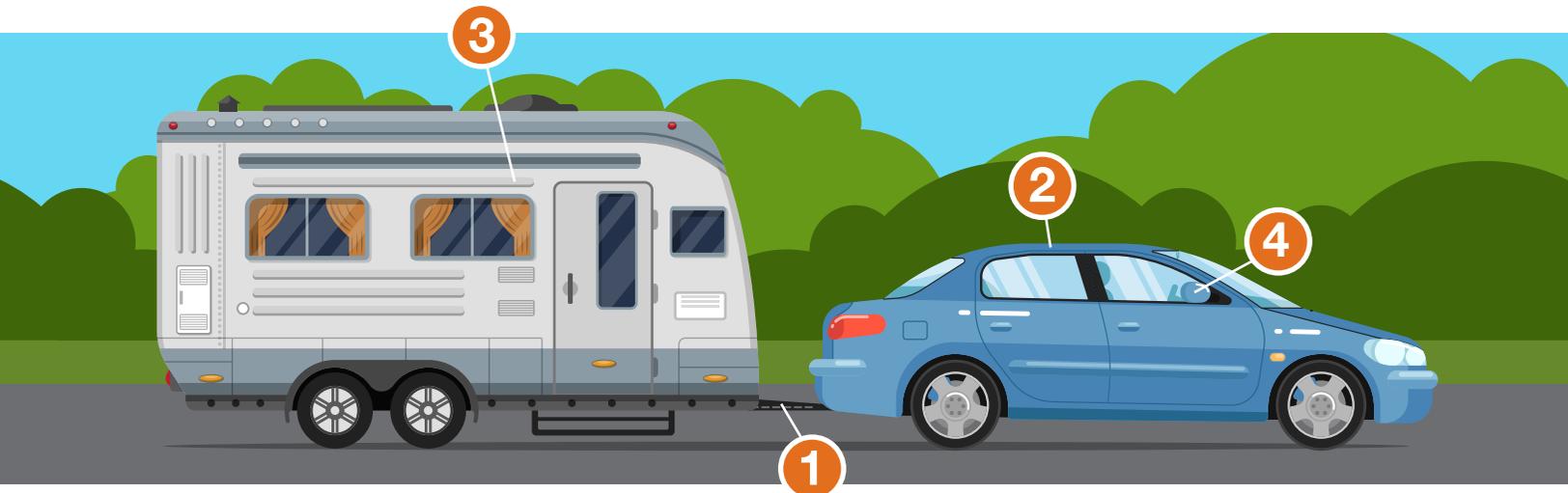


## ROAD TRIP SAFETY CHECKLIST

### How to Prepare for a Vacation via Travel Trailer

The pandemic has uprooted air travel plans and hotel stays. As a result, many people are making the great outdoors their summer vacation destination—and they're getting there via travel trailers and RVs.

If you've been thinking about hitting the road with a travel trailer, it pays to plan ahead. Let's take a look at what you should consider before starting your adventure.



## 4 Tips for Safe Travels With a Travel Trailer

### 1. Make sure your tow vehicle and trailer are a good match.

Most vehicles can be equipped to tow a trailer. The type, size, and weight of the trailer will determine the proper tow vehicle and tow equipment. Review your vehicle's owner's manual and manufacturer's guide to learn about its capabilities. Also, research what hitch systems are compatible with it. Some vehicle manufacturers offer special towing packages to accommodate different types of trailers.

### 2. Confirm that no maintenance issues exist.

To help avoid unwanted surprises on your journey, check your vehicle's brakes, lights, fluids, cooling system, springs and shock absorbers, tire pressure, and turn signals. Also, check your side- and rear-view mirrors for good visibility when the trailer is attached.

Make sure that your trailer's lights are working, too, to ensure that wiring is connected properly. Confirm that your trailer's brakes are operating optimally and tire pressure is ideal. Also, look at the hitching device and safety chains to confirm they are firmly attached and adjusted properly.

### 3. Pay attention to weight limits and distribution.

Take note of the maximum weight your owner's manual says your vehicle can safely tow. If you exceed that limit, it could cause damage to your vehicle or lead to accidents. Remember that the weight of your trailer AND everything you pack inside contributes to its total weight.

