

# RV Consumer e-Magazine

**July 2014**

**Volume 4**

**ISSUE 7**



**DISCOVER**

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**Trailer Sway  
Part 2  
What it is  
&  
How to  
Control it**

## How to Beat the Summer Heat



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- Devin T., Georgia



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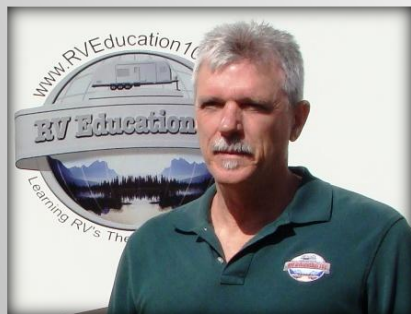
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Happy 4<sup>th</sup> of July! The 4<sup>th</sup> of July is special to me for many reasons. Number one being it's America's Independence Day, and it is the date I started RV Education 101 fifteen years ago. I had some time off work, so we started filming our first RV training video over the 4<sup>th</sup> of July weekend in 1999.

It is hard to believe I completed an entire career in the military and now have 15 years in a second career. I will say that my RV career has been much more fun than my Army career.

Take some well deserved time off over the 4<sup>th</sup> of July and enjoy family, your RV and the warm weather. Happy Birthday America!

This month's issue is packed with RV articles, RV information, RV videos and much more. Enjoy

*Mark*

## RV Consumer Magazine

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# RV Education 101 Product Catalog



Our new digital RV Product Catalog puts all of our RV training products in one place, and we separate which products apply to which type of RV. For example if you own a travel trailer you can browse through the single DVD titles or go directