

Subject:

October 2020 Newsletter from Air Safe Hitches

October 2020

Newsletter

10/1/20

Now Into Autumn, No Signs RVing is Slowing Down

RV PRO Staff September 23, 2020

There's a campground, rather peculiarly, in downtown Gibson City in Ford County along Route 9. We pass it several times a year on our way to the whimsical Harvest Moon Twin Drive-In. The campground has been busy. One night my wife and our daughter thought it was packed to capacity.

This year, this 2020, is different.

Something is happening with people, camping and RVs during the pandemic. Part is related to schooling and working remotely, part to staycations and part to safety.

The Point Grove Campground, at the confluence of the Iroquois and Kankakee rivers in Aroma Park, is far busier than usual.

"We usually have a couple of electric sites open here or there but this year every electric site was taken from as soon as we opened through the Labor Day holiday," emailed Vicki Winn, one of the hosts. "Our primitive sites were also pretty full. Lots of campers elected to use those sites and run generators for their campers. Lots more tent campers, too."

Beginner RV Camper Mistakes

Not having a SET up / CLOSE down list. Not having a list of tasks for steps to take when getting to camp and leaving camp is a huge mistake. After you've done it a few times, you can keep a mental list. At first, it helps to have these things written down and check them off one by one. This guarantees you don't miss anything and additionally, are doing them in the proper order. This is so important.

Not having one or both Good Sam memberships This is a HUGE first step that we suggest to anyone that is planning on RV travel. If you want to stay safe and keep your family safe, make sure your insurance is up to date and that you also have one or both of the Good Sam memberships. Good Sam has two incredible services that have helped us out several times over the past couple of years. There is a **Roadside Assistance program** and a **medical Travel Assist program**. I highly suggest either or both of these plans. See below or check out their sites for more details but DON'T make the mistake of not having Good Sam.

Not Being Aware of your Clearance. This is a really important one, one that can save your life and your RV. Be sure you know how tall and how long your camper is. Finding proper gas

stations to pull into is a must. Be aware when stopping off in tiny old towns where the streets are narrow and the turns are tight.

Not filling up your gas early enough. When traveling, there are roads that go on and on before you see a gas station. Especially, when you are traveling in rural and mountainous areas. Be sure you don't wait until the needle is in the red before looking for a gas station.

Not being level. If you aren't hooking up and are boondocking you can do this and it's not that big of a deal. If you have an RV refrigerator, it can be dangerous. Your fridge will not work properly and could cause damage and even a fire. Using **level blocks** to adjust for differences of the ground.

Pulling into a Space without Investigating it. Not only do you want to check your **mirrors**. It is best to actually Get Out and LOOK around before pulling in. Look at the ground for objects that might **puncture tires**, low spots, holes, ... Look up! Low tree limbs, dead trees, and utility poles. also, taking a walk around before you leave camp.

Not having books available when you need them. After being "In the dark" a couple of times with no internet or phone service, we decided it was time to invest in a couple of books to have on standby. I can't tell you how many times these particular books have helped us out along the way. And let's face it, even if you have internet, it's always nice to have something to read. What better to read about than books on RV travel and inspiration.

Driving too fast!

This is so dangerous. Take your time, go slow. Especially when you are new to driving an RV. Check the weather and wind before you travel. Wind speeds and traffic going by can have huge effects that you don't feel in a regular vehicle. Stay safe and drive slow. We suggest staying under 60 mph if at all possible.

Also, when timing out your trip to your next destination-be sure to add extra time for going under the speed limit. Your *GPS* will tell you that you will be there way sooner than you expect. Get a *GPS* that will give you options for routes for your RV.

Leaving Awnings Out and Vent Covers Open when it is windy. Windy days and awnings are not friends. Get into the habit of checking wind when checking the weather. A rolled out awning in high winds can tear and cause damage to your camper. Some like to use **tie downs**, but we have found it best to always keep it rolled in unless we are using it.

