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2020 GOOD SAM GUIDE TO DINGHY TOWING

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FOR 2020



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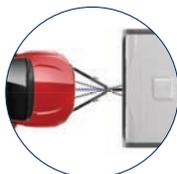
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THE MOBILE LIFESTYLE

As a motorhome owner, travel options are virtually limitless. You can explore the country in comfort and, whether on the road or at the RV park, you're always a few short steps away from a homemade meal and your own warm bed. If you don't like the park's amenities or the weather turns foul, you can pack up and move on. That's the beauty of the mobile lifestyle. But even though your home-on-wheels can transport you to many favorite places with ease, there are limitations. When visiting popular attractions or navigating narrow campgrounds and congested roadways, you've probably wished for a method of transportation that's a bit less white-knuckle. That's where towing a dinghy vehicle behind your motorhome really shines.

The good news is it's never been easier to equip a dinghy vehicle and motorhome for road duty — you just need to do a little research and preparation. The *2020 Guide to Dinghy Towing* is your one-stop resource for determining which new vehicles are manufacturer-approved for flat towing, and also to learn about the equipment and procedures needed to tow four-down.

Our 2020 listings section begins on page 12 and includes vehicles that have specifically been approved by the manufacturer for recreational (dinghy) towing. While some vehicles are easy to tow, others require that very detailed and lengthy procedures be followed before and during towing to prevent damage. We've included some of that information in the listings, but **you will still need to check the owner's manual of the specific vehicle for more detailed procedures.**

Once you've confirmed that a particular vehicle is dinghy-towable, the next move is to

create the dinghy-to-motorhome connection. As highlighted in "The Essentials" (beginning on page 18), connecting a motorhome and a dinghy can be a surprisingly smooth operation. It begins with a baseplate (which is actually a bracket affixed to the dinghy vehicle). Next, a dinghy tow bar is placed in the motorhome's hitch receiver and then connects to the dinghy vehicle's new baseplate. A number of accessories are also available to help protect the dinghy while on the road.

Properly wiring a dinghy vehicle is another consideration. It is essential that the brake- and taillights on the dinghy work in concert with those on the motorhome, and there are a number of options to do not only that, but also to help keep the dinghy's battery charged while en route. Check out "Juice to Go," beginning on page 26.

The final component of safe dinghy towing is a supplemental braking system. Today's motorhomes can accommodate a lot of dinghy weight. While many new chassis have tow ratings of at least 4,000 pounds, certain luxury coaches have a gross combined weight rating (GCWR) of 60,000 pounds or more — with up to 25% (15,000 pounds) of that available for towing. Dinghy brakes are mandatory in most states and Canadian provinces; besides, when extra weight is added, there must be a way to slow the mass down without overtaxing the brakes on the motorhome. Portable systems can be installed in minutes, and permanent installations remain unobtrusive. To discover what's available to slow down a dinghy vehicle, check out "Put a Stop to It," beginning on page 28.

Motorhomes are the best way to tap into the mobile lifestyle. Towing a dinghy vehicle ensures you optimize that mobility at all times. **M**

This guide only addresses 2020 vehicles. Guides for earlier model years are available at: www.motorhome.com/download-dinghy-guides



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An at-a-glance reference for motorhome and dinghy-towing laws and requirements across North America



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DINGHY TOWING 2020

SUVS AND PICKUPS DOMINATE THIS YEAR'S LIST OF NEW TOWABLE VEHICLES, PLUS WE PICK OUR FAVORITE FLAT TOWABLES

Quite apart from being towable, a new dinghy vehicle has to look good and fit your needs and lifestyle.

Sure, a used mail truck might be a great buy, and may even accommodate your kayak, but wouldn't a new SUV look better? Plus, no one will accost you for the package they never received. Well, we're glad you agree, because this year's guide is chock-full of new vehicles that can accommodate just about any need, lifestyle or budget. This year, we're doing things a little bit differently, starting with calling out our favorite new dinghy vehicles based on features, towability and overall coolness. Of course, that doesn't mean that's all you have to choose from: The 2020 listings [which begin on page 12] include everything from compact runabouts to full-size pickups, all of which can be dinghy towed with the blessing of the manufacturer.

Ready to shop? Let's go!

Favorite Full-size SUV

Chevrolet Suburban and Tahoe

If you've always wanted a new Chevrolet Suburban or Tahoe SUV, this is your year. Because soon, you'll be able to choose from the outgoing 2020 model and the all-new 2021 Suburban and Tahoe, which will make their way to dealer showrooms by late spring/early summer. Though it was too early at press time to get our hot little hands on an owner's manual, GM's engineering team tells us that the new models will be dinghy-towable when equipped with 4WD and a two-

speed transfer case, just as in previous years.

As you might expect, the new Suburban and Tahoe will have more of everything than ever before. An all-new chassis featuring independent multi-link rear suspension offers a longer wheelbase (more than 4 inches for the Suburban and nearly 5 inches for the Tahoe) along with increased overall length (1.3 inches for the Suburban and nearly 7 inches for the Tahoe). The changes result in more leg- and cargo room, especially for the smaller Tahoe; it gets 3 extra inches of legroom in the second row, and a whopping 10.1 inches in the third row, plus an additional 10.2 inches of cargo room behind the third-row seat. In total, Suburban gets an additional 23 cubic feet of maximum cargo room, while the Tahoe gains 28.2 inches. An entirely new "SUV specific" interior offers up to five display screens, including a standard 10-inch diagonal central color touch screen (the largest in its segment); an available 8-inch diagonal instrument cluster; an available 15-inch Heads-Up Display; and available dual 12.6-inch diagonal rear-seat LCD displays, part of the rear-seat media system. There will be more to watch, too, including HD Surround Vision, up to nine camera views and a Hitch Guidance with Hitch View feature, part of the available Max Trailering package. Power options include the venerable 5.3- or 6.2-liter V-8, as well as a new addition: the 3.0-liter inline six Duramax turbodiesel, which made its debut in GM full-size trucks last summer. All three engines will be backed by the



CHEVROLET TAHOE RST

10L80 10-speed automatic transmission. In addition, the all-new models offer both the Air Ride Adaptive Suspension system and Magnetic Ride Control, along with 30 safety and driver convenience features, including automatic emergency braking and rear pedestrian alert.



[Favorite Small SUV](#)

Ford Escape Hybrid

Introduced last fall, the Ford Escape bears no resemblance to its predecessors, and forgoes any off-road pretensions in favor of enhanced on-road manners, greater flexibility, increased utility and improved performance. A new architecture incorporating high-strength steel is lighter and more rigid than before, and combined with an aluminum hood, control arms, mini spare and other weight-saving tricks, reduces weight by up to 200 pounds over the outgoing model, according to Ford. This is also the most aerodynamic Escape ever, owing to a sleek new profile and wind-cheating features like active grille shutters, front tire spoilers and redesigned fog light pockets/sideview mirrors.

The Escape has two new engine offerings: a 1.5-liter three-cylinder EcoBoost and 2.0-liter four-cylinder EcoBoost backed by an eight-speed automatic transmission, but these models are not towable. Ironically, however, the hybrid and plug-in models, with a CVT transmission (usually the enemy of dinghy towing), are. (We're told the plug-in models will be towable, but further information was unavailable at press time.) We're not complaining, as motivation comes from a 2.5-liter Atkinson-cycle four-cylinder engine that generates 198 hp in the hybrid, and 209 hp in the plug-in. Both

models are available in front- or all-wheel-drive and come standard with Co-Pilot360, Ford's suite of safety technologies that includes the Blind Spot Information System (BLIS) with Cross-Traffic Alert, pre-collision assist with Automatic Emergency Braking (AEB), auto high-beam headlamps and a rearview camera. Available features include Adaptive Cruise Control with Stop-and-Go and Lane Centering, Evasive Steering Assist, which aids in emergency lane changes; and Active Park Assist, which allows the driver to park in a parallel or perpendicular spot with the touch of a button.

[Favorite Midsize SUV](#)

Ford Edge ST

Dinghy vehicles can be convenient, practical or rugged, but rarely are they as cool as Ford's Edge ST. Completely redesigned for 2019, the Edge model line got a facelift that made the Edge, well, edgier. Gone are the appliance-like styling cues, replaced with a sportier new front and rear fascia, grille, hood and lift gate. More importantly, 2019 marked the introduction of the stonking Edge ST, the first Ford Performance SUV. Even more importantly, Ford approves it for dinghy towing.

In the timing that often accompanies new-vehicle launches, the Edge ST didn't make it into last year's guide, but we're here to inform you that the 2019 and 2020 models are towable. Powered by a hot-rodged 2.7-liter EcoBoost V-6 with 330 hp and 380 lb-ft of torque, the Edge ST puts its grunt to the ground with an eight-speed SelectShift automatic transmission and standard all-wheel-drive. Performance-tuned suspension conspires with Sport Mode, selectable traction control and 20-inch wheels for confident handling, and purist features like bigger brakes and summer-only tires are available.

[Favorite Full-size Truck](#)

Ford F-150 Raptor

Any four-wheel-drive pickup can take you to



out-of-the-way places, but if you want to get there at a high rate of speed, the bonkers Ford Raptor is the way to do it. Looking like a refugee from a stadium off-road event, the Raptor is a special addition to the F-150 lineup, with a high-performance version of the ubiquitous 3.5-liter EcoBoost V-6 that generates 450 hp and 510 lb-ft of torque, delivered to all four wheels via a 10-speed automatic transmission. It's available in either SuperCab or SuperCrew configurations, and is approved for towing four-down. There's plenty of off-road gear included as well, such as Fox racing shocks that automatically adjust for terrain and speed, Trail Control for navigating the rough stuff, and Terrain Management System, featuring seven modes that can be adjusted for various surface conditions. Of course, you'll also get skid plates to protect the expensive bits underneath, BF Goodrich All-Terrain tires and available features like bead lock wheels and a 4.10:1-gear front axle with a Torsen differential.



JEEP GLADIATOR RUBICON

Favorite Midsize Truck

Jeep Gladiator

Introduced last year as a 2020 model, the Gladiator is everything you'd expect from a

Jeep-branded truck, with hardcore hardware such as Command-Trac or Rock-Trac 4x4 systems, third-generation Dana 44 axles, Tru-Lock electronic front and rear axle lockers, Trac Lok limited-slip differential, sway bar disconnect and 33-inch off-road tires. And just like the legendary Wrangler on which it's based, the Gladiator is towable with either a manual or automatic transmission. The Gladiator boasts up to 7,650 pounds of towing capacity and up to 1,600 pounds of payload, and offers a choice of a standard 285-hp 3.6-liter Pentastar V-6 or a third-generation 3.0-liter EcoDiesel engine (available by the time you read this) that produces 260 hp along with 442 lb-ft of twist. Jeep hasn't forgotten the fun factor, either — the Gladiator features a fold-down windshield and dozens of different door, top and windshield combinations, plus practical storage solutions like rear seats that can be folded flat for larger items. Available in Sport, Sport S, Overland and the no-holds-barred Rubicon, the Gladiator offers equipment and capability unmatched by any of its competitors.

