



Before You Go:

Before you take off on vacation with your vintage trailer, there are a few things you need to keep in mind. Here is a good checklist to run through each time before you tow your trailer:

First, you need to securely hitch your trailer to the towing vehicle. You should have a 2 inch ball hitch for towing your Trailer. The ball hitch height on the tow vehicle should be about 18 inches high for the 13 foot trailer.

With help from someone standing near the trailer, yet clear of where your vehicle will travel, back the towing vehicle up to the trailer hitch.

Be certain that the hitch is seated all the way down on the ball, and that the latch is locked in place. It is a good idea to use either a trailer hitch lock or a bolt to secure the hitch down and in place. Then attach the safety chains and connect the wire harness. When connecting the wire harness, make sure the tab on the trailer connector lines up with the notch on the car connector. Next, raise the center mount jack as far as it goes. For the 5th wheel jacks, after raising them as high as they go, remove the height adjustment pin, lift the lower member all the way up, and then re-insert and latch the pin to lock the jacks all the way up.

Finally, while at the front of the trailer, make sure that the LP tank is turned all the way off. If you have a dual tank setup, make sure you check both tanks.

Next, make a quick check of the trailer lights to confirm that they are working, checking left turn, right turn, brake lights, and tail lights. Check the marker lights on both sides as well. Please latch the awning on the front exterior window.

The last step before you travel is to take one final look around the camper, looking for any issues like low tire pressure and water or electrical connections that need to be properly stowed. If this is the first time you have towed your trailer in several weeks, check the tire pressure with a tire gauge. Don't forget to check the pressure on your spare tire. This is also a good time to check for any abnormal tire wear.

Finally take a look inside the camper trailer, confirming that all the windows are closed, roof vent is closed, all loose items are properly put away, all faucets and valves are off. Please latch the wardrobe closet. Your refrigerator should be latched as well to make sure it doesn't open during transit. Lock the door as you close it, and your camper is ready to tow.

It's a good habit to run through this checklist each time you tow your camper trailer. It only takes a couple of minutes, and assures that your trailer is ready to travel.

Next, let's take a look at proper loading and weight distribution:

How you load your trailer can have a big impact on how well it tows as you travel down the road. Weight needs to be distributed evenly side to side, and front to rear. Keep in mind that your LP tank or tanks will impact the weight, depending on how much gas you have in them. Ideally you will want enough weight on the hitch to keep the trailer from floating up in the front, but not so much that the towing vehicle is carrying too much weight causing the rear suspension to sag. Ideally you want from 100 to 200 pounds of weight on the hitch when your trailer is fully packed. The best method to determine the proper tongue weight for your trailer is this - approximately 10% of the total weight of the trailer should be on the hitch for correct trailing.

Also consider how much water you have in your holding tanks. Every gallon of water adds 8 pounds. Traveling with full tanks will add several hundred pounds to the weight of your trailer. If all tanks were completely full you may add over 200 pounds to the travel weight of the trailer.

Don't forget to distribute your supplies among the various storage areas under the bunks and rear dinette. Place any heavy items low in the trailer to reduce swaying, and as close to the axle as possible to maintain trailer balance.

Note that your vintage camper trailer is not designed to be a utility trailer. You should not pack excessive amounts of supplies in it while you are traveling. This will cause unnecessary wear on the axle, and shorten the life of your trailer. Pack most of your heavy gear in your tow vehicle

Pack items in a manner that will prevent them from moving around during travel. Any breakable items should be securely packed, as some bouncing may occur. Whenever possible use non-breakable items, such as plastic plates and cups instead of glass.

Finally, let's consider the brake controller. All trailers with electric brakes will require a brake control mounted in the tow vehicle. If you have a trailer with electric brakes you will need to set the controls properly. For instructions on how to do this we refer you to the instruction manual for your specific brake controller. When your brakes are set properly your vehicle should not feel as though the trailer is pushing it when you are trying to stop. At the same time, do not set your trailer brakes so aggressively that they are stopping the car and trailer both with the trailer brakes.

The goal is a smooth braking action, where the trailer brakes are stopping the trailer, and the auto brakes are stopping the tow vehicle.

The last thing to check before you tow your trailer is your mirrors. Once in the driver's seat, make any mirror adjustments that are needed to see around your trailer as you drive. And then you are set to go...

At the campground:

When you are choosing a camping spot there are a few things to keep in mind. First, the area should be fairly level. It is difficult to set up your trailer properly in an area that is not level. The area should have enough room to allow entrance to the various outer access panels. The ground should also be solid enough to support the trailer properly.

Your next step is to level the trailer:

Start this process by ascertaining which wheel side of the trailer is highest or lowest. Then, before removing the trailer from the tow vehicle, slide one or two leveling blocks under the trailer tire that needs to be leveled and then slowly pull the trailer up onto the leveling block to level that side of the trailer. Always have a person get out and guide you up onto the leveling blocks. Then, put the wheel safety chocks/blocks on the opposite tire for safety. Once you are done leveling the trailer, you can raise the trailer off the front hitch, unlock the safety chains and disconnect the wiring harness and slowly drive the tow vehicle away to a safe area. Next it's time to use the front jack and lower the trailer down to a level position.

Support Jacks:

Next it's time to put the support jacks under the trailer frame to give it support while it's stationary. Two jacks are for the back and one is for the front. These are easy to open and will support the trailer on the FRAME only. If the ground is a solid concrete pad the jacks will have plenty of support. If you are camping on soft ground, we provide supports for the jack stands so the jacks don't sink into the soft ground.

Some additional things to consider when looking for a camp site:

- Look for areas where water does not pool when it rains.
- Consider trees for shade.
- Decide how far you wish to walk to the rest rooms.
- If you plan to use water and power make sure you are close enough to the source.
- If children are along, note how accessible the play areas are, and if they are clearly visible from the camping spot.
- If pets need to be tied up or staked out, look for an area with shade that interferes with no other campsites.
- Beware of poison ivy or other such plants.
- Make sure that campfire spots are a safe distance from your trailer.

Happy and Safe camping!!

Vintage Camper Rental

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