DON'T Use the same Hose for back-washing and fresh water. Not to mention, Storing them together. Ewww, Nooooo! Don't do this. This may seem obvious. Apparently, and unfortunately, it is a common occurrence. Be prepared with a **water hose** made for drinking water only. Use two separate hoses AND store them separately.

Use your stabilizers as jacks. RV **stabilizers** are not for jacking up your camper. They are only for keeping your camper from moving around too much. Use **jack stands** in addition to the stabilizers to help with those shimmy shakes. Also, placing **something under the stairs** is extremely helpful in stabilizing your Travel trailer or camper.

Not having a Surge Protector. As a boondocker, this doesn't matter if you're not hooking up to electric. If you are hooked up to electric, you will want to keep your appliances and wiring safe during surges. Electricity at RV parks and camps can be unreliable and do strange things. There are many horror stories to people tell about electrical issues. It is best to always use a surge protector. It is also a good idea to lock it up.

Bugs, bugs bugs!!! There is NOTHING that can ruin a camping/outside experience faster than those pesky mosquitoes! Unfortunately, this is something that most people do not prepare for, and end up being dinner for these unwanted bugs. You also don't want to have to use toxic sprays and chemicals on your skin to keep them at bay. So what is the solution? We use and LOVE our Thermacell devices.

These awesome, cost effective and easy to use little machines give you up to a 15 foot zone of protection from mosquitoes. They are super easy to use, and they WORK very well. You can get one that simply attaches to your belt or backpack or one that sits in front of your RV for

protection. We live in Florida where the bugs are awful and our Thermacell works at keeping them away.

Not Using Discounts

There are many ways to save money when on the road. Research the options for Camping memberships, rebates, point systems.

Not planning for Mail solutions

Sasquatch Mail is a company that helps with Mail solutions. They help out RV travelers with mail forwarding services, scanning, shredding, and storage.

Sasquatch Mail LLC Mail Forwarding Service

Not immediately replacing or upgrading your mattress after buying.

Getting a good nights rest is just as important as all of the adventures you will take in your camper. The mattress that comes with your RV is usually hard as a rock. Sometimes just adding a mattress topper will do the trick. People seem to really love these new **Lucid mattress toppers**.

Be sure you know the measurements of your bed, you may have an “**RV Queen**” which is shorter than a standard queen mattress.

Forgetting you will need to wash your clothes.

I actually enjoy going to laundromats in different cities. For instance, the giant folding tables are especially helpful for sheets and blankets. But, it can be a pain to have to stop and do laundry frequently. So if you are traveling without a washer and dryer in your RV, there are some other options.

Portable Washer and Dryer

This **mini washing machine** boasts almost a 10 lb capacity. It is small and quiet, yet powerful. It has a washing time of 15 minutes and spinning time of 5 minutes.

Allowing you to have clean clothes without having to leave your RV spot.

Being Unprepared for Power Loss

May you want to try out RV Boondocking for a few days or may be not. It's good to know that power outages can happen. When camping at a campground, there are bound to be disruptions. It is nice to be prepare by having some back up power.

RV Daily Tips. Monday, September 28, 2020

September 28, 2020

Tips for Interstate highway RV driving By Ray Burr, Love Your RV

The right lane is your friend. There are many advantages to staying in the far right lane: it's where the slower traffic like your RV is expected to be; you can see better behind you using the driver's side mirror; in an emergency the shoulder is right there for a pull-over.

Learn to anticipate : Driving a heavy rig is a disadvantage when braking and accelerating. Most other drivers are unaware of our limitations and will perform the most stupid maneuvers with blissful ignorance. RV drivers need to constantly anticipate the traffic all around to take action as soon as possible. Leave a fair distance in front of the rig for braking, but keep on the lookout for those who will use that space for a quick darting maneuver. Anticipate traffic slowdowns by keeping an eye out far ahead and watch for brake lights. If you see a bunch light up, expect to be needing to brake soon yourself.