Favorite Luxury SUV

Lincoln Nautilus

If you own a luxury motorhome, it makes sense that you probably want to continue the theme with the dinghy vehicle you bring along for your journeys. Introduced in the 2019 model year as a replacement for the aging Lincoln MKX, the midsize Nautilus continues Lincoln's elegant new design language and brings with it a wide range of over-the-top luxury features. Among these are available Ultra Comfort seats, which were developed with input from orthopedic surgeons and can be adjusted up to 22 ways; a 19-speaker Revel audio system; and more.



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The top-of-the-line Black Label trim is even offered in different “themes,” such as Gala, which “showcases deep colors and rich textures, inspired by the high fashion and atmosphere of excitement and anticipation inherent at New York’s Met Gala,” according to Lincoln. Then there’s Chalet, which “evokes the contrasting pleasures of pulse-pounding mountain slopes and the inherent comfort of an après-ski lodge.” Finally, there’s Thoroughbred, which “celebrates the distinguished and elite lifestyle of horse racing, offering a reflection of traditional American history.” Ookay ... well, now that’s out of the way.

More importantly, the Nautilus is towable when ordered with the available 2.7-liter twin-turbocharged V-6 (otherwise known as the 2.7-liter EcoBoost), which is the only version that is approved. That’s OK, though, because this engine knocks out 335 hp and 380 lb-ft of torque and is backed by an eight-speed Select-Shift automatic transmission with paddle shifters.

A suite of standard/available driver convenience and safety features include a Blind Spot Information System (BLIS) cross-traffic alert, pre-collision assist with automatic emergency braking, auto high beams, a lane-keeping system, rearview camera, Evasive Steer Assist, lane-centering technology and adaptive cruise control. Nautilus drivers can also stay connected through a standard embedded 4G modem with Wi-Fi hotspot capability and an available concealed wireless charging pad for compatible smartphones. Naturally, Ford’s SYNC 3 comes standard with Apple CarPlay and Android Auto compatibility.

NISSAN VERSA S



Editor’s Note: The information provided in the following listings has been provided by the manufacturers and is current as of press time; however, it is not uncommon for manufacturers to make mid-year engineering changes, which is why we always recommend that you check with the owner’s manual that comes with the vehicle that you intend to purchase to confirm that the specific vehicle is approved for dinghy towing before you buy. In addition, some 2020-model-year vehicles, like the Nissan Frontier, had not been released when we compiled this guide, so please check our website for any additions, deletions or updates to the *2020 Guide to Dinghy Towing* at www.motorhome.com/download-dinghy-guides

OFF THE LIST

We would be remiss if we didn’t mention the models that are no longer on our list, either because they’ve been discontinued, or they’re no longer towable. For 2020, these include:

FORD EXPLORER: This long-time favorite switched to rear-wheel-drive architecture this year, which is great for driving, but not for towing, apparently. For this year at least, Ford isn’t approving its midsize ute as your next dinghy.

FORD FIESTA AND FLEX: No longer in production.

GMC ACADIA: Last year it was, this year it isn’t. We’re guessing this change is due to the new nine-speed automatic transmission.

NISSAN SENTRA: Like the Versa, it’s been completely redesigned for 2020, but is only available with a CVT transmission now. So, buh-bye.

NISSAN SENTRA NISMO: Not available at press time. A new model is expected, but we don’t know when, or if it will be towable, yet.

TOYOTA COROLLA AND YARIS HATCHBACK: These were the only models in Toyota’s line that were approved for towing, but after the 2020 redesign, they’re not. So, that makes for a grand total of zero dinghy-approved Toyotas.

Favorite Compact Car

Nissan Versa S

Nissan’s humble Versa made new-car ownership possible for millions of people with a starting price just north of \$12,000, but its styling left something to be desired. That changes for 2020 with an all-new Versa, which shares the design language of its bigger siblings, Altima and Maxima, and offers more features than ever. The base Versa S, with its 1.6-liter, 122-hp engine and five-speed manual transmission is towable, and comes with some impressive standard features such as front and rear power windows with driver’s one-touch auto up/down, cruise control, tilt/telescoping steering column, remote keyless entry push-button start and RearView Monitor. It doesn’t scrimp on safety either, with standard automatic braking with pedestrian detection, lane-departure warning, high beam assist, hill start assist, stability/traction control and more. With an MSRP that’s still less than \$15,000, it’s an unbeatable value. **M**

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DINGHY LISTINGS 2020

MAKE/ MODEL	BASE CURB WEIGHT/LBS.	SPEED/DISTANCE LIMITS	TOWABLE W/ MANUAL TRANS.	TOWABLE W/ AUTO TRANS.	MILEAGE CITY/HWY.	APPROX. RETAIL PRICE RANGE
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BUICK

Envision FWD/AWD	3,755	None	N/A	Yes	22/29 21/27	\$33,190-\$44,795
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Special Procedures: Turn ignition on, shift transmission to N (Neutral). With transmission in N, turn ignition off. To prevent battery from draining, remove fuses 29 and 32 (Body Control Module) from instrument panel fuse block. Reinstall fuses once the destination has been reached.

CADILLAC

Escalade 4WD (all)	5,856	None	N/A	Yes	14/21	\$75,490-\$95,590
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Special Procedures: Only dinghy tow 4WD vehicles with a two-speed transfer case that have a Neutral position and a 4WD Low setting. Negative battery cable must be disconnected. Apply parking brake and start engine. For vehicles with Electric Parking Brakes (EPB), the EPB cannot be applied, tires must be chocked. Shift transfer case to N (Neutral). Check that vehicle is in N by shifting transmission to R (Reverse) and then to D (Drive). There should be no movement of vehicle while shifting. Shift transmission into D. Turn engine off. Disconnect negative battery cable and secure the nut and bolt. Cover negative battery post with a non-conductive material to prevent contact with negative battery terminal. Shift transmission to P (Park). Move steering wheel to make sure steering column is unlocked. With foot on the brake pedal, release parking brake. If equipped with Keyless Access, keep RKE transmitter outside of vehicle, manually lock doors. Access vehicle as if it has a dead RKE transmitter battery, by using a key in the door lock.

CHEVROLET

Blazer	3,810	65 mph/None	N/A	Yes	21/28	\$29,995-\$46,795
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Special Procedures: Remove shift-lever boot by pulling up on the rear of the trim plate. Use a small screwdriver or tool to press and hold the manual release button on the rear right. Shift transmission to N (Neutral). Run engine at the beginning of each day and at each RV fuel stop for about 5 minutes. See owner's manual for disconnecting dinghy.

Colorado 4WD	4,167	None	N/A	Yes	19/24	\$29,795-\$47,595
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Special Procedures: Only flat tow 4WD vehicles with a Neutral and 4WD Low setting. Apply parking brake, start engine. Shift transfer case to Neutral. Check to ensure transmission is in N by shifting to Reverse, then to Drive. There should be no movement of vehicle while shifting. With engine off, leave key in ACC/ACCESSORY to prevent steering column from locking. Disconnect negative battery cable and secure nut and bolt. Cover negative battery post with non-conductive material. Move steering wheel to ensure steering column is unlocked. With foot on brake pedal, release parking brake. See owner's manual for disconnecting dinghy.

Equinox	3,274	65 mph/None	N/A	Yes	26/31	\$24,995-\$36,895
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Special Procedures: Engine should be run at the beginning of each day and at each RV fuel stop for about 5 minutes. If equipped with AWD, engage AWD system and confirm that it's on. Shift transmission to N (Neutral). Put vehicle into ACC/ACCESSORY by pressing ENGINE START/STOP one time without brake pedal applied. An amber light will appear in the button when in ACC/ACCESSORY mode. The chime will ring continuously for 30 minutes. Leave transmission in N. Turn off all accessories that are not needed.

Malibu with 2.0L engine	3,126	65 mph/None	N/A	Yes*	22/32	\$34,195
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Special Procedures: *Only models with a 2.0-liter engine can be towed. Start engine. Shift transmission to N (Neutral), turn engine off and leave transmission in N. Disconnect negative battery cable. Run engine at the beginning of each day and at each RV fuel stop for about 5 minutes.

Silverado 1500 4WD	4,730	None	N/A	Yes	19/22	\$34,390-\$60,890
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Special Procedures: Only dinghy tow 4WD vehicles with a two-speed transfer case that have an N (Neutral) and a Four-Wheel Drive Low setting. Start engine and shift transfer case to Neutral. Release parking brake. Check to ensure vehicle is in N by shifting to Drive and then to Reverse. There should be no movement of vehicle while shifting. Shift transmission to D. If equipped with an ignition key, turn ignition to ACC/ACCESSORY. If equipped with Keyless Access, turn engine off. Disregard the Shift to P (Park) DIC message. Disconnect negative battery cable. If the battery is left connected or the battery cable contacts the post, the Electric Parking Brake may activate during towing, which could cause a crash. Shift transmission to P. Move steering wheel to make sure steering column is unlocked. If the vehicle has an ignition key, keep it in the towed vehicle in ACC/ACCESSORY to prevent the steering column from locking. If equipped with Keyless Access, keep the RKE transmitter outside of the vehicle and manually lock the doors. Access vehicle by using the key in the door lock.

Silverado 2500 HD 4WD	6,418	None	N/A	Yes	N/A	\$38,495-\$72,645
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Special Procedures: Only dinghy tow 4WD vehicles with a two-speed transfer case that have an N (Neutral) and a Four-Wheel Drive Low setting. Start engine and shift transfer case to Neutral. Release parking brake. Check to ensure vehicle is in N by shifting to Drive and then to Reverse. There should be no movement of vehicle while shifting. Shift transmission to D. If equipped with an ignition key, turn ignition to ACC/ACCESSORY. If equipped with Keyless Access, turn engine off. Disregard the Shift to P (Park) DIC message. Disconnect negative battery cable. If the battery is left connected or the battery cable contacts the post, the Electric Parking Brake may activate during towing, which could cause a crash. Shift transmission to P. Move steering wheel to make sure steering column is unlocked. If the vehicle has an ignition key, keep it in the towed vehicle in ACC/ACCESSORY to prevent the steering column from locking. If equipped with Keyless Access, keep the RKE transmitter outside of the vehicle and manually lock the doors. Access vehicle by using the key in the door lock.

Silverado 3500 HD 4WD	6,528	None	N/A	Yes	N/A	\$39,695-\$75,045
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Special Procedures: Only dinghy tow 4WD vehicles with a two-speed transfer case that have an N (Neutral) and a Four-Wheel Drive Low setting. Start engine and shift transfer case to Neutral. Release parking brake. Check to ensure vehicle is in N by shifting to Drive and then to Reverse. There should be no movement of vehicle while shifting. Shift transmission to D. If equipped with an ignition key, turn ignition to ACC/ACCESSORY. If equipped with Keyless Access, turn engine off. Disregard the Shift to P (Park) DIC message. Disconnect negative battery cable. If the battery is left connected or the battery cable contacts the post, the Electric Parking Brake may activate during towing, which could cause a crash. Shift transmission to P. Move steering wheel to make sure steering column is unlocked. If the vehicle has an ignition key, keep it in the towed vehicle in ACC/ACCESSORY to prevent the steering column from locking. If equipped with Keyless Access, keep the RKE transmitter outside of the vehicle and manually lock the doors. Access vehicle by using the key in the door lock.