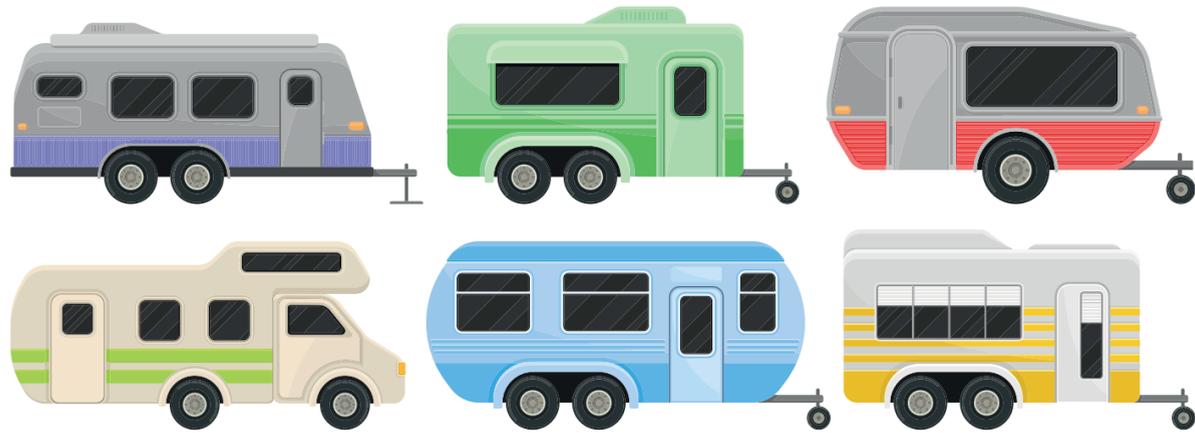
Also, plan to distribute the weight of items inside of the trailer properly. Recommendations from the **National Highway Traffic Safety Administration** include:

- Balance weight from side to side
- Secure and brace items to prevent them from moving during travel
- Adjust the height of the tow vehicle/trailer interface
- Apply load-leveling (weight distributing hitch bars)

How you pack your belongings will affect the tongue weight (the weight that a fully loaded trailer exerts downward on the hitch ball of the tow vehicle). Experts suggest positioning about 60 percent of your load's weight in front (but not too far in front) of the axle. Doing so will help ensure the tongue weight falls within the recommended 10 - 15 percent of the trailer weight.

### 4. Learn about best driving practices when towing a trailer. (continued on page 4)

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## The RV Business is Booming

As the pandemic upends our lives, probably for a long time to come, people are looking for a safe way to hit the road, and many of them are taking their lodging along. However, it is not just vacationers who are buying RV's, but also people who see them as mobile offices. Rather than just work from home, these folks subscribe to working from anywhere. From a Wall Street Journal article, "the RV market is getting a bump from traditional leisure users. After a dozen or so weeks in which people were waiting out the pandemic at home, consumers see RVs as an appealing way to travel while avoiding airports, hotels, and other crowded public spaces

according to Kathryn Thompson, CEO of Thompson Research Group". "Americans still want to get out on the road, but an RV is somewhere that they can still control the environment," she said. According to analyst Michael A Swartz of Suntrust Robinson Humphrey, a survey they did showed "40% to 50% of units sold in May went to first time buyers compared with a more typical level of 30% to 35%. That 20% down payment is probably similar to what you were paying for you kids' summer camp or your vacation, especially if you're not going to college football games or NFL games." he said.

## A Rose is a Rose

**AAA says there are 40 different names for automatic emergency braking and 20 different names for adaptive cruise control . . .**

From Panorama Magazine: "a rose by any other name is still a rose it is said, but everybody already knows what a rose looks like. But what if we are talking about ASCC, LPA, DAW, BCA, and HVA? Very few people know what those acronyms—which are manufacturer names for driver assist safety systems such as automatic braking, lane departure systems, adaptive cruise control, and the like—refer to. To avoid confusion among consumers, especially in the used car market, a number of organizations, including AAA, NHTSA, and J. D. Power would like to standardize the names of these assist systems. AAA says there are 40 different names for automatic emergency braking and 20 different names for adaptive cruise control, leading to mass confusion among consumers. The organizations are suggesting 3 word descriptive names such as, "adaptive cruise control" rather than acronyms and names such as Distronic, which is what Mercedes calls it."

## Hey, I Just Need a Headlight Bulb

Panorama Magazine reports a new development in headlight technology from Marelli called Digital Micromirror. "What the heck is that, you ask?" It's a "1.3 million-pixel mirror-matrix-based digital system to illuminate the road. High power LEDs project onto the mirror matrix, which then provide the optimal illumination for the road conditions. The first to use the technology is the Mercedes S-Class. Remember when a headlamp went out and all you had to do was replace the bulb? It will never be that simple again." I wonder what this thing is going to cost to fix? Some of the cars we see now already cost over \$1000 for a headlamp repair.