Watch the truckers : Truckers often have some of the best and most experience on the Interstate. It's handy in large cities to notice which lanes the bulk of the truck traffic is taking when navigating their way through. Having driven through many times, they usually know what

is the best lane to be in to move through in the safest and most efficient manner. If you have a CB radio, listen to the truckers chatter and pick up information on the road ahead. If there is an accident or construction, they relay it back to other truckers on the CB channels.

Watch your rear: Take into account that there may be someone right behind you. With the length of your RV, the blind spot behind can be fairly large and it's easy for a car to hide back there. Many RVs are equipped with rear cameras, which is great — but if you don't have one, always remember that at anytime someone may dart out from behind you.

Make slow, deliberate movements: Have your turn signal on well in advance and move over slowly. This gives the other drivers a chance to correct themselves if they are darting out from behind you or coming upon you at a high rate of speed. Brake well in advance and slowly, giving tailgaters a chance to see you're slowing down.

Plot your course, especially when navigating through large metropolitan areas. Know your turns, the exit numbers, and which lane is best to be in well before you get there. The worst thing to do is try and force yourself across several lanes of traffic to get to an exit. Have a look at the roadway from a satellite view. We are able to use our iPad to see a bird's eye view of the highway and know ahead of time what the road pattern is for exits, and from that information we know the best lane to be in. This comes in real handy when there is a left-hand lane exit versus the standard right-hand variety.

Be well rested : Interstates are a demanding environment for RVers. You need to have all your wits about you and it takes sustained concentration to make your travels safe. It's just not worth saving time if you're starting to get tired. Take a break! It may save your or another's life. Bad things always seem to happen when you're tired and not paying full attention. This is why they have those things called Rest Stops.

Watch for debris: A common threat is pieces of tires from blowouts on the big rigs. Another is stuff like chairs and mattresses which have fallen off vehicles. This is another reason it pays to be always anticipating and scanning far ahead. It's also another good reason to travel in the right lane next to the shoulder because then you have somewhere to go if you quickly need to avoid an object.

Avoid bad weather : Poor weather while traveling increases your risks dramatically. Why push through during a driving rainstorm, snow, ice or fog when you can pull over and wait it out? When something goes wrong on an Interstate during poor weather, it usually is bad.

Have a well-maintained rig: Rig failures on the Interstate have consequences that magnify. A blowout on a two-lane rural road is a lot less concerning than on a packed eight-lane Interstate. Anything you can do to decrease the likelihood of mechanical failure is worth it. Make sure your tires are in excellent shape and properly inflated and that the lug nuts are tight. Make sure your brakes are in perfect shape. It's also extremely important that all signal and marker lights are functioning properly.

AirSafeHitches.com



We carry the largest selection of AIRSAFE™ Hitches

Check out our Hitches and Prices

[5th Wheel Hitches](#) - Omni-Directional 4 air bag vs competitor 2 air bag system

A four-air bag hitch is designed to allow the hitch head to move on the air bags in any direction based on articulation from the trailer itself. The result of such continuous motion results in a smooth ride and decrease chucking and surging forces from the trailer on the truck. In addition to the movement from the trailer, the 4-airbag hitch support 100% of the pin weight, increasing

the effectiveness of the air springs. This results in a smooth and controlled motion for the trailer on the truck.

[Receiver Hitches](#) – If you want a smoother ride and the ultimate in control, then you need the advantage provided by Air Safe Hitches with the Receiver Hitch by AirSafe™. With an Air Safe Receiver Hitch you will get a 90% smoother ride than with a traditional hitch, which can save you money. Glide across the highways and roads avoiding the constant bouncing, which leads to a decrease in gas mileage and early wear and tear on your tires. Our Air Safe Receiver Hitches also reduce stress on your truck and trailer suspension and help eliminate breakages inside the trailer. Our design allows total air ride vs the **Shocker Hitch** with the hinged approach.

