The First Trip Trailer Checklist

Camp better. Go further.

A simple, printable routine for leaving home, setting up camp, and returning ready for next time.

Use this alongside your manuals. Check the instructions for your specific trailer, tow vehicle, appliances, and equipment. This checklist is general trip-planning guidance - not a replacement for manufacturer procedures, campground rules, professional maintenance, or hands-on towing instruction.

Before You Leave Home

Plan the trip

- ☐ Reservation, site details, check-in time, and campground number saved
- ☐ Route, weather, road notices, and arrival plan checked
- ☐ Trailer and tow-vehicle manuals accessible
- ☐ Keys, identification, payment method, and any campground paperwork packed
- ☐ Food, water, medications, clothing, and personal essentials packed
- ☐ Phone charged; offline map or directions available if useful

Pack and secure the trailer

- ☐ Loose items, cabinets, drawers, doors, windows, and vents secured for travel
- ☐ Items returned to travel position according to the trailer instructions
- ☐ Exterior compartments closed and latched
- ☐ Steps, awnings, slide-outs, and other equipment handled according to the manuals
- ☐ Interior lights and appliances checked according to the manuals
- ☐ Trash, food, and wet gear managed for travel

Hitch, travel, and final walk-around

- ☐ Coupling, hitch, safety equipment, and brake procedures completed as your manuals direct
- ☐ Tire condition and visible damage checked on the trailer and tow vehicle
- ☐ Lights checked with a helper if available
- ☐ Mirrors, doors, storage compartments, and exterior panels checked
- ☐ Area around and under trailer checked for loose items or obstructions
- ☐ One calm final walk-around completed before moving

Arrival and Campsite Setup

Before backing in

- ☐ Check in and review campground or site instructions
- ☐ Walk the site: pad, turns, utilities, trees, and obstacles noted
- ☐ Agree on one spotter and simple hand signals before maneuvering, if using a spotter
- ☐ Position trailer according to the site and trailer instructions

Set up in this order

- ☐ Level and secure trailer with equipment intended for your setup, following the manufacturer’s instructions
- ☐ Complete any required stabilization steps according to the manuals
- ☐ Connect electricity, water, sewer, or other site utilities only with equipment and instructions appropriate to your trailer and campsite
- ☐ Keep cords and hoses neat and out of walking paths where practical
- ☐ Check that the entry and surrounding campsite are clear and comfortable to use
- ☐ Set up chairs, mat, cooking items, and comfort gear last

First-evening check

- ☐ Read quiet hours, trash, pet, fire, and checkout rules
- ☐ Put essentials where you can find them after dark: light, phone, keys, and shoes
- ☐ Note anything you need to adjust or look up in the manuals tomorrow

Before You Pull Out

Break camp

- ☐ Remove trash and personal items from the site
- ☐ Clean and stow outdoor gear, chairs, mat, and cooking items
- ☐ Pack inside by zone; secure loose items, cabinets, doors, windows, and vents
- ☐ Return equipment to travel position according to the manuals

Disconnect and prepare for travel

- ☐ Disconnect utilities using campground and equipment instructions
- ☐ Empty, close, and stow equipment as directed for your trailer and campsite
- ☐ Complete coupling, hitch, safety equipment, and brake procedures as your manuals direct
- ☐ Check tires, lights, mirrors, doors, storage compartments, and exterior panels
- ☐ Look around the site, under the trailer, and at the utility area for anything left behind
- ☐ Complete one quiet final walk-around before moving

Return-Home Reset

- ☐ Remove food, trash, damp towels, and clothing
- ☐ Clean and dry equipment before storing it
- ☐ Restock the everyday basics for the next trip
- ☐ Add repairs, questions, or manual reviews to the next-trip list
- ☐ Store the trailer according to its manufacturer instructions
- ☐ Write down one thing that worked and one thing to change next time

Quick Don’t-Forget List

- ☐ Reservation and campground contact details
- ☐ Keys, phone, wallet, identification, and charging cable
- ☐ Manuals and checklist
- ☐ Flashlight or headlamp
- ☐ Drinking water and simple first-night food
- ☐ Weather-appropriate layers and rain gear
- ☐ Trailer equipment that is appropriate for your trailer and campsite