FOR ALL VEHICLES: SEE OWNER'S MANUAL FOR COMPLETE DETAILS.

MAKE/ MODEL	BASE CURB WEIGHT/LBS.	SPEED/DISTANCE LIMITS	TOWABLE W/ MANUAL TRANS.	TOWABLE W/ AUTO TRANS.	MILEAGE CITY/HWY.	APPROX. RETAIL PRICE RANGE
Sonic	2,794	65 mph/None	N/A	Yes	26/34	\$17,595-\$22,395
Special Procedures: Run the engine at the beginning of each day and at each RV fuel stop for about 5 minutes. Shift auto transmission to P (Park), turn ignition off. Set parking brake. To prevent battery from draining while vehicle is being towed, remove the DLIS fuse from fuse block. For Keyless Access vehicles, remove BCM1 and BCM2 fuses from the instrument panel fuse block and fuse 7 from the engine compartment fuse block. Turn ignition on, apply brake pedal. Shift transmission to Neutral. Turn ignition to ACC/ACCESSORY. Release parking brake. Re-install fuses once destination has been reached.						
Spark	2,246	70 mph/None	Yes	No	29/38	\$14,095-\$17,495
Special Procedures: Shift the transmission to Neutral. Disconnect the negative battery cable. Cover negative battery post with non-conductive material. Release parking brake.						
Suburban 4WD	5,808	None	N/A	Yes	14/21	\$55,995-\$75,320
Special Procedures: Only flat tow 4WD vehicles with two-speed transfer case with a Neutral position and 4WD Low setting. Apply parking brake, start engine. Shift transfer case to Neutral. Check to ensure vehicle is in N by shifting to Reverse, then to Drive. There should be no movement of vehicle while shifting. With transmission in D (Drive), turn ignition to ACC/ACCESSORY. If equipped with Keyless Access, turn engine off. Disconnect negative battery cable and secure nut and bolt. Cover negative battery post with non-conductive material. Shift transmission to P (Park). Move steering wheel to ensure steering column is unlocked. Release parking brake. Keep ignition key in ACC/ACCESSORY to prevent steering column from locking. If equipped with Keyless Access, keep RKE transmitter outside of vehicle and manually lock doors. Access vehicle as if it has a dead RKE transmitter battery, by using the key in the door lock. See owner's manual for disconnecting dinghy.						
Tahoe 4WD	5,602	None	N/A	Yes	15/21	\$53,295-\$72,520
Special Procedures: Only flat tow 4WD vehicles with two-speed transfer case with a Neutral position and 4WD Low setting. Apply parking brake, start engine. Shift transfer case to Neutral. Check to ensure vehicle is in N by shifting to Reverse, then to Drive. There should be no movement of vehicle while shifting. With transmission in D (Drive), turn ignition to ACC/ACCESSORY. If equipped with Keyless Access, turn engine off. Disconnect negative battery cable and secure nut and bolt. Cover negative battery post with non-conductive material. Shift transmission to P (Park). Move steering wheel to ensure steering column is unlocked. Release parking brake. Keep ignition key in ACC/ACCESSORY to prevent steering column from locking. If equipped with Keyless Access, keep RKE transmitter outside of vehicle and manually lock doors. Access vehicle as if it has a dead RKE transmitter battery, by using the key in the door lock. See owner's manual for disconnecting dinghy.						
Traverse	4,362	65 mph/None	N/A	Yes	18/27	\$30,995-\$54,395
Special Procedures: Remove the shift-lever boot by pulling up on the rear of the trim plate. Use a small screwdriver or tool to press and hold the manual release button on the rear right. Shift transmission to N (Neutral). Engine should be run at the beginning of each day and at each RV fuel stop for about 5 minutes. This will ensure proper lubrication of transmission components. Once the destination is reached, reinstall the shift-lever boot. Start the engine and let it idle for more than 3 minutes before driving.						
DODGE						
Durango AWD	4,814	None	N/A	Yes	18/25	\$33,045-\$63,245
Special Procedures: Only AWD models with two-speed transfer case are flat towable. Flat towing is NOT allowed on SRT vehicles. Transmission must be in Park; transfer case must be shifted into Neutral (see owner's manual for very detailed and involved instructions).						
FORD						
Edge ST 2.7L	4,525	65 mph/None	N/A	Yes	19/26	\$43,265
Special Procedures: Start the engine and allow it to run for 5 minutes at the beginning of each day and every 6 hours thereafter. Activate Manual Park Release (MPR) — refer to owner's manual to follow procedure.						
Escape Hybrid	3,554	70 mph/None	N/A	Yes	44/37	\$28,255
Special Procedures: Select Stay in Neutral mode — refer to owner's manual transmission and towing sections to follow procedures. Start the engine and allow it to run for a few minutes at the beginning of each day, and every 6 hours or fewer. With the engine running and foot on the brake, shift into Drive (D) and then into Reverse (R) before shifting back into Neutral (N). Before continuing to tow, re-enable Neutral Tow mode.						
Expedition/Expedition MAX 4WD	5,623/5,794	None	N/A	Yes	17/22 16/21	\$52,810-\$76,965
Special Procedures: Requires two-speed transfer case. You can only tow a 4X4 Low equipped 4WD vehicle with all wheels on the ground by placing the transfer case in its neutral position and engaging the four-wheel-down towing feature. Flat towing requires following the very detailed and involved instructions outlined in the owner's manual.						
F-150 4WD	4,343	None	N/A	Yes	18/23	\$33,985-\$61,235
Special Procedures: You can only tow a 4WD vehicle with all wheels on the ground by placing the transfer case in its neutral position and engaging the four-wheel-down towing feature. Flat towing requires following the very detailed and involved instructions outlined in the owner's manual.						
F-150 Raptor 4WD	5,525	None	N/A	Yes	15/18	\$54,800
Special Procedures: Refer to Raptor Supplement for the very detailed and involved instructions.						
F-250/F-350/F-450 Super Duty 4WD	6,112	None	N/A	Yes	N/A	\$38,090-\$90,530
Special Procedures: Place the transfer case in the Neutral position to engage the four-wheels-down towing feature — refer to owner's manual to follow procedure.						

FOR ALL VEHICLES: SEE OWNER'S MANUAL FOR COMPLETE DETAILS.

DINGHY LISTINGS 2020

MAKE/ MODEL	BASE CURB WEIGHT/LBS.	SPEED/DISTANCE LIMITS	TOWABLE W/ MANUAL TRANS.	TOWABLE W/ AUTO TRANS.	MILEAGE CITY/HWY.	APPROX. RETAIL PRICE RANGE
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Fusion Hybrid	3,994	70 mph/None	N/A	Yes	43/41	\$28,000-\$34,595
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Special Procedures: Release parking brake, place vehicle in Stay in Neutral mode. Tow only in the forward direction. Start the engine and allow it to run for a few minutes at the beginning of each day, and every 6 hours or fewer. With the engine running and your foot on the brake, shift into Drive (D) and then into Reverse (R) before shifting back into Neutral (N). Before continuing to tow, you must re-enable Stay in Neutral mode.

Fusion Plug-in Hybrid	3,986	70 mph/None	N/A	Yes	103 mpge combined gas/electric; 42 mpg combined (gas only)	\$35,000-\$38,000
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Special Procedures: Release parking brake, place vehicle in Stay in Neutral mode. Tow only in the forward direction. Start the engine and allow it to run for a few minutes at the beginning of each day, and every 6 hours or fewer. With the engine running and your foot on the brake, shift into Drive (D) and then into Reverse (R) before shifting back into Neutral (N). Before continuing to tow, you must re-enable Stay in Neutral mode.

Ranger 4WD	4,354	None	N/A	Yes	20/24	\$28,570-\$38,675
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Special Procedures: Put the vehicle in neutral tow for recreational towing by placing the transfer case in its neutral position and engaging the four-wheel-down towing feature. Flat towing requires following the very detailed and involved instructions outlined in the owner's manual.

GMC

Canyon/Canyon Denali 4WD	4,180	None	N/A	Yes	19/24	\$32,195-\$49,025
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Special Procedures: Only flat tow 4WD vehicles with two-speed transfer case with a Neutral position and 4WD Low setting. Start engine, shift transfer case to Neutral. Check to ensure transmission is in N by shifting to Reverse, then to Drive. There should be no movement of vehicle while shifting. With engine off, leave key in ACC/ACCESSORY. Disconnect negative battery cable and secure nut and bolt. Cover negative battery post with non-conductive material. Move steering wheel to ensure steering column is unlocked. With foot on brake pedal, release parking brake. Keep ignition key in ACC/ACCESSORY to prevent steering column from locking. See owner's manual for disconnecting dinghy.

Sierra/Sierra Denali 1500 4WD	4,730	None	N/A	Yes	15/20	\$35,795-\$62,390
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Special Procedures: Only flat tow 4WD vehicles with two-speed transfer case with a Neutral position and 4WD Low setting. Start engine, shift transfer case to Neutral. Check to ensure vehicle is in N by shifting to Drive, then to Reverse. There should be no movement of vehicle while shifting. With transmission in D (Drive), turn ignition to ACC/ACCESSORY. If equipped with Keyless Access, turn engine off. Disconnect negative battery cable and secure nut and bolt. Cover negative battery post with non-conductive material. Shift transmission to P. Move steering wheel to ensure steering column is unlocked. Keep ignition key in ACC/ACCESSORY to prevent steering column from locking. If equipped with Keyless Access, keep RKE transmitter outside of vehicle and manually lock doors. Access vehicle as if it has a dead RKE transmitter battery, by using the key in the door lock. See owner's manual for disconnecting dinghy.

Sierra/Sierra Denali 2500 HD 4WD	6,418	None	N/A	Yes	N/A	\$39,995-\$75,245
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Special Procedures: Only flat tow 4WD vehicles with two-speed transfer case with a Neutral position and 4WD Low setting. Start engine, shift transfer case to Neutral. Check to ensure vehicle is in N by shifting to Drive, then to Reverse. There should be no movement of vehicle while shifting. With transmission in D (Drive), turn ignition to ACC/ACCESSORY. If equipped with Keyless Access, turn engine off. Disconnect negative battery cable and secure nut and bolt. Cover negative battery post with non-conductive material. Shift transmission to P. Move steering wheel to ensure steering column is unlocked. Keep ignition key in ACC/ACCESSORY to prevent steering column from locking. If equipped with Keyless Access, keep RKE transmitter outside of vehicle and manually lock doors. Access vehicle as if it has a dead RKE transmitter battery, by using the key in the door lock. See owner's manual for disconnecting dinghy.