[Gooseneck Hitches](#) – Air Safe offers the industry's largest selection of air hitches. Innovation and engineering insures you receive the safest and smoothest ride. "Enjoy the ride, arrive alive." With AIRSAFE™ you stop the flow of shock flow between the tow vehicle to the trailer and greatly reduce the explosion of energy when these two forces meet. The patented AIRSAFE™ hitches are engineered so the connection to the trailer is separated from the connection to the tow vehicle by an industrial strength airbag. Air Safe Gooseneck Hitches by AIRSAFE™ are simply the best air product money can buy. They are engineered with you and your precious cargo in mind. Simply remove your existing gooseneck tube and coupler and replace it with the AIRSAFE™ system. Available in round and square necks

[Click to check out the benefits of an air hitch vs a rigid hitch.](#)

RV Electricity – Just Ask Mike (J.A.M.): Dogbone adapter confusion cleared up

September 27, 2020

Welcome to my J.A.M. (Just Ask Mike) Session, a weekly column where I answer your basic electrical questions. If you're a newbie who's never plugged in a shore power cord (or ask – what's a shore power cord?), or wonder why your daughter's hair dryer keeps tripping the circuit breaker, this column is for you. Send your questions to Mike Sokol at mike (at) noshockzone.org with the subject line – JAM.

I've had several postings this week over on my RVElectricity Facebook group about dogbone adapters. No, these are not the bones that you actually feed your dog. But you'll see below that they sort of resemble the cartoon version of a big juicy bone any cartoon dog would love.

In the RV world these are AC power adapters that allow you to plug your 50-amp shore power RV into a 30- or 15-amp pedestal outlet. Or you can go the other way 'round and plug your 30-amp shore power RV into a 50-amp pedestal outlet.

Power to the people... But I've noticed some confusion in the naming of these adapters. For example, about half of my readers would call this male 30-amp to female 50-amp adapter a 30- to 50-amp dogbone since it allows you to use a 30-amp pedestal to power a 50-amp RV. However, the other half of you will call it a 50- to 30-amp dogbone adapter since it allows you to plug a 50-amp RV into a 30-amp pedestal.

This isn't just some argument about semantics and double spacing after the period at the end of a sentence. (Yes, our editor, Diane, and I discuss this all the time, and I throw in the occasional double space just to see if she's paying attention.)

Who's on first? For example, take a look at this next dogbone adapter, which is the reverse of the previous one shown. Note that it's a male 50-amp to female 30-amp adapter. So do we call this one a 50- to 30-amp dogbone because it lets you use a 50-amp outlet to power a 30-amp RV? Or do we call it a 30- to 50-amp dogbone since it lets you plug your 30-amp RV into a 50-amp outlet?

TNSTAAFL (There's No Such Thing As A Free Lunch) Now in neither of these cases do these dogbone adapters actually give your RV more amperage. That's determined by both the

circuit breaker capacity of the pedestal outlet, and well as the circuit breaker capacity of the RV's load center. So a 30-amp RV plugged into a 50-amp outlet is limited to 30 amperes of current (or at least it should be) by its own inlet breaker. And a 50-amp RV plugged into a 30-amp pedestal with an adapter can only use 30 amperes of current because it's limited by the pedestal's outlet circuit breaker.

10-Minute Tech: Dog-Friendly Steps

By Joe Malat

July 7, 2020

When my wife and I purchased our travel trailer, we were disappointed when our dog, an energetic Florida black mouth cur, did not share our enthusiasm. She has no problem negotiating steps at our house (or hopping up into our bed!), but she absolutely refused to climb the three steps into our rig. After talking to other dog owners and doing research, I was surprised to learn that some dogs will not climb steps without risers because they can see through the steps and it disorients them.

My solution was to "black out" the back side of the steps using a piece of black Coroplast, a waterproof, lightweight, corrugated plastic sheet material used by sign makers. RVers will know it as the black underpinning found under many RVs. Most sign shops will sell a small piece of the material, and it's also available on Amazon.

For my RV's Lippert SolidStep that folds up inside the entry door for travel, I cut the piece with a knife to 23¾ by 27½ inches for an exact fit. I slipped the bottom of the sheet into a lip on the back side of the bottom step, used a sharp-tipped razor knife to cut a small slit at the top of each side of the Coroplast, drilled a hole on each side of the horizontal piece at the top of the step and secured the sheet with a couple of black cable ties. That's it.

