, and more with our WorkamperPlus Green membership.

RV DVDs on every topic...

RV Education 101
Learning RVs the Easy Way

with MARK POLK
As Seen On TV

America's most popular RV TRAINING SERIES

RV DVDs, Books, E-books & DOWNLOADS with Step-by-Step Instructions

Click for More Information
I like to pride myself on the fact that I can do any type of camping imaginable. I have camped under the stars, in pup tents with the boy scouts, in less than desirable conditions throughout my military career, in good and bad weather, and in almost every type of RV manufactured. But as we get older we tend to enjoy more creature comforts when it comes to camping.

When I was selling RVs I remember telling my customers that once they own an RV with a slide-out it is hard to go back to one with no slide-outs. I should heed my own advice when it comes to downsizing RVs, especially when the entire RV could fit in the living room of the RV you have now!

Let me start from the beginning. A year-or-so-ago I was looking for a camper I could use to film some upcoming video projects we were working on, and nobody I knew owned one equipped the way we needed it to be. So, I started looking on Craigslist and ran across an ad for a used Lance truck camper. The owner wanted to get rid of it so it was priced right, and it was equipped with many of the features I needed for the upcoming video projects. The camper’s size, dry weight & estimated loaded weight worked with my truck at the time so I drove the 3-hours and picked it up.

It just so happened that Dawn’s niece was getting married in Colorado, and between my sense of adventure and dislike for flying this day and age I convinced Dawn it would be fun to take the truck camper to Colorado for the wedding.

I checked all the systems on the camper, fabricated some tie downs to secure it to the truck, carefully loaded it, as not to exceed any weight limitations, and we headed out on our RV adventure.

Marriage Test: Take 2-adults and 3-dogs on a 3,500 mile cross-country trip in an 8 ½ foot truck camper.
RV Downsizing Considerations:

One of the thoughts I had about taking the truck camper, rather than the motorhome, was saving some money on the cost of fuel. Our motorhome averages 7 ½ miles to a gallon. I thought it would be possible to nearly double that with the truck, but when all was said and done we averaged 11.7 miles to a gallon. We did use the truck’s air conditioner for most of the trip which had an impact on the fuel economy.

I definitely think it’s more difficult to adjust to a smaller RV after spending a good bit of time in a larger RV. I have always liked small RVs, but you need to seriously consider if a smaller RV will suit your specific needs. We usually travel with 2-adults, 1-teenager and 3-dogs. For our scenario we need a larger RV with the space required to accommodate all of the travelers.

In addition to interior space like the bathroom, sleeping arrangements, sitting space and kitchen area, with a smaller RV you also need to consider things like interior and exterior storage space, the size of the holding tanks, fresh water storage, and LP gas capacity.

We are also accustomed to having an onboard generator when we travel. When you dry camp or spend a night in a Wal-Mart parking lot a generator is a nice feature in an RV.

One of our friends saw a post on Facebook about the truck camper and said, “Nice, a traveling man cave!” When Dawn saw his response she said, that’s exactly what this is, your traveling man cave when you go to RV shows and business events by yourself.

We had a great trip and a fun adventure in the used Lance truck camper, but the moral to the story is to select an RV that is suited for you and how you travel. Trust me when I say it will make all your RV experiences the best they can be. The truck camper will be great for 1 or 2 adults, but not so much for 2-adults, 3-dogs and a 3,500 mile cross-country RV trip. ~ RV101
Question: Mark, can you tell me the correct pressure that you should inflate a tire to before taking a road trip. My trailer tires say max psi 70lbs. I can't seem to get a straight answer from our local shops, and I want to make sure I don't overheat them. I do know you check them first thing before driving and before the sun hits them. Thanks for any information you can provide.

Answer: It can be a bit confusing, but I'll try and explain. Tire manufacturers publish tire load and inflation tables for tires they manufacture. In a perfect world you would know what the actual load being placed on the tires is, and could go to the load and inflation tables for precise inflation pressure based on that load.

