

PROPER HITCHING plus Tips from experienced Airstreamers by Luke Bernander

*HITCHES / TOWING

- maintenance
 - lubricate ball & coupler
- check ball nut
 - +turn receiver head / ball head 1/4 turn in receiver hitch, to tighten
- check tow vehicle hitch bolts / nuts
- check TOW VEHICLE hitch for cracks
 - +ALL weight distribution hitches place torque / stress on hitch components
 - * Some designs create excessive stress on rough roads & turns
- setting weight distribution bar tension
 - +Weight of hitch should NOT exceed bar capacity (ie 1000# bars are designed for UP TO 1000#)
 - +TOO heavy is not good either (1000# bars may be too heavy on a 600# tongue weight)
 - +after bars & hitch are set correctly, the trailer frame needs to be parallel to the road (Level if you will)
 - *Due to the design of the Airstream axles, this allows equal load on each axle
 - *Adjustment of the head on the tow vehicle may be required for the above to be completed
 - +As the tongue weight is applied to the tow vehicle,
 - * The REAR axle the tow vehicle gains weight
 - * the FRONT axle of the tow vehicle loses weight (this can create steering stability issues)
 - +One way to get weight back on to the FRONT wheels of the tow vehicle
 - *Measure the distance from the ground to the top of the wheel well opening, on the FRONT wheels of the tow vehicle... Document the number
 - *After loading the weight of the trailer onto the tow vehicle hitch, measure the distance from the ground to the top of the FRONT wheel well opening, of the tow vehicle (This number will be greater than the previous number)
 - *Adjust the weight distribution bars to get the FRONT wheel well dimension at or close to the first dimension (when the tow vehicle was not hooked up)
 - *Too much weight bar tension is NOT good either. (this can cause reduced stability / traction on the rear wheels of the tow vehicle)
 - +Air bags and / or "spring assists" are NOT a substitution for PROPERLY adjusted weight distribution bars

- Equalizer® weight distribution hitches
 - *rubber friction pads are available to reduce noise
 - grease is not the recommended solution

- Hensley® / Pro-Pride® hitches
 - + easier line up for hooking up
 - *lay a tape measure out on the ground, in line with tapered square receiver portion of hitch, for easier hook ups. Align tow vehicle over tape measure

- Air Safe® hitch reduces impact between trailer & tow vehicle

TIPS FROM EXPERIENCED AIRSTREAMERS:

*PLUMBING

- winter travel tips
 - +RV antifreeze in black & wash water tanks
 - * consider packing salt to create a solution, or Windshield washer solution, or RV anti freeze for:
 - P traps
 - wash water tank
 - black water tank
 - +consider RV anti freeze "diverter valve" to draw RV anti-freeze, for easy fresh water winterization
 - +leave cabinet doors & drawers open, when camping with fresh water, on cold nights
 - +Disconnect shore water from coach on cold nights....water inlet / pressure regulator can freeze & break
- operate furnace to supply heat to tanks (most trailers)
 - +electric space heaters do not provide heat to tanks

- Cold Weather winterizing
 - +winterize / blow out black water tank sprayer system (back flow valve may freeze)
 - +winterize toilet flush valve (frequently missed)
 - +winterize outside faucet (frequently missed)

- Black Water sprayer issues?
 - +about 3.5gpm (when operating properly)
 - *mine about .25gpm
 - +debris has been known to be on inside of sprayer, not build up from tank debris
 - +back flow valves have been known to restrict water flow

ELECTRICAL:

- how does "store use" switch work
 - +2017 & older (store / use switch must be ON / USE to charge batteries)
 - *"Dumb" Charger
 - +2018 & newer (batteries are charged in either switch position)
 - *different trailer wiring configuration for "Smart" charger
- how does inverter system operate / disconnect
 - +older (must when connected to shore power to operate "inverter" labeled outlets)
 - +newer (when connected to shore power, "inverter" labeled outlets automatically operate)

-How many HIGH amp devices can you use at the same time, based on the shore power plug?

+What are considered high amp draw devices?

*Electric water heater (if you have that option)

*Hair dryer

*Microwave

*Electric toaster (if you carry one)

*Space heater

*Air conditioner

*Coffee pot, electric

+20 amp plug (household type, usually connected with an adapter from RV plug)

*Can use 1 of the 7 devices listed above at a time

+30 amp RV plug

*Can use 2 of the 7 devices listed above at a time

+50 amp (220 volt)

*Can use 4 of the 7 devices listed above (or more depending on load balance)

PROPANE

-open propane tanks s-l-o-w-l-y to prevent safety valve from “tripping”

-leak down test (24 hours is ideal)

*DOORS

-tired of having to push main door, with one hand, from the outside, while opening the door with the other hand?

+consider LPS 3 lubricant, in lock assembly

WINDOWS, stuck shut?

-use credit card in lieu of prybar to open

-use 303 or silicone to lubricate seal area

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