The trick worked like a charm. The first time Melody saw the "new" steps, she followed my wife up them without hesitation.

Horse Trailer Myth – Asking The Experts Gooseneck Vs. Tag-Along Interview

BY USRIDER WITH TOM SCHEVE

USR: Tom and his wife, Neva Scheve, have been advocating horse trailer safety since 1984. Both have written numerous articles for Dressage Today, Horse Illustrated, Equus, Horse and Rider, Trail Blazer, Southeast Horse Journal, and have been safety clinics around the country. Neva has written three books on horse trailers including "The Complete Guide to Buying, Maintaining, and Servicing a Horse Trailers."

We asked Tom some questions about the differences and advantages of different styles of trailers.

(Air Safe Hitches and its patented [Gooseneck](#) and [Receiver](#) Hitches by AirSafe™ will improve your ride by 90%. This Hitch will save you many repairs to your trailer down the road, repairs that would cost much more than the hitch.

Animals riding in trailers has always been a dangerous situation. The horse has to stand spread almost spread eagle in the trailer when in motion to keep from falling. The bounce and jerk of the trailer also places undue stress on the horse's leg muscles and joints, making the horse stressed out, tired, and jumpy by the time the trailer stops,

especially on long rides. The drive always seems to take a little longer too, because the driver has to stop and let the horses rest every four to six hours.

Using an Air Ride Hitch will give you a smoother ride for you and your horses, other animals, and cargo. The hitch will reduce the repairs and maintenance on your truck and trailer therefore saving you time and money.)

USR: Is a gooseneck horse trailer safer than a bumper pull trailer?

Tom: We prefer to call them “tag-along” trailers rather than “bumper pulls”. It’s just semantics, but the idea is that you should never hook a horse trailer to the actual bumper of a tow vehicle. So, the term “bumper pull” makes people believe it’s OK to use a ball installed on the bumper, but it’s important to always use a frame mounted hitch, usually with a weight distribution system. That being said, we use the term “bumper pull” on our website since it is the “common term.”

USR: Good point. So, is a gooseneck safer than a tag-along trailer?

Tom: Great Question. It’s a common misconception that gooseneck trailers are always safer, and that myth needs to be dispelled. But it gets tricky.

USR: How so?

Tom: Well, first of all, I always recommend a gooseneck trailer for 3 or more horses, whether it’s a slant or a straight load. But for a two-horse trailer, a tag-along (bumper pull) can be just as safe, and tow just as well if hitched up with the right equipment. The tricky part is the word “safer.” There are so many variables with towing that just calling the trailer itself “safer” doesn’t take in all the other parts, such as using the proper tow vehicle with the proper hitch. And, of course, the operator’s driving expertise is also a factor.

USR: Okay. I get it. So why would one choose a tag-along trailer over a gooseneck?

Tom: The benefits of a tag-along, or bumper pull, over a gooseneck is that it’s cheaper, shorter, tracks closer to the path of the tow vehicle when turning, can be pulled with a properly rated SUV or a truck, and it’s lighter so you don’t need such a big tow vehicle. If you don’t have a lot of storage space for the trailer, it doesn’t take up as much room in the yard. Unless the gooseneck area is needed for sleeping or storage, it doesn’t make sense to spend the extra money, unless one just prefers to have a gooseneck because they like it better.

USR: And the gooseneck?

Tom: Well, if you want a place to sleep or extra room for tack, the gooseneck area gives you plenty of extra room. If you want living quarters a gooseneck is usually mandatory. Also, it’s easier to pick the right tow vehicle and hitch because it’s obvious a full-sized truck is needed and the hitch only installs in the bed.

One of the reasons people believe a tag-along (bumper pull) trailer is not as stable is because it’s so easy to make a mistake when putting the tow vehicle/hitch combination together. And we often see people tow with some scary combinations. For instance, as I mentioned earlier, by towing directly on the bumper, the trailer would be susceptible to sway and other problems. There are also so many tow vehicles to choose from, it’s easy to choose a less capable tow vehicle.