Since we know this isn't always practical, especially with RVs, there are a couple of ways to help determine tire inflation pressure. On the front left corner of the travel trailer you will find a Federal Certification Tag or label. This label displays information on tire inflation pressure, GVWR and GAWR. The tire inflation you see on the label is based on how much the trailer weighed when it was manufactured. If no additional weight is placed on tires this inflation pressure is accurate, but we all add weight to the RV when we load it for a trip. The question is how much weight is added, and the only answer is to have the RV weighed, preferably by individual wheel position.

The inflation pressure molded into the sidewall of the tire is the maximum amount of air pressure you would ever inflate the tire to, if a full load was placed on the tire. You can find the tires max load range on the sidewall too.
What this means is, if the trailer tires are not overloaded the inflation pressure (depending on actual weights) is somewhere between what is posted on the certification label and what is molded in the tire’s sidewall. In other words in some cases it is possible to increase tire load capacity by increasing the inflation pressure in your tires, but you cannot exceed the maximum pressure specified on the sidewall of the tire. You can usually find tire brand specific load and inflation tables on the internet.

It’s also important that you use the same inflation pressure on both ends of each axle. If you weigh the RV and the tire loads are different on each axle end the load tables might require different inflation pressures. When this happens you need to redistribute the load. If the load can not be redistributed you would inflate both of the tires on that axle to the inflation pressure required for the tire with the heaviest load. Keep in mind it cannot exceed the max tire pressure molded in the sidewall.

Here are a few general rules for tire inflation I like to use:

- Never pull the trailer with tires inflated to less pressure than required for the load placed on the tires.
- Never pull the trailer with tires inflated to less pressure than what is on the certification tag, no matter what the load.
- Never inflate your tires above the maximum pressure shown on the tire sidewalls.

~RV 101

Check out our 19 minute RV Tire Care & Maintenance E-course.

This online e-course is packed with information on caring for and maintaining your RV tires. Host Mark Polk explains tire inflation, tire inspection, overloading, tire maintenance, how to decipher the tire sidewall and much more in this informative online RV tire e-course. Total Run Time is 18 minutes 40 seconds.

This affordable online e-course is only $6.99

RV Tip: Replacing one tire on a motorized RV, due to lack of routine maintenance, can cost you 30 times the price of this e-course.
Our new Pick 6 for $60 is a big hit! Pick any 6 single DVD titles and pay just $10.00 per title.

**Insider TIP:** Each additional DVD added to your order will receive the same discount: 7 for $70, 8 for $80 etc.

Now you can select and build your own DVD box set based on your specific needs, and get the best discount we ever offered at the same time. This offer may only be available for a limited time so act now.

To get this special discounted offer you must go here and pick from the 14 DVD titles on this page.

**RV Education 101 Instant Video Downloads**

Don’t want to wait for DVDs to arrive in the mail? Try our instant downloads
Here are a few RV videos we released since the last issue:

- How To Level a Travel Trailer
- How To Install a Tongue Jack
- How To Install a RVac Plus Central Vacuum
The only way to know the condition of your RV batteries is to test the state of charge. All batteries lose charge over time, not to mention the parasitic loads that can drain RV batteries when they are sitting in storage. At a minimum you should test the battery state of charge monthly, and charge any battery that is at or below an 80% state of charge.

**Note:** An 80% state of charge for a 12-volt battery is 12.5 volts, and 6.25 volts for a 6-volt battery.

Testing the battery state of charge is not difficult, and can help prevent a dead battery when you least expect it. Here are three easy ways to test the condition of your RV batteries.

1) You can use the monitor panel in the RV.
2) You can measure the voltage with a digital voltmeter.
3) You can test the specific gravity with a hydrometer.

The least accurate of the three testing methods mentioned is the RV monitor panel, but it will give you a general idea of the battery’s condition. When you check the condition of your battery using the monitor panel make sure the RV is not plugged in to shore power, if it is you will get a false fully-charged reading.