Sierra/Sierra Denali 3500 HD 4WD	6,528	None	N/A	Yes	N/A	\$41,195-\$77,645
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Special Procedures: Only flat tow 4WD vehicles with two-speed transfer case with a Neutral position and 4WD Low setting. Start engine, shift transfer case to Neutral. Check to ensure vehicle is in N by shifting to Drive, then to Reverse. There should be no movement of vehicle while shifting. With transmission in D (Drive), turn ignition to ACC/ACCESSORY. If equipped with Keyless Access, turn engine off. Disconnect negative battery cable and secure nut and bolt. Cover negative battery post with non-conductive material. Shift transmission to P. Move steering wheel to ensure steering column is unlocked. Keep ignition key in ACC/ACCESSORY to prevent steering column from locking. If equipped with Keyless Access, keep RKE transmitter outside of vehicle and manually lock doors. Access vehicle as if it has a dead RKE transmitter battery, by using the key in the door lock. See owner's manual for disconnecting dinghy.

Yukon/Yukon XL 4WD (includes Denali)	5,626	None	N/A	Yes	15/21	\$54,895-\$74,795
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Special Procedures: Only flat tow 4WD vehicles with two-speed transfer case with a Neutral position and 4WD Low setting. Apply parking brake, start engine. Shift transfer case to Neutral. Check to ensure vehicle is in N by shifting to Reverse, then to Drive. There should be no movement of vehicle while shifting. Shift transmission to D (Drive), turn off engine. Disconnect negative battery cable and secure nut and bolt. Cover negative battery post with non-conductive material. Shift transmission to P. Move steering wheel to ensure steering column is unlocked. With foot on brake pedal, release parking brake. Keep ignition key in ACC/ACCESSORY to prevent steering column from locking. If equipped with Keyless Access, keep RKE transmitter outside of vehicle and manually lock doors. Access vehicle as if it has a dead RKE transmitter battery, by using the key in the door lock. See owner's manual for disconnecting dinghy.

HONDA

Accord Sport	3,155	65 mph/None	Yes	No	26/35	\$26,530-\$31,060
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Special Procedures: Put transmission into N. Release parking brake. Turn ignition switch (or power mode) to ACCESSORY. Make sure the steering wheel does not lock. Turn off all electrical devices. Do not use any accessory power sockets; this will prevent the battery from running down. If you are towing for more than 8 hours a day, certain fuses will require removal. See owner's manual for complete details.

FOR ALL VEHICLES: SEE OWNER'S MANUAL FOR COMPLETE DETAILS.

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DINGHY LISTINGS 2020

MAKE/ MODEL	BASE CURB WEIGHT/LBS.	SPEED/DISTANCE LIMITS	TOWABLE W/ MANUAL TRANS.	TOWABLE W/ AUTO TRANS.	MILEAGE CITY/HWY.	APPROX. RETAIL PRICE RANGE
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Fit	2,522	65 mph/None	Yes	No	29/36	\$16,190-\$17,600
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Special Procedures: Put transmission into N. Release parking brake. Turn ignition switch (or power mode) to ACCESSORY. Make sure the steering wheel does not lock. Turn off all electrical devices. Do not use any accessory power sockets; this will prevent the battery from running down. If you are towing for more than 8 hours a day, certain fuses will require removal. See owner's manual for complete details.

JEEP

Cherokee 4WD	3,875	None	N/A	Yes	21/29	\$27,435-\$37,895
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Special Procedures: Only 4x4 models with Two-Speed Power Transfer Unit can be towed. Transmission in Park, Power Transfer Unit in Neutral. You must ensure that the Auto Park Brake feature is disabled before towing this vehicle to avoid inadvertent Electric Park Brake engagement. The Auto Park Brake feature is enabled or disabled via the customer programmable features in the Uconnect Settings. See owner's manual for very detailed instructions on shifting transmission into Neutral.

Gladiator	4,650	None	Yes	Yes	17/22	\$35,040-\$45,235
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Special Procedures: Automatic transmission in Park. Manual transmission in gear (NOT IN NEUTRAL). Transfer case in Neutral. Disconnect negative battery cable. See owner's manual for very detailed instructions on shifting transmission into Neutral.

Grand Cherokee 4WD	4,625	None	N/A	Yes	18/25	\$34,540-\$55,590
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Special Procedures: Only 4WD models with 4-LO Range can be towed. Transmission in Park, transfer case in Neutral. Disconnect negative battery cable. See owner's manual for very detailed instructions on shifting transmission into Neutral.

Wrangler/Wrangler Unlimited	3,948	None	Yes	Yes	22/24	\$29,790-\$43,435
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Special Procedures: Automatic transmission in Park. Manual transmission in gear (NOT IN NEUTRAL). Transfer case in Neutral. See owner's manual for very detailed instructions on shifting transmission into Neutral.

LINCOLN

MKZ Hybrid	3,855	70 mph/None	N/A	Yes	42/39	\$43,640
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Special Procedures: Select Stay in Neutral mode — refer to owner's manual transmission and towing sections to follow procedures. Start the engine and allow it to run for 1 minute at the beginning of each day and every 6 hours thereafter.

MKZ Twin-Turbocharged 3.0L	4,136	65 mph/None	N/A	Yes	18/27	\$42,500-\$49,640
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Special Procedures: Start the engine and allow it to run for 5 minutes at the beginning of each day and every 6 hours thereafter. Select Stay in Neutral mode — refer to owner's manual transmission and towing sections to follow procedures.

Nautilus Twin-Turbocharged 2.7L	4,529	65 mph/None	N/A	Yes	19/26	\$54,535-\$64,840
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Special Procedures: Only the 2.7-liter twin-turbocharged model is flat towable. Start the engine and allow it to run for 5 minutes at the beginning of each day and every 6 hours thereafter. Activate Manual Park Release (MPR) — refer to owner's manual to follow procedure.

Navigator 4x4	5,884	None	N/A	Yes	16/21	\$75,825-\$99,970
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Special Procedures: Only vehicles equipped with optional Heavy-Duty Trailer Tow Package and two-speed transfer case. Place the vehicle in Stay in Neutral mode. Refer to owner's manual for detailed instructions.

NISSAN

370Z Coupe/Nismo/Sport	3,333	70 mph/500 miles	Yes	No	17/26	\$30,090-\$45,790
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Special Procedures: Always tow with the manual transmission in Neutral. After towing 500 miles, start and idle the engine with the transmission in Neutral for 2 minutes.

Versa S sedan	2,599	None/500 miles	Yes	No	27/35	\$14,730
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Special Procedures: Always tow with the manual transmission in Neutral. After towing 500 miles, start and idle the engine with the transmission in Neutral for 2 minutes.

RAM

1500 4WD	4,994	None	N/A	Yes	19/24	\$35,645-\$57,465
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Special Procedures: Automatic transmission in Park. Transfer case in Neutral. Tow in a forward direction. See owner's manual for very detailed instructions on shifting transmission into Neutral.

2500 4WD	6,316	None	N/A	Yes	N/A	\$36,545-\$67,790
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Special Procedures: Automatic transmission in Park. Transfer case in Neutral. Tow in a forward direction. See owner's manual for very detailed instructions on shifting transmission into Neutral.

3500 4WD	6,402	None	N/A	Yes	N/A	\$37,895-\$69,140
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Special Procedures: Automatic transmission in Park. Transfer case in Neutral. Tow in a forward direction. See owner's manual for very detailed instructions on shifting transmission into Neutral. **M**

FOR ALL VEHICLES: SEE OWNER'S MANUAL FOR COMPLETE DETAILS.



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THE ESSENTIALS

EQUIPMENT YOU'LL NEED TO TURN YOUR DAILY DRIVER INTO A DEPENDABLE DINGHY

Towing a vehicle behind your motorhome may seem like a simple proposition — from the outset. But unlike a travel trailer, which is inherently designed to be towed, a dinghy vehicle must be set up with the right equipment to be towed safely. For example, a baseplate provides an attachment point on the dinghy vehicle, while the tow bar serves as the “hitch,” connecting the two vehicles together in order to make towing possible. Understanding what components are required ahead of time will make prepping your dinghy vehicle easier, and prevent any unwanted surprises or unplanned expenses. There are a lot of variables involved when choosing dinghy towing products, but the sections highlighted on the following pages are common to any vehicle you plan to tow.

Baseplates

A travel trailer that you would typically tow behind a truck or SUV is equipped with an A-frame that terminates at the coupler and accommodates the hitch ball. A car, truck or SUV you plan to tow behind a motorhome has no such thing, so the first step is to equip your dinghy vehicle with what is commonly known as a baseplate.

In actuality, a baseplate is not so much a “plate” as it is a bracket; it’s an application-specific steel structure that attaches to the vehicle’s frame and/or bumper brackets, enabling a tow bar to be connected. Contrary to what you might think, baseplates for small cars are usually bigger, heavier and more complex to install than they are for a full-size truck or SUV. Because the structure of smaller cars is



➤ Modern baseplates are secured to the frame of the dinghy vehicle. While some installations are more complicated, the end result is usually a clean appearance.

lighter-weight, the bar must be designed to distribute the towing loads correctly in order to prevent damage to the vehicle's chassis. By contrast, a truck or SUV is designed to carry and haul heavier loads, so its frame is already robust and typically doesn't require a baseplate with so many structural enhancements (multiple tubes, gussets, etc.).

With this in mind, not all baseplates require the same amount of effort to install, and may require trimming of the front fascia, grille or other area. That's why it's a good idea to research baseplates for your vehicle first. Blue Ox, Demco and Roadmaster have fit lists on their respective websites that specify whether a baseplate is available: simply enter the year, make and model of the vehicle. Installation instructions can also be downloaded so you

can determine how much work will be involved, which can be important for budgetary considerations. Because not all companies offer the same baseplate designs, make sure you shop each company's website to find what works best for you. If you don't have a local RV dealership or repair center that's comfortable installing a baseplate system, the product manufacturer in question should be able to point you to a qualified dealer.



A baseplate like this one from Demco may take some work to install, but once in place, is almost unnoticeable.

➤ This Roadmaster baseplate for the Jeep Wrangler (a perennial dinghy-towing favorite) clearly demonstrates that a baseplate is more than just a "plate" — it's a carefully engineered system designed to evenly distribute towing loads to the dinghy vehicle's frame.





Tow Bars

What started off as a simple steel A-frame back in the 1970s has evolved into a well-engineered, full-featured piece of equipment that seems to get easier to use with each passing year. As such, what would seem like a fairly straightforward choice will actually require some research on your part to make sure you get the best bar possible for your needs and budget.

Like hitches, tow bars have weight ratings, so the first step is to determine how much your dinghy vehicle weighs when it's full of fuel and cargo. All of the tow bars on the market today are rated for at least 5,000 pounds, which covers just about every passenger car out there, so from a capability standpoint, even the least expensive bar will do the job. However, many RVers load camping gear and other supplies in the cargo area, then strap a couple of kayaks to the roof, which can add several hundred pounds (or more) to the vehicle manufacturer's curb weight. Look for a bar that has

⬆ Motorhome-mounted tow bars are arguably the easiest to use and store, simplifying connection to the towed vehicle. When not in use, all the hardware that's visible can be removed, allowing the dinghy vehicle to retain its original appearance.