USR: Which is easier to hook up?

Tom: Now remember, we’re talking about a two-horse gooseneck vs. a two-horse tag-along. The tag-along tongue weight is lighter maybe by 1,000 lbs. or more, so if the jack is in good working order it can be easier to jack up and down. And you don’t have to crawl up into the truck bed as you do for a gooseneck to fasten the safety chains, or in some cases, secure the coupler onto the ball.

USR: How about backing up to line up the coupler and ball?

Tom: Both are tricky but can be mastered with practice. If you don’t have a built-in tool chest in your truck you can see the ball from the cab when lining up. Because you can’t see the coupler or ball on a tag-along, you might need someone to guide you or do a “hit and miss.” With experience, it’s possible to hitch a tag-along alone with no problems. There are, however some innovative devices on the market that can help, and some tricks I’ve learned that can help with either style trailer that don’t cost anything.

USR: I’m sure our readers would like to know the tricks. Are they secret?

Tom: Not at all. With a gooseneck, the trick is to put your tailgate down, of course, and then place a small stone or piece of tape at the tip of the rear of the tailgate where you can see it from the driver's seat. This stone or tape should be placed directly in line with the ball in the truck. Then, you back straight under the trailer, making sure that the coupler goes right over the stone. If you are driving in a straight line, the coupler should then end up right over the ball.

USR: And for the tag-along?

Tom: With the trailer hitched up to the vehicle, take a piece of visible tape and put it up high on the nose of the trailer directly up from the coupler so you can see it from the driver's seat. If you have a truck or tail gate on your SUV, put another piece on the end of the tailgate to line up with the tape of the trailer. When you next hitch up, just align the two pieces of tape again.

USR: What about length? Do some like to pull the tag-along because it's not as long or big?

Tom: Actually, a two-horse tag-along with a dressing room is an average of 17 ½ feet including the tongue. So, you are pulling 17 ½ feet behind your truck. An average length for a gooseneck with dressing room is 21 ½ feet, but the gooseneck area, which is usually around 7 ½ feet, is over the truck. So, you really only have about 14 feet, give or take, that you're pulling behind your truck. So, the gooseneck can be a bit shorter. Of course, a tag-along without a dressing room is really the shortest option.

USR: Which do you think would fare best in an accident?

Tom: There are a lot of opinions on this, but I'd say it would depend on the type of accident.

USR: How so?

Tom: If it's a major accident, let's say a head on collision, there's a chance the gooseneck could pop off the ball, and if the safety chains break, the trailer is heading straight for the cab where you are sitting. By the way, this is why you always want to use safety chains.

In a minor accident, where you might have to do a severe swerve to avoid hitting something, the heavier gooseneck would be a bit more stable than being hitched behind the vehicle like a bumper pull. That's why it's important to have the proper hitch. A weight distribution system on a bumper pull adds quite a bit to the safety factor.

So, a lot of it depends on the circumstances and the quality of the trailer. I think either type of trailer should be strong enough to hold up as well as possible in an accident. There are no requirements for trailer strength, and no crash testing is done, so we only have to go on the information we get from examining accidents after they happen to see which type of construction holds up better. In my many years of experience, steel and steel framed trailers hold up much better in accidents.

USR: Any other insight you might want to add about gooseneck vs. tag-along?

Tom: The best choice is a trailer that makes one feel comfortable. Over the years, many of my customers like to see the horses in the trailer while they are traveling. So, a tag-along with big windows gives them that ability which results in a feeling of comfort. Others just like the feeling of a gooseneck because they feel safer or more secure. In that case, a gooseneck is the best choice. The point I've tried to make today is that, for a two-horse trailer, one doesn't need to buy a gooseneck trailer "just because."

Avoiding Low Clearance Obstructions with a Fifth Wheel

Avoiding low clearance obstructions with a fifth wheel often means doing some trip planning in advance. It is easy to get yourself into a very tight spot if you are unaware of a low clearance bridge on your route. One of the ways to avoid low clearance bridges is to use a GPS that has bridge height data built in. The drawback to this system is that not all bridges are in the system, especially bridges that are on small roads into state parks and back country campgrounds. Another way is to use a Rand McNally road atlas that truckers use to get low bridge data on their route.

A new device is the Giraffe G4 Overhead Collision Alert System. This device uses sonar to read the height of an obstruction and alert you if your Fifth Wheel is too high to pass underneath. Below is a video demonstrating the Giraffe G4 Overhead Collision Alert System.

Do You Know Why It's Called A "Fifth Wheel" RV?

The answer might surprise you.

STORY BY TEAM OUTDOORSY // AUGUST 24, 2020

"Fifth wheel" can allude to something other than your single friend who keeps tagging along your double dates. In the world of campers, it refers to a type of RV that gives you the same benefits of a larger model without being a full-blown house on wheels. If you're thinking of going in this direction— and have the right towing vehicle— a fifth wheel might be the perfect fit.

If you're curious how the fifth wheel got its name and what makes them such a great RV option, continue reading! We've got answers to your questions and a few reasons why you should consider renting a fifth-wheel for your next great RV road trip.

What is a fifth wheel?

As it turns out, a fifth wheel *does* involve another wheel, but maybe not in the kind that you're thinking.

Simply put, a fifth wheel is a hitch that allows the driver to connect a cargo attachment to the back of a large vehicle, like a tractor or truck. If you've seen a transport on the highway, then that's a prime example of the fifth wheel design. Today, the fifth wheel refers to the "U" shaped coupling component found on the back of the towing vehicle, be it a large transport, pickup truck, or semi-truck.

The fifth wheel got its name from its original design. They were initially invented for horse-drawn carriages in the mid-1850s. Manufacturers (who at the time built the components by hand) placed a horizontal wheel on the cargo frame or "truck" that allowed the front axle to pivot on its own. This worked wonders for stability and maneuverability.

Is a fifth wheel right for you?

Ultimately, the answer to this question depends on your comfort level, personal needs, and budget. If you're still on the fence, consider the following:

1. The fifth wheel hitches are handy Fifth wheel hitches are handy because they facilitate turning, allowing you to drive normally with the attachment automatically following suit. The hitch therefore eliminates the cumbersome maneuvering that you'll experience with a bumper pull. This is a tremendous advantage if you're not extremely comfortable towing or if you plan on driving in parks that are a little more difficult to navigate.

2. Fifth wheels have a better safety record The fifth wheel mechanism is sturdier and safer, regardless of travel speed. The high hitch point reduces trailer sway, a towing condition that is extremely dangerous. The hitch also better distributes the weight of the trailer and offers a more secure anchoring point. If you're bringing children or other passengers, a fifth wheel can give you extra peace of mind.

3. Fifth wheels use less gas Compared to a large Class A motorhome, a truck towing a fifth wheel uses much less gas. Obviously, your vehicle will work harder and therefore go through fuel faster, but not nearly at the same rate of a diesel-powered motor home. It's better for the environment and your wallet!

If you're already the outdoorsy type— or happen to own a heavy-duty vehicle like a pickup truck — then you're pretty much set to go. All you need to do is either buy or rent the "U" shaped attachment along with the trailer. If you don't own a pick-up, you can always rent a large truck and a fifth wheel compatible trailer separately. Many prefer this route compared to renting a motorhome that'll come with a much larger gas costs.

4. Larger groups can fit in a fifth wheel These RVs are great for large groups. Despite the fact that they give up a small amount of space to accommodate the hitch, these RVs can still be quite large, ranging between 20 and 40 feet. This allows you to accommodate up to ten people— perfect for newbie and veteran families alike. All you need is the right attachment and

enough horsepower to pull the RV.

5. Fifth wheels are also great for solo campers This type of trailer is equally great for solo travelers or sportspeople. Smaller models have plenty of space for storing equipment and other supplies and aren't too hard for one person to operate and maintain.

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