

Easy Water Connection

I have an Airstream travel trailer that has the “city water connection” located under a panel to the rear of the wheels on the street side. Now it is very nice to have it all covered up when you travel, but I have had a lot of trouble hooking up hoses to that fitting.

First, you either have to kneel down in the often rocky ground (or you can get a piece of carpeting to kneel on) or you can lie down (same discomfort) or you can squat and work by feel. Then you can work at getting the hose or spring covered adaptor (which gets stuck when you try to remove it) to line up and tighten it up. Of course, the washer has fallen out by now and it leaks. Wanting to be a good Airstreamer, you disconnect, insert a new washer (which you took from another hose because you forgot to buy spares) and then go through the process again. (Note: no matter how gently you hook the hose up to the inlet, it will take a lot of strength, perseverance, and cussing to disconnect.) If it’s not leaking, you’re now able to go in the trailer and wash your bloody knees, apply antiseptic, and band-aids.

I do not have a problem with Airstream’s location for this connection. It is near the other stuff. Of course, it’s right by the electrical connection, which if the ground is wet from your leaky hook-up, becomes an interesting focal point when walking barefoot or otherwise subjecting yourself and others to a life- threatening shock.

I said there has to be a better way. So after tinkering with this for a few years, I have what may be a solution, at least I hope so. Ace Hardware sells a very nice selection of solid brass quick connectors. These are intended for use with your home watering system, but will work quite well with your trailer. I purchased everything at my local store, but you can most likely find all these parts at your local hardware store.



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3

First, I purchased a brass male-to-male adaptor (all fittings are solid brass). This attaches to the inlet on the trailer. The next piece is a female quick connector that has a built-in shutoff. This is necessary so that you can fill the fresh water tank and not have the water pumped out when you stop and are dry camping. On your water hose, you connect first a female-to-female adaptor, then the other half of your quick connector which has male threads and a male adaptor. You are now able to reach down, push the locking ring on the adaptor back (blindfolded if you wish), insert the hose connection, release the ring and “voila,” you’re hooked up in about 10 seconds. The fittings on the inlet may be left in position because the cover will close and latch properly. I have also purchased a 10 foot, 5/8” diameter HD water hose (Camco) with stainless fittings as my permanent hook up hose. I can attach any other hoses, filters, etc. to this, but it is the main line.

BTW, try to keep your water hoses out of the sun to prevent odors from the plastic getting into the water. Some folks even recommend covering the hose with a piece of dark tarp to keep the sun off. The average human is about 50 – 65% water, so we might as well have the best!

The stock numbers of the parts I purchased from Ace Hardware and installation instructions are:

1. Hose connector, Part No. 71942, \$6.99
2. Quick Connector with auto shutoff, Part No. 72462, \$8.99
3. A package of RUBBER hose washers
4. Male to male hose adaptor, Part No. 47042, \$5.50

Installation

1. Open water connection hatch and undo the little plug from the water inlet. Leave it connected for re-use if necessary. Figure (1)
2. Connect the quick connector part with the sliding lock to the male hose adaptor and then screw the adaptor in to the water inlet. You might want to put a new washer in the inlet, Figure (2).
3. Attach the male hose adaptor fitting to your water supply hose. Then attach the brass quick-connect male side to the hose connector, Figure (3). Slide the locking ring on the trailer connector back, insert hose connector and release the lock. Barring any unforeseen circumstances you can turn on the water, it should not leak and you'll have a quick and easy water connection. The money you save on band-aids and antiseptic will pay for the fittings in no time.