Available for 2- and 2½-inch hitch receivers, the aircraft-grade aluminum **Ascent** tow bar from Blue Ox has a 7,500-pound rating and features non-binding latches and offset triple lugs to make unhooking easier. Rubber boots prevent dirt from getting into the legs, and safety cables are included. Blue Ox offers a variety of steel tow bars as well, with ratings up to 20,000 pounds.



The Demco **Dominator** tow bar features an aluminum outer body and weighs just 30 pounds, but is rated to tow up to 7,500 pounds. The non-binding design features a receiver tube that has a 1½-inch drop/rise to adjust tow-bar attitude.



The **Nighthawk** by Roadmaster is a non-binding tow bar with solid stainless-steel inner arms housed inside of a matte-finish, powder-coated body with built-in LED lights. In addition to increased safety and visibility, the Nighthawk offers a tow rating of up to 8,000 pounds and incorporates internal channels for the power cord and safety cables.



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capacity to spare; after all, it's the component responsible for keeping the dinghy vehicle attached to the motorhome.

Not surprisingly, tow bar manufacturers like Blue Ox, Demco and Roadmaster offer unique features or benefits in their products, so compare carefully and determine what's really important to you. For example, Demco's Dominator bar comes standard with a 1½-inch drop/rise male provision and features a head that pivots up and down, allowing an additional 3 inches of adjustment. Roadmaster's Nighthawk bar incorporates LED lighting embedded in each arm that illuminates with the motorhome's lights, in addition to solid stainless-steel inner arms and an aluminum outer body with built-in channel guides for the safety cables and power cord. As you can see, there are many features to consider.

Next, determine how the tow bar is stowed (on the vehicle or on the motorhome) and whether or not the bar is a traditional or non-binding design. Traditional tow bars may be less expensive, but they are more difficult to connect and can be impossible to disconnect if you find yourself on uneven ground (which is entirely possible at an unimproved campground). So-called "non-binding" bars offer arms that move independently of one another so the dinghy doesn't have to be perfectly aligned with the motorhome, and latches can be released to make it easy to connect/disconnect in less-than-ideal circumstances. Another benefit of these newer designs is that they don't use a ball-and-coupler (trailer hitch) design — the shank goes directly into the motorhome's hitch receiver and stays there. When you're not using it, the bar simply folds up out of the way and stays on the motorhome — a cover is usually included to keep the bar assembly dry and clean.

Keep in mind that each equipment manufacturer engineers its products to work with other products in the same family, and not necessarily with another manufacturer's products, so mixing and matching may not be possible in some cases. Most manufacturers provide details on mounting considerations and available solutions. For example, Blue Ox, Demco and Roadmaster all offer adapters that make it possible to connect their tow bars to a competitor's baseplate; you'll typically find these in the tow bar section of each company's website. When in doubt, always call and ask.

The next thing you'll want to consider when comparing tow bars is weight. Depending on the construction materials, design and weight rating, tow bars can weigh 50 pounds or more, which is a lot to handle, especially while bent over a hitch receiver. While it's true that the bar will spend most of its time mounted to either the vehicle or motorhome, there will be times when you'll have to remove it (for storage, theft prevention, etc.), so unless you're a bodybuilder, you'll probably want the lightest model possible. Some good lightweight examples are the Blue Ox Ascent (31 pounds, 7,500-pound rating); the new CURT Rambler (all-steel construction, less than 40 pounds, 7,500-pound rating); the Demco Dominator (30 pounds, 7,500-pound rating); and the Roadmaster Sterling All-Terrain (35 pounds, 8,000-pound rating).

Always ask what is included with your tow bar and what else may be required. Blue Ox and Roadmaster offer complete kits with everything you need to tow (called Towing Accessory Kits and Combo Kits, respectively) while Demco offers a variety of kits and individual options. Without knowing exactly what you're looking at, it can get confusing — so again, find out what you will (and won't) need ahead of time.

CURT RAMBLER



🔗 The brand-new Rambler steel RV tow bar from CURT has a non-binding design and is rated at 7,500 pounds. Available in a premium textured black finish with zinc-plated accents, the Rambler features handles that make it easy to release on uneven surfaces, polymer isolator bushings that reduce friction for smooth operation, built-in cable guides, and rubber boots that protect the arms from dirt and debris. Three stowing positions help avoid obstructions and add versatility. The Rambler includes safety cables, a hitch pin and clip, and it weighs less than 40 pounds for easy handling and set up.



The Roadmaster Guardian is made from rotationally molded, high-impact polyethylene. It fits all Roadmaster tow bars equipped with quick disconnects and can be attached/removed easily.

Accessories

Once you've chosen the base-plate and tow bar, you've got what you need to make your dinghy vehicle towable, but there are some accessories that you should probably consider. For example, try hitching up to the motorhome and see if the tow bar is level. If it's not level, you might need a drop/rise receiver adapter that can relocate the receiver opening up or down as needed.

You would probably never closely follow a truck at high speeds (we hope not, anyway) but that's essentially what your dinghy vehicle will be doing when it's connected to the motorhome. If you'll be towing a new (or well-preserved) vehicle, you'll probably want to protect it from rocks, gravel, tar, fresh paint and who knows what else that can be kicked up from the motorhome's rear wheels, right into the front of the dinghy.

A rock guard mounted to the rear of the motorhome is a good start, but for further



➔ A hitch receiver extender like this one can be used to move the towed vehicle farther away from the motorhome to reduce the likelihood of jackknifing, or to make installing the tow bar possible/easier in cases where the factory receiver might be set back underneath the motorhome's bumper, impairing clearance.



➔ Depending on the height of the motorhome relative to the dinghy vehicle, a drop/rise hitch receiver adapter may be necessary. This one, offered by Roadmaster, is available in a wide range of offsets.



➔ Some dinghy vehicle manufacturers do not approve of a rock shield mounted in front of the grille, as it can restrict airflow to the transmission fluid cooler. In these instances, the Roadmaster Tow Defender could be a possible solution. Offering 20 square feet of protection, the Tow Defender's all-weather, heavy-duty screen is secured by shock-absorbing gas struts. It can be used with Roadmaster tow bars or those from competitors.

THE ESSENTIALS

protection, consider a product like the Blue Ox KarGard, Demco Sentry Deflector or Roadmaster Guardian to ward off rocks and other debris. But first, check the dinghy vehicle's owner's manual to make sure the manufacturer doesn't warn against the use of such products. Transmissions require a steady flow of air through the fluid cooler (located in the front of the engine compartment) and if the air is blocked by a shield, the transmission could overheat and become damaged. Roadmaster also offers a product called the Tow Defender, which is a vinyl-coated mesh screen that sits atop the tow bar and prevents road debris from reaching the dinghy vehicle. You can also have a detailing shop apply paint protection film to the front of the dinghy vehicle, which will help stop small incursions.

Of course, you'll also need wiring for the lights



⬆ Kits like the Towing Accessory Kit from Blue Ox, or the Combo Kit from Roadmaster, provide the necessary components to complete your dinghy-towing project.

and an auxiliary braking system, which are covered in detail on pages 26 and 28, respectively.



Towing anything can be a stressful experience, but with some careful planning, and the right components, you'll be able to enjoy all of the benefits that dinghy towing can bring, without the anxiety. **M**



⬆ Top: The KarGard from Blue Ox is a polyethylene protective shield that folds for easier storage. Aluminum mounting equipment and hardware are included. Above: The Sentry tow bar deflector by Demco Products is made from high-density polyethylene and is unique in that it is positioned at a 30-degree angle to deflect debris down and away from the towed vehicle. Easy to install or remove, the Sentry attaches to the connecting ears of the Demco tow bar.

2020 GUIDE TO DINGHY TOWING SPONSORS

Produced by the editors of *MotorHome* for the publication's April issue, the *2020 Guide to Dinghy Towing* was developed with support from the following companies:

Blue Ox Products
800-228-9289
www.blueox.com

CURT
877-287-8634
www.curtmfg.com

Demco/SMI
800-543-3626
www.demco-products.com

Hopkins Manufacturing Corp.
800-835-0129
www.hopkinstowingsolutions.com

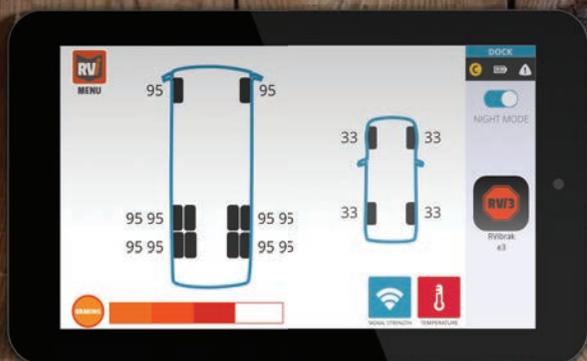
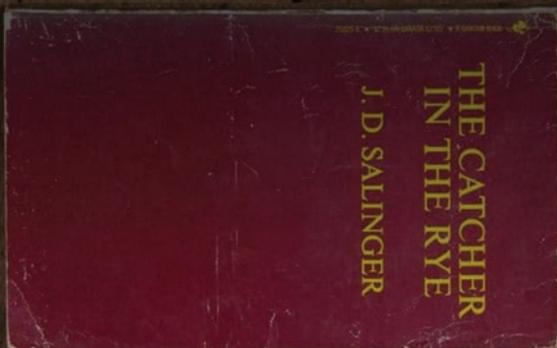
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ⓘ Dinghy-vehicle prep often involves pulling automotive fuses before towing.

JUICE TO GO

THERE ARE A VARIETY OF CHOICES AVAILABLE TO MAKE YOUR DINGHY AND MOTORHOME ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS COMPATIBLE WHILE TOWING

It may seem counterintuitive, but the fact that a road-going vehicle is far more sophisticated than a trailer actually makes it more difficult to tow. In many ways, you're effectively "dumbing down" your car, truck or SUV so it will behave more like a towable RV, and that includes the electrical system. Today's vehicles are computer-controlled wonders of engineering that use increasingly complex systems, but without turning on the key and incorporating driver inputs, their lighting won't work. Wouldn't it be nice if the vehicle manufacturer were kind enough to incorporate a wiring harness that you could plug into the motorhome just in case you ever wanted to tow it? Yes — and it would be awesome if there were a hot tub in the trunk, but that's not likely to happen, either.

No, if you plan to tow a car, truck or SUV, you'll have to modify its electrical system so that you can plug it in and make its running lights (also known as marker lights), brake-lights and turn signals work in tandem with the motorhome. Thankfully, dinghy towing is such a common practice today that there are ready-

made kits that enable an electrical connection to the motorhome in just a few hours. These can be divided into three basic types: prefabricated, application-specific harnesses that plug and/or splice into the dinghy's electrical system; universal towed car wiring kits; and so-called "bulb and socket" systems. Obviously, a plug-and-play prefabricated harness would be the easiest way to go if one is available for your vehicle. Companies like Blue Ox, Demco and Hopkins Towing Solutions all offer fit lists that make it easy to find out. If not, a universal wiring kit can be made to fit almost any vehicle by splicing into the existing electrical system. Finally, a bulb-and-socket system bypasses the vehicle's electrical system altogether with separate wiring, and (you guessed it) bulb/socket assemblies that mount inside the existing taillamp housings. Universal kits are typically less expensive to purchase initially, but will likely require more labor to install.