## Just Needs a Battery

The knock on electric vehicles is battery life and range, but Tesla announced a new battery technology that can withstand 4000 charge cycles as opposed to the 1000 to 1500 cycles with current technology. Panorama reports that "Tesla claims that this will give a battery life of a million miles". "And in November fuel-cell-powered semi-truck manufacturer Nikola announced a new battery technology that is more eco-friendly than lithium-ion, and would give passenger vehicles a range of 600 miles, and their line of trucks a range of 800 miles fully loaded. This battery will also last a million miles according to Nikola CEO Trevor Milton, who told reporters, 'it's a new type of battery. I can't get into too much detail about it, but it does have some aspects of lithium in it. It just does get rid of cobalt, magnesium, nickel and aluminum.' "



## HUMOR me

- **The television** was invented two years after the invention of sliced bread.
- It took the creator of the **Rubik's Cube** one month to solve the cube after he created it.
- **German chocolate cake** is named after an American baker named Samuel German.
- **Mr. Potato Head** was the first toy to be advertised on TV.
- **Camels** have three eyelids.
- The only letter that doesn't appear on the **periodic table** is J.
- **Starfish** don't have blood. They circulate nutrients by using seawater in their vascular system.
- No piece of **paper** can be folded more than 7 times.
- There are 18 different animal shapes in the **animal cracker** zoo.
- "**Bluetooth**" technology was named after a 10th-century king, King Harald Bluetooth. He united Denmark and Norway, just like the technology united computers and cell phones.

From <https://parade.com/1019661/marilyniles/wtf-facts/>

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- ½ tablespoon butter
- ½ cup onion, chopped
- 4 ounces of Neufchatel cheese, softened
- 2 tablespoons chicken broth
- 2 tablespoons prepared pesto (such as Barilla®)
- ¼ teaspoon garlic powder
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- ½ teaspoon basil
- ½ teaspoon oregano
- 3 cups fresh spinach
- 1 cup diced canned tomatoes
- 1 pound skinless, boneless chicken thighs
- 1 pinch salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
- ½ cup shredded mozzarella cheese

Total Time: Prep 30 min. Cook 2 hours

Melt butter in a skillet and cook onion until soft and translucent, about 5 minutes. Remove from skillet and set aside.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F(175 degrees C).

Combine Neufchatel cheese, chicken broth, pesto, garlic powder, black pepper, basil and oregano, and beat using an electric mixer until well combined. Stir in spinach and sauteed onions. Gently fold in tomatoes. Transfer mixture into a casserole dish.

Season chicken with salt and pepper and place on top of spinach mixture in the dish.

Cover and bake in preheated oven until chicken is no longer pink in the center and the juices run clear, about 45 minutes. An instant-read thermometer inserted into the center should read at least 165 degrees F.

Remove cover from casserole dish, top with mozzarella cheese, return to oven uncovered for 10 minutes. Serve over pasta.

*This recipe was modified from one found at allrecipes.com*



## ROAD TRIP SAFETY CHECKLIST

### How to Prepare for a Vacation via Travel Trailer

*(continued from page 1)*

#### 4. Learn about best driving practices when towing a trailer.

Ensure a smoother ride by paying attention to the following tips:

- Always anticipate the need to slow down and allow considerably more distance when stopping.
- Downshift to help with braking on downgrades and provide additional power for going uphill.
- Make wider turns at curves and corners than you would if you were driving just your vehicle. Your trailers wheels are closer to the inside of a turn than your vehicle's tires.
- Avoid parking on slopes. If you have no choice, when you park, have someone place blocks on the downhill side of the trailer wheels.
- Signal well in advance when changing lanes or passing another vehicle. Allow extra distance to clear the vehicle you're passing before pulling back into the lane.
- When you uncouple your travel trailer from your vehicle, place blocks at the trailer's front and rear tires to prevent it from rolling away. Also, place jack stands under the rear of the trailer to help prevent the tongue from rotating upward when disconnecting it from your vehicle.

For a bon voyage, heed these suggestions and review your vehicle and trailer manufacturers' recommendations. If you need any assistance with your pre-vacation vehicle maintenance, give us a call. [PJ](#)



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