For the best results check the monitor panel when the RV is not plugged in, and turn some overhead lights on to place a small load on the battery.

Measuring voltage with a voltmeter has its advantages. If you have sealed batteries your only choice is to use a voltmeter, and measuring voltage can give you a quick picture of the batteries depth of discharge, so you know when or if they need to be recharged. To measure
the voltage you need a good digital voltmeter. Set the meter to read DC voltage and connect the red lead to the positive battery terminal and the black lead to the negative battery terminal. A 12-volt battery that is charged should read between 12.5 and 12.7 volts. Readings less than 12.5 volts indicates the battery state of charge is below 80% and the battery needs to be charged.

A 6-volt battery that is charged should read 6.25 to 6.37 volts. Readings below 6.25 indicate the battery state of charge is below 80% and the battery needs to be charged.

**Note:** To get an accurate reading the battery should not be tested if it has been charged or discharged in the last 12 hours and preferably 24 hours.

The preferred method for testing the battery’s state of charge is to check the specific gravity reading of each cell. You can purchase a hydrometer at an auto parts store for about ten dollars. The electrolyte in the battery’s cells is a solution of acid and water so you need to wear safety glasses and gloves and avoid any contact with your skin.

The first step is to remove the vent caps and check the electrolyte levels. There needs to be enough in the cells for the hydrometer to pick up a sample. If you need to add any water prior to testing you will need to charge the battery and let it sit for 12 hours before testing the condition of the battery.

Next, fill and drain the hydrometer at least twice in each cell before taking a sample. Take the reading and record it and drain the electrolyte back into the cell you are testing. Test all of the cells and replace the vent caps when you are finished.

Specific gravity readings for a charged battery should read between 1.235 and 1.277. Specific gravity readings below 1.235 indicate the battery state of charge is less than 80% and the battery needs to be charged. If there is a .050 or more difference in the specific gravity reading between the highest and lowest cell, you have a weak or dead cell in the battery.

If you put your RV in long term storage it’s a good idea to remove the batteries and put them in storage too. This is quite simple to do. When you remove a battery always remember to remove the negative terminal first and then the positive terminal. Label the battery cables so you remember how to make the connections. Knowing the battery state of charge and re-charging a discharged in a timely manner will extend the life of the battery.  

*RV 101*
How will you Remember your travels?

The laptop we would've used to keep in touch with the kids.

The guy from Ed’s Towing. Spent three hours with him.

Cook’s Field, the week after we missed the Bluegrass Festival.

Not all insurance is equal. Just because you have your RV insured, doesn’t mean your whole RV experience is covered. Things like personal effects coverage, vacation liability, and towing expenses are frequently left out of other carriers’ policies. But at Explorer RV, we believe it’s more than just your RV we’re covering. It’s the travels, the good times, the memories. Visit us online to learn more or to get a quote.

PROTECTING YOUR RV. PROTECTING YOUR MEMORIES.

Get a FREE quote
BALSAMIC GRILLED ZUCCHINI & TOMATOES
(Makes 2 to 4 servings)

2 small green zucchini
2 tomatoes
extra virgin olive oil
freshly ground sea salt
freshly ground pepper
balsamic glaze
Parmesan cheese

- Slice each zucchini in half, lengthwise. Trim the ends.
- Cut the tomatoes in half, lengthwise. If necessary, trim a small portion of skin from the bottoms of the tomatoes so they will stand upright on a serving dish.
- Brush the cut sides of the zucchini and tomatoes with olive oil and sprinkle with sea salt and pepper.
- Lightly brush the barbecue grate with olive oil. Preheat the grill to medium-high.
- Place the zucchini and tomato halves cut side down on the grate.
- Cook until the zucchini and tomatoes are browned, tender, but still firm.
- Set the zucchini and tomato halves on a serving plate with grill-marked sides up.
- Drizzle balsamic glaze over the surface of the vegetables.
- Finely grate Parmesan cheese over the vegetables.
If you want access to informative RV how-to videos, RV product videos, RV installation videos and more take a minute to visit our RV Education YouTube channel.