Whichever system you choose, it will include a wiring harness that is routed from a receptacle located in the front of the towed vehicle to another



1) Demco's Towed Vehicle Taillight Wiring/Diode Kit is a universal system that includes four heat-sealed diodes and 26 feet of four-conductor 16-gauge wire, plus butt connectors, ring terminals, nylon cable ties and instructions. **2)** Hopkins Towing Solutions offers application-specific wiring kits like this one for the 1998-2006 Jeep Wrangler. This kit plugs into the vehicle's electrical harness with no cutting or splicing, according to the company, and utilizes OEM connectors for enhanced fit and weatherproofing.

3) Battery disconnect kits are a great solution for any vehicle (except diesels) that must have the negative battery cable disconnected before towing. Once installed, the kit allows you to effectively disconnect the battery before towing by flipping a switch. 4) The Roadmaster Brake-Lite Relay restores full brakelight/turn-signal functionality to some motorhome/dinghy combinations where the motorhome may have one circuit for a brakelight signal and another for a turn signal, while the dinghy has a combined brake- and turn-signal circuit. 5) For vehicles that require one or more fuses to be removed before towing, Blue Ox (pictured) and Roadmaster offer fuse-bypass kits, which are available in a range of applications and allow the user to effectively connect and disconnect the fuse(s) in question with a cab-mounted switch.



3

er receptacle in the back of the motorhome. In some cases, wiring kits that incorporate the vehicle's electrical system may also include one-way diodes that prevent electrical "backflow" from the motorhome's electrical system to the dinghy (and vice-versa), which can cause damage to both vehicle systems. Companies like Blue Ox, Demco, Hopkins Towing Solutions and Roadmaster offer viable choices, and when in doubt, can help you find what you need for your specific vehicle.

Another alternative is an auxiliary light bar that attaches temporarily to the dinghy vehicle, using either magnets or suction cups. These may be a good choice if there is no application-specific wiring harness available for your vehicle and you don't want to go through the trouble (and expense) of installing a universal wiring kit or bulb-and-socket system. They may also be preferable if you only tow your vehicle once in a while (for example, when you tow your four-wheeler to an annual rock-crawling event), or if you tow several different vehicles from time to time. These kits incorporate a power cord that is routed across the towed vehicle to the connector at the motorhome's receiver, or send signals wirelessly. Simply attach the assembly, plug it in and go.

Some vehicles have electrical challenges that you might not know about until you attempt to make them dinghy-towable. In these cases, specialized equipment may be required. For example, many new vehicles require the negative battery cable to be disconnected every time you tow. Roadmaster offers a battery-disconnect kit that effectively disconnects the vehicle's battery with the flip of a switch (usually located in the passenger compartment), yet provides positive current to the breakaway system or other accessories that must be connected to battery power. Still other new vehicles require that fuses be removed each time you tow, which can be an even bigger ordeal. For these applications, Blue Ox has fuse-bypass kits, while Roadmaster offers its FuseMaster system; both solutions require only that you flip a switch to disconnect the fuse (or fuses) in question.

In some vehicles, the brakelights and turn signals will work fine on their own, but if you're braking and turning at the same time (which is fairly common when approaching an intersection, for example) the brakelight from the dinghy will override the turn signal from the motorhome. To address this issue, Roadmaster offers its Brake-Lite Relay (standard with the company's Even Brake system), which

4

5



restores full brakelight/turn-signal functionality on both vehicles. In other motorhome and dinghy combinations, the motorhome may have one circuit for a brakelight signal and another for a turn signal, while the dinghy has a combined brake- and turn-signal circuit, or vice versa. Roadmaster's Brite-Lite wiring converter makes the two systems work in concert, while delivering more current to the towed vehicle's brake- and turn-signal lights for brighter illumination, according to the company.

In any case, the manufacturers mentioned throughout this guide can usually help with any electrical question or concern and help get you down the road safely and legally. **M**

SOURCES

Blue Ox, 800-228-9289, www.blueox.com

Demco Products, 800-543-3626, www.demco-products.com

Hopkins Towing Solutions, 800-835-0129, www.hopkinstowingsolutions.com

Roadmaster Inc., 800-669-9690, www.roadmasterinc.com

PUT A STOP TO IT

AUXILIARY BRAKING SYSTEMS ARE PART OF A SAFE, RELIABLE AND LEGAL DINGHY TOWING PACKAGE

Just about everyone has towed a trailer at one time or another, be it for horses, a move to another home, or a camping trip with friends and family. Aside from a tiny single-axle utility trailer, though, can you recall one that didn't have its own braking system? Probably not, and for good reason. A brake system helps you maintain control of the trailer and can greatly shorten stopping distance, reducing the likelihood of an accident.

The same principles apply to a dinghy vehicle towed behind a motorhome, yet, paradoxically, many RVers don't see it that way. They believe that, because a motorhome is large and designed to carry a lot of weight, employing additional braking on the dinghy vehicle is simply not necessary. While it is true that most motorhomes are capable of stopping with a dinghy vehicle in tow, the question is, how much is braking distance increased? 10 feet? 25 feet? 50 feet? Obviously, this depends on the motorhome and the weight of the dinghy vehicle in question, but we'd be willing to bet that you'd give anything for more braking power when you crest a highway rise at 60 mph and find the traffic ahead is at a dead stop.

Besides the obvious safety aspect of a dinghy braking system, they're also required by law in

most of the United States and in all provinces in Canada. While the requirements differ state by state (and province by province), they're all based on either trailer weight or stopping distance — and yes, a towed vehicle is considered a trailer. According to U.S. federal law, "Trailer means a motor vehicle with or without motive power, designed for carrying persons or property and for being drawn by another motor vehicle." Yep, that's a dinghy vehicle, all right. You can get a complete list of requirements in the U.S. and Canada by visiting <https://drivinglaws.aaa.com/tag/trailer-brakes>.

But even if you live in Missouri (which, as of this writing, is the only state that does not require a supplementary brake system "except on fifth-wheel trailers coupled by a fifth-wheel and kingpin, and on trailers hauling hazardous materials with a gross weight exceeding 3,000 pounds," according to state law), the odds are good that you'll plan to travel outside of the state from time to time. After all, that's what the RV lifestyle is all about, right?

Now that you know all the reasons a dinghy braking system is required, let's look at the types of systems offered, along with their differences, features and benefits.

PHOTOS: SHAWN SPENCE AND COURTESY THE MANUFACTURERS



Portable Braking Systems

By far the most popular type of dinghy braking device is the portable system. These locate between the driver's seat and the brake pedal, and incorporate an arm and pedal clamp that depresses the vehicle's brake pedal when the motorhome's brakes are applied. Portable systems are a good option if you tow more than one vehicle, or may be considering another dinghy vehicle in the near future and therefore don't want to commit to a permanently installed system. Features vary greatly in portable systems, but proportional braking is one benefit that may

influence the system you choose. "Proportional braking" means that the system in your dinghy is designed to mirror the brake application in the motorhome, both in timing and in the amount of force; as you brake harder, so does the dinghy braking system. Other (typically less expensive) systems use "on/off" braking, which can cause a perceptible jerking sensation when the brakes are applied. It still works and meets the legal brake requirements, but it's just not as smooth and can accelerate brake wear on the dinghy vehicle.

BLUE OX

PATRIOT II AND PATRIOT 3

The Blue Ox Patriot II and Patriot 3 are essentially the same unit, except that the latter continuously monitors brake pressure while towing. Other than that, both units share the same features. The Patriot is a proportional, all-electric system, meaning that it doesn't use a pump and compressed air to depress the vehicle's brake pedal. Weighing in at 15 pounds, the Patriot is light enough to be handled by anyone, and installation is a snap. Simply place it on the floor, attach the brake claw to the brake pedal and then slide the seat forward until it makes contact with the push pads on the unit. Next, plug the Patriot into a constant 12-volt source (cigarette-lighter outlet). When connected, green lights on the plug will glow to verify that electricity is present. Press the power button, and then "Set-up," and you're good to go. A built-in, lifetime super capacitor allows the unit to operate for up to 30 minutes without a power connection, and an in-cab controller with extended range allows you to make adjustments from the cockpit if necessary. A breakaway cord is included. Blue Ox | 800-228-9289, www.blueox.com



BRAKE BUDDY

CLASSIC 3 AND SELECT 3

Brake Buddy is one of the original players in the portable braking game, and its Classic and Select systems still rank among the most popular in the RV industry. Its latest versions, the Classic 3 and Select 3, come with what the company calls TruFit riser technology, which features independently adjustable legs that allow the units to be correctly positioned on irregularly shaped floorboards. Both systems offer proportional braking, a towed vehicle battery charger, an Easy-Pull cord for

power/breakaway and a compact, low-profile design with carrying handle, but the Select 3 includes an interactive remote that allows the user to adjust settings from the cab of the motorhome and also provides alerts if anything goes wrong. Other handy features include a new universal Quick-Lock clevis, which is designed to fit brake pedals of all sizes and shapes, and an AutoStart feature that automatically performs a diagnostic system check and cycles the brake pedal.

Hopkins Manufacturing Corp. | 800-470-2287, <http://brakebuddy.com>



DEMCO PRODUCTS

DELTA FORCE

The Delta Force is a proportional system that has been designed for fast but secure mounting, with a ball-and-socket actuator that makes it easy to work with irregular floorboards and offset transmission tunnels when mounting to the brake pedal. The Delta Force is the only portable unit that doesn't wedge against the driver's seat or floor pan; instead, it rests on the floorboard and is anchored via a cable and bracket setup fastened to the firewall. Another handy feature is the Set-It-Once design, which only requires that you adjust the pedal clamp during the initial installation. Demco's Dual-Signal technology uses the brakelight signal, vehicle inertia or both to activate braking in the towed vehicle, while a "boost" button will add 15% more braking power



on demand, according to the company. The wireless CoachLink system, meanwhile, monitors connectivity to the towed vehicle, displays braking effort and offers visual/audible alerts for fault codes and the breakaway circuit. The Intuitive User Interface checks the unit's functionality when the "initialize" button is pressed and offers different user profiles. **Demco Products | 800-543-3626, www.demco-products.com**

ROADMASTER

EVEN BRAKE AND 9700

Roadmaster's Even Brake is a compact unit packed with a lot of thoughtful features. In addition to full-time proportional braking in the dinghy vehicle and constant self-diagnostic testing, the system's status is transmitted to an easy-to-read monitor located in the motorhome cockpit. Power Save protection warns of a low-battery condition with LED and LCD alerts, and a sleep mode preserves battery power while maintaining emergency braking if battery voltage is too low. Automatic brake protection warns the driver of dragging brakes, then will release brake pressure to avoid excessive wear. Even Brake is also equipped with on-board memory, so it will "remember" your adjustment settings — just position the unit between the seat and the brake pedal, slide the driver's seat forward and plug it in. For more basic needs, Roadmaster also offers its 9700 portable braking system, which is similar in design to the Even Brake and has some of the same features, but is not proportional. Both systems include emergency breakaway activation. **Roadmaster Inc. | 800-669-9690, www.roadmasterinc.com**



RVI

RVIBRAKE3

In just about every form of business, there's a company that does things a bit differently, and in the dinghy-towing world, that company is RVi. Instead of glowing LEDs that communicate system status, the company's RVibrake3 system features an Audio Assistant that walks the user through a 30-second set-up with the push of just one button and can also advise of a brake-lock condition. Weighing only 10 pounds, the low-profile unit is designed to be positioned against the rise in the floor pan underneath the seat, rather than the seat itself. And instead of a monitor, the RVibrake3 includes the company's Command Center tablet and



hub, which helps the user select the correct settings, monitors proportional braking in real time and alerts the driver of a breakaway using a proprietary Wi-Fi connection. The system also has a tire-pressure monitoring option. **RVi | 800-815-2159, www.rvistore.com**



Patriot™ II

BRK2016 Dinghy Tow Brake



Fast Setup.

Attach the brake claw, plug in the power cord, push the setup button, go.



It's electric.

Electric, self-contained. Designed to make towing safe and easy.



No tanks.

No tank to drain, no pumps or hoses to connect.



Works with hybrids.

If you have a hybrid vehicle, Patriot II will get you on the road.



In-cab controller.

Monitors the brake and allows manual input for braking response.



Find a dealer or buy your Patriot @
blueox.com

800-228-9289

Permanent Systems

A permanently installed system is a great choice if you only tow one vehicle and plan to keep it for a long time. While the initial cost of these systems may be comparable to some portable units, they typically require several hours of labor to install, which must be factored into the overall cost. The upside is that, once installed, permanent systems remain in the vehicle and require very little preparation before towing; just plug in a power cord and/or quick disconnect and the system is operational. Because permanent units tie into the air- or hydraulic-brake system in the motorhome and/or its electrical system (brake signal) to activate the brakes in the towed vehicle, they are inherently proportional. Finally, they are designed to be practically invisible, typically consisting of a small control unit that mounts underneath the hood or out of view in the passenger compartment.



BRAKE BUDDY STEALTH

The Brake Buddy Stealth is a proportional braking system with low- and high-sensitivity settings that, which allow the user to choose between greater braking effort or lighter braking effort in the motorhome (respectively) before the system is activated. The Stealth consists of a compact 14-by-5½-inch actuator box in the dinghy, while the controller with digital display is located in the motorhome cockpit. The controller mounts in a similar fashion as a trailer brake controller (in fact, it can function as a trailer brake control if you ever tow a trailer) and allows sensitivity adjustment, while the display shows braking action and breakaway condition. Built-in battery protection keeps the dinghy's battery charged while towing, and a pump restores the vehicle's brake system vacuum after each braking event.

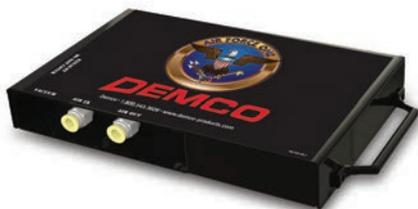
Hopkins Manufacturing Corp. |
800-470-2287,
<http://brakebuddy.com>

DEMCO

AIR FORCE ONE

As its name would imply, Demco's Air Force One is designed for use on motorhomes with air brakes.

Using a pilot signal from the coach's air brake system, it delivers 100% direct proportional braking and is not affected by an exhaust brake or transmission retarder, according to the company. The system is comprised of three main components: the operating unit, the actuator and the coach air assembly. The Air Force One operating unit mounts under the hood of the towed vehicle. It houses the vacuum generator for the dinghy's power assist and also the reserve air supply for the breakaway circuit. While the compact brake actuator mounts on the brake arm of the towed vehicle and secures to the firewall with just one self-drilling screw, the system, due to its complexity, should be installed by a qualified professional. Once installed, the entire system is invisible and always ready for towing.



STAY-IN-PLAY DUO

Designed for motorhomes with hydraulic brakes, the Stay-in-Play DUO uses the power and speed of air pressure to activate the towed vehicle's brake pedal while creating vacuum for the power brake system. The DUO requires deceleration and coach brakelight activation to apply the dinghy vehicle brakes instantly — there's no need to set gain or sensitivity to achieve the proportionate balance of brake effort. The DUO's small operating unit is installed under the hood, and the system does not have to be taken in and out for normal operation of the towed vehicle. In fact, there is no physical connection to the motorhome at all.

Demco Products | 800-543-3626, www.demco-products.com





ROADMASTER

INVISIBRAKE

InvisiBrake is a fully automatic, progressive braking system that uses the same electrical signal from the towed vehicle's brake-lights to activate the system. When the motorhome's brakes are applied, InvisiBrake immediately engages the dinghy's brake pedal and then applies increasing brake pressure until the user-selected setting is attained (adjustable from 5 to 100 psi). Measuring 8¾ by 8¾ inches and only 2 inches tall, the main controller can be placed almost anywhere in the main cabin or trunk. InvisiBrake trickle charges the dinghy vehicle's battery while towing and energizes the power brake system, so it's not working against

a "dead" brake pedal. A two-stage monitor includes LEDs for visual reference of braking activity, as well as an audible alert that will sound if the dinghy's brakes have been activated for an excessive period.



JUST CHARGE IT

Whichever dinghy braking system you choose, check to make sure that it charges the dinghy's battery while towing. Some vehicle manufacturers require that the negative battery cable be disconnected while dinghy towing to prevent the battery from being discharged. If you connect a dinghy brake to it, you could end up with a dead battery during your trip or when you reach your destination. If your dinghy brake is powered by the vehicle's battery, but does not have a charging feature, your best bet is a charge-line kit. These will use the power from the motorhome's electrical system to charge the dinghy vehicle while it is in transit. Charge-line kits are inexpensive and can be easily installed while the rest of the electrical system modifications are performed. See "Juice to Go" on page 26 for more information on electrical system solutions.

BRAKEMASTER

Available for air- and hydraulic-brake systems, the BrakeMaster is a proportional auxiliary braking system that uses brake-line pressure in the motorhome for activation, so the brake application in the motorhome is always mimicked by the BrakeMaster system in the towed vehicle. A small air cylinder weighs just 3.75 pounds and measures 17 inches long, and connects to the towed vehicle in less than a minute without any tools, adjustments or settings; simply attach the brake pedal clamp, secure the other end to the seat adapter, connect the air hose and you're ready to tow.

Roadmaster Inc. | 800-669-9690, www.roadmasterinc.com 



RULES OF THE ROAD

AN AT-A-GLANCE GUIDE TO STATE AND PROVINCIAL LAWS PERTAINING TO MOTORHOMES AND DINGHY VEHICLES

	SIZE LIMITS			TOWING		MISC.	EQUIPMENT REQUIRED			CELLPHONE	
	MOTORHOME WIDTH	MOTORHOME LENGTH	MOTORHOME HEIGHT	TWO-VEHICLE COMBINED LENGTH	TRIPLE TOWING	OVERNIGHT PARKING IN STATE REST AREAS	WEIGHT OF TOWED VEHICLE REQUIRING BRAKES	FIRE EXTINGUISHER IN MOTORHOME	LIGHTS REQUIRED ON (DISTANCE OF VISIBILITY)	VOICE CALLING	TEXT MESSAGING
AK	8½'	45'	15'	75'	•	•	5,000	NS	1,000 ⁷	•	
AL	8½'	45'	13½'	57'		P	3,000 ³	• ¹¹	500 ^{6,7}	• ^{1,12}	
AR	8½'	40'	13½'	53½'	•	•	1,500	NS	500 ^{6,7}	• ^{1,12}	
AZ	8½'	45'	13½' ¹	65'	• ¹	• ⁹	3,000 ⁵	NS	500 ⁷	•	•
CA	8½'	40' ¹	13½' ¹	65' ¹	• ¹	• ¹⁰	1,500 ⁵	•	1,000 ^{6,7}	• ^{1,12,13}	
CO	8½'	45'	14½'	75'	70'	P	3,000 ⁵	•	1,000 ⁷	• ¹²	
CT	8½'	40'	13½'	65'		P	3,000 ⁵	NS	500 ^{6,7}	• ^{1,12,13}	
DC	8' ¹	40'	13½'	55'	• ¹		3,000 ³	NS	500 ⁷	• ^{1,12,13}	
DE	8' ¹	45'	13½'	65'		P	4,000	NS	1,000 ^{6,7}	• ^{1,12,13}	
FL	8½'	40'	13½'	65'		• ¹⁰	3,000 ⁵	•	• ^{6,7}	•	
GA	8½'	40'	13½' ¹	100'			3,000 ⁵	•	500 ^{6,7}	• ^{1,12}	
HI	9'	45'	14'	65'			3,000 ⁵	NS	• ⁷	• ^{1,12,13}	
IA	8½'	45'	13½'	65'	70'	• ¹⁰	3,000 ⁵	NS	500 ^{6,7}	• ¹²	
ID	8½'	45'	14'	75'	75'	P	1,500	NS	500 ⁷	•	
IL	8½'	45'	13½'	60'	60' ¹	P	3,000 ⁵	NS	1,000 ^{6,7}	• ^{1,12,13}	
IN	8½'	45'	13½'	60'	65'		3,000	NS	500 ⁷	• ¹²	
KS	8½'	45'	14'	65'	70'	P	1,4	¹¹	1,000 ^{6,7}	• ¹²	
KY	8½'	45'	13½'	65'	65'	P	3,000 ³	•	• ⁷	• ^{1,12}	
LA	8½'	45'	13½' ¹	65'	70'	P	3,000	NS	500 ^{6,7}	• ^{1,12}	
MA	8½'	45'	13½'	65'		P	10,000	NS	500 ^{6,7}	• ^{1,12}	
MD	8½'	40' ¹	13½'	65'		P	3,000 ⁵	•	1,000 ⁶	• ^{1,12,13}	
ME	8½'	45'	13½'	65'		P	3,000 ⁵	NS	1,000 ^{6,7}	• ¹²	
MI	8½'	45'	13½'	65'	75' ¹	•	3,000	NS	500 ⁷	• ^{1,12}	
MN	8½'	45'	13½'	70' ¹	60' ¹	P	3,000 ⁵	NS	500 ^{6,7}	• ^{1,12}	
MO	8½'	45'	13½' ¹	65'	65' ¹	P	NS	NS	500 ^{6,7}	•	• ^{1,12}
MS	8½'	45'	13½'	53'	•	•	2,000	NS	500 ⁷	• ¹	
MT	8½'	55'	14'	65'	70'	P	3,000 ^{3,5}	NS	500 ⁷	•	•
NC	8½'	45'	13½'	60'		•	4,000	NS	400 ^{6,7}	• ^{1,12}	
ND	8½'	50'	14'	75'	75'	•	3,000	NS	1,000 ⁷	• ¹²	
NE	8½'	40'	14½'	65'	65'		3,000	NS	500 ⁷	• ^{1,12}	
NH	8½'	45'	13½'	53'			3,000	NS	1,000 ⁷	• ^{1,12,13}	
NJ	8½'	45' ¹	13½'	65' ¹		P	3,000 ^{3,5}	NS	500 ⁶	• ^{1,12,13}	
NM	8'	45'	14'	65'	•	P	3,000 ⁵	NS	500 ⁷	• ^{1,12}	
NV	8½'	45'	14'	70'	70'	• ¹⁰	1,500	NS	1,000 ⁷	• ¹³	
NY	8½'	40'	13½'	60'		P	3,000 ⁵	NS	1,000 ^{6,7}	• ¹³	
OH	8½'	45'	13½'	65'	65'	P	2,000 ⁵	NS	1,000 ^{6,7}	• ¹²	
OK	8½'	45'	13½'	65'	65'	•	3,000 ⁵	NS	1,000 ^{6,7}	• ^{12,13}	
OR	8½'	45'	14'	65'		• ¹⁰	NS	NS	1,000 ⁷	• ^{12,13}	