You can subscribe to our channel and get notified every time we post a new video. We currently have over 250 RV Education 101 produced videos posted on our channel with over 16,000 subscribers and 4,591,000 video views.

It’s a great place to sharpen up on your RV skills and learn more about how to use and maintain your RV.
How-To Avoid Accidents at the Gas Pump

Getting to

Today I want to discuss and demonstrate how you can avoid one of the most common reported RV accidents, accidents at the gas pump.

Most RV related accidents are a result of the length, width or height of the RV, because it is longer, wider and taller than you are accustom to when you drive an automobile. But if you take a minute to learn more about tail swing and pivot points you can avoid the most common RV accident. Let’s check it out.

For starters when it’s time to refuel look for an exit where there are several gas stations available. This gives you a better selection for finding the easiest one to navigate in and out of. The two most common incidents at the pump are when you turn into or away from a concrete island or pole at the gas station. If you are turning away from the pole tail swing is the culprit. If you are turning towards the pole your pivot point is the culprit.

Tail swing is when you turn the RV in one direction and the rear of the RV swings out in the opposite direction. Depending on the RV, tail swing can be more than 30 inches. The pivot point of the RV is the center of the rear axle(s). If you turn in the direction of an object before the pivot point reaches the object you will hit it. If you turn in the direction of an object after the pivot point reaches the object you will clear it. This RV driving tip is an excerpt from our drive and tow like a pro DVDs.

Avoiding Accidents at the Gas Pump
Learn more about our products

For all your RV training needs we have you covered
RV Consumer E-Magazine Archives

Did you miss previous issues of RV Consumer e-Magazine? Catch up on all the information packed issues right here.

Happy RV Learning

Go To Archives now

Video download & DVD Box Set Deals

RV Education 101
Learning RVs the Easy Way
with MARK POLK

Americas most popular RV Training Series

Videos, Books, E-books
Looking for a bargain on some RV training materials? Check out Box Set deals in our Bargain Room

BARGAIN ROOM
Visit our sponsors who help make this free publication possible


www.vdcelectronics.com  www.equalizerhitch.com

RV Education 101 Learning RVs the Easy Way

Media Kit
Our goal with RV Consumer E-Magazine is to provide you with helpful information to make all of your RV experiences more enjoyable. I left my position as an RV Sales and F&I manager in 2000 to start RV Education 101.

We produce RV educational videos & DVDs and publish books and e-books on how to safely & properly use and maintain your RV. The reason I left my job was because of my concern about the lack of educational and safety awareness material available to the RV consumer, in other words you.

My wife Dawn left her position in RV sales to help start the company, and is our Sales and Marketing Director. We currently have a 35-foot Class A motor home. We have two boys, Tyler 18 and Josh 24, both avid RVers and two dogs, Roxie and Gracie. If you would like to learn more about us and about RV Education 101 please visit www.rveducation101.com

RV Consumer E-Magazine, Copyright 2011,2012,2013, 2014, 2015 Mark J. Polk except where indicated otherwise. All Rights Reserved worldwide. Reprint only with permission from copyright holder(s). All trademarks are the property of their respective owners. All content provided as is. Not all content may be the opinion of the RV Consumer Magazine editorial staff or of RV Education 101. Advertisers are solely responsible for ad content.

To subscribe please visit our sign up page. All RV Education e-publications are opt-in, available by subscription only. We neither use nor endorse the use of spam. Your e-mail address will only be used to distribute RV Education 101 e-news and will never be sold or given to any other entity.

If you no longer wish to receive e-news from RV Education 101 you can unsubscribe in the e-mail notification you receive in your in box.

RV Education 101  
150 Bay Ridge Rd.  
Harrells, NC 28444  
910-484-7615  
Contact:  
Mark@rveducation101.com  
Dawn@rveducation101.com