	SIZE LIMITS			TOWING		MISC.	EQUIPMENT REQUIRED			CELLPHONE	
	MOTORHOME WIDTH	MOTORHOME LENGTH	MOTORHOME HEIGHT	TWO-VEHICLE COMBINED LENGTH	TRIPLE TOWING	OVERNIGHT PARKING IN STATE REST AREAS	WEIGHT OF TOWED VEHICLE REQUIRING BRAKES	FIRE EXTINGUISHER IN MOTORHOME	LIGHTS REQUIRED ON (DISTANCE OF VISIBILITY)	VOICE CALLING	TEXT MESSAGING
PA	8½'	45'	13½'	65'			3,000 ^{3,5}	•	1,000 ^{6,7}	•	
RI	8½'	45'	13½'	60'		•	4,000 ⁵	NS	500 ^{6,7}	• 1, 12, 13	
SC	8½'	45'	13½'	53'		P	3,000 ³	•	500 ^{6,7}	•	
SD	8½'	45'	14'	80'	75' ¹	P	3,000 ³	•	200 ⁷	• 12	
TN	8½'	45'	13½'	65'	65'	• ¹⁰	1,500	•	200 ⁷	• 1, 12	
TX	8½'	45'	14'	65'	65'	• ¹⁰	4,500	NS	1,000 ⁷	• 1, 12, 13	• 1, 12
UT	8½'	65'	14'	65'	65' ¹	• ¹⁰	2,000	•	1,000 ⁷	• 1, 12	
VA	8½'	45'	13½'	65'		P	3,000	NS	500 ^{6,7}	• 1, 12	
VT	8½'	46'	13½'	75'			3,000 ³	•	500 ⁷	• 1, 12, 13	
WA	8½'	40'	14'	75'		• ¹⁰	3,000 ^{3,5}	•	1,000 ⁷	• 1, 12, 13	
WI	8½'	45'	13½'	70'	60' ¹	• ¹⁰	3,000 ⁵	NS	500	• 1, 12	
WV	8½'	45'	13½'	65'			3,000 ^{3,5}	NS	500 ⁶	• 1, 12, 13	
WY	8½'	60'	14'	85'	85'		⁴	NS	1,000 ⁷	•	

CANADA

AB	2.6m	14m	4m	20m	• ¹	P	909kg ²	NS	150m ⁷	• ¹³	
BC	2.6m	14m	4.15m	20m		P	1,400kg ²	NS	150m ⁷	• 12, 13	
MB	2.6m	14m	4.15m	21.5m	• ¹	P	910kg	NS	60m ⁷	• ¹³	
NB	2.6m	14m	4.15m	23m		P	1,360kg	•	• ⁸	• ¹³	
NL	2.6m	12.5m ¹	4.15m	23m		P	4,500kg	NS	150m ⁷	• ¹³	
NS	2.6m	14m	4.15m	23m		P	1,800kg	•	• ⁸	• ¹³	
NT	2.6m	14m	4.2m	20m		•	1,360kg ²	NS	• ⁸	• ¹³	
ON	2.6m	14m	4.15m	23m	• ¹	P	1,360kg	NS	150m ⁷	• 12, 13	
PE	2.6m	14m	4.15m	23m		• ⁹	1,500kg	NS	150m ⁷	• ¹³	
QC	2.6m	14m	4.15m	23m ¹	• ¹		1,300kg	NS	•	• ¹³	
SK	2.6m	14m	4.15m	23m	• ¹	P	1,360kg	NS	• ⁷	• 12, 13	
YT	2.6m	14m	4.2m	25m	• ¹	• ⁹	910kg ²	NS	• ⁸	• 12, 13	

NOTE: The regulations in these tables may have changed since press time. Please call state or provincial motor-vehicle agencies for up-to-date rules and complete details.

• Indicates "YES," item is permitted or required

NS Indicates "NOT SPECIFIED"

P Indicates "AS POSTED"

1 Some exceptions

2 Required if the gross weight of the towed vehicle is greater than half the motorhome's weight

3 Required if the towed vehicle weight exceeds 40% of the motorhome's weight

4 Must be able to stop within 40 feet at 20 mph

5 Laden weight noted (gross weight of the towed vehicle plus cargo)

6 Required when wipers are in continuous use

7 Required 30 minutes after sunset and 30 minutes before sunrise

8 Headlights or running lights required at all times

9 Prohibited where posted

10 12-hour limit; CA: 8-hour limit; FL: 3-hour limit; IA: 24-hour limit; NV: 18-hour limit; TN: 2-hour limit; TX: 24-hour limit; WA: 8-hour limit; WI: 24-hour limit

11 Suggested but not required

12 Restrictions apply for minor drivers and/or newer drivers, or under certain conditions such as school zones, etc.

13 Permitted only if "hands-free"

NOTE: Child safety restraints are required in ALL states and provinces. For more details, contact the motor-vehicle agency of the state or province you plan to visit.

RV Restrictions on Major North American Travel Corridors

ALASKA MARINE HIGHWAY SYSTEM (ALASKA, BRITISH COLUMBIA): RV propane tank valves must be closed while the vehicle is on the ferry. Terminal agents will seal bottled gas containers before boarding. Small, portable containers of fuel (5 gallons or less and limited to two containers) must be properly sealed, labeled with the owner's name for ID and stored by Alaska Marine Highway System officials while en route.

MARYLAND: Propane cylinders weighing more than 10 pounds are prohibited from being transported through the tunnels of Baltimore Harbor (I-895) and Fort McHenry (I-95). The Francis Scott Key Bridge (I-695, the Baltimore Beltway) is a convenient alternative route for crossing Baltimore Harbor.

MASSACHUSETTS: In the Boston area, propane is prohibited in all tunnels; visit the Massachusetts Department of Transportation website for alternate routes.

NEW YORK/NEW JERSEY: Propane is prohibited in the Holland Tunnel between Manhattan and Jersey City; in the lower level of the George Washington Bridge (I-95 South) between Manhattan and Fort Lee; and in the Lincoln Tunnel between Manhattan and Weehawken.

NEW YORK: Propane is prohibited between Manhattan and Brooklyn in the Brooklyn Battery Tunnel, between Manhattan and Queens in the Queens Midtown Tunnel, and on the lower level of the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge between Staten Island and Brooklyn.

TEXAS: Propane is restricted in the Washburn Tunnel between Pasadena and Galena Park under the Houston Ship Channel. Valves must be closed when in the tunnel. Vehicles are limited to a maximum of two cylinders.

VIRGINIA: Propane is restricted when crossing bridges or tunnels near water. When crossing the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel, RVs are limited to no more than two non-permanently mounted 45-pound propane tanks or one with a maximum capacity of 60 pounds of propane. All valves should be properly closed before traveling over bridges or through tunnels.

WASHINGTON FERRIES: All propane tank valves must be closed and tagged prior to boarding. Any number of full or empty cylinders of propane may be transported, provided that the total weight does not exceed 100 pounds (water weight equivalent).

CANADA

QUEBEC: When traveling across bridges and through tunnels, RVs are limited to a maximum of two cylinders of propane, each with a capacity of 46 liters. When traveling aboard a ferry, RVers must inform a ferry representative if they are carrying propane aboard a ferry boat.



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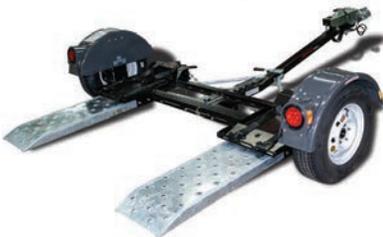
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RVs Not Permitted Here

CALIFORNIA: Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks have a number of road restrictions for large motorhomes (visit www.nps.gov/seki/planyourvisit/vehicle-restrictions.htm for more information). Yosemite National Park also has vehicle restrictions (see www.nps.gov/yose/planyourvisit/restrictions.htm). In addition, be sure to contact the California Highway Patrol before entering a snow area; depending on conditions, chains may be required.

CONNECTICUT: Motorhomes are not permitted on Route 15 (the Merritt and Wilbur Cross parkways) between the New York state line and Interstate 91 in Meriden and SR 796 (Milford Parkway). Motorhomes are also prohibited on the Connecticut River ferry between Chester and Hadlyme.

ILLINOIS: Motorhomes are not permitted to park on boulevards in and around Chicago.

MAINE: Acadia National Park has a number of road restrictions for RVs (visit www.nps.gov/acad/planyourvisit/oversized-vehicles.htm).

MONTANA: On Going-to-the-Sun Road in Glacier National Park, all vehicles and combinations of vehicles over 21' long and 8' wide (including mirrors) are prohibited between Avalanche Campground and the Rising Sun picnic area parking.

Vehicles over 10' in height may have clearance issues with rock overhangs driving west from Logan Pass to the Loop.

NEW JERSEY: Vehicles with a GVWR over 10,000 pounds (including trailer combinations) aren't allowed on the New Jersey Garden State Parkway north of Exit 105.

NEW YORK: Motorhomes are not permitted on the Taconic State Parkway.

UTAH: If your motorhome is 11' 4" or taller or 7' 10" or wider, including mirrors and awnings, a permit is required for Zion National Park's Zion-Mount Carmel Tunnel (www.nps.gov/zion/planyourvisit/the-zion-mount-carmel-tunnel.htm).

SPECIAL NOTE REGARDING FERRIES: Many ferry lines charge extra for motorhomes. Ask about surcharges before you reserve space on a ferry. Know your motorhome's height, length and width, including overhangs and towed vehicles. Most vessels can accommodate vehicles up to 60 feet in length. An additional premium may be charged for motorhomes that exceed the standard width rate of 8' 6" with the mirrors folded in.

SOURCE: The 2020 Good Sam Guide Series

EDITOR'S NOTE: This summary is not all-inclusive — please check in advance on the specific area you plan to visit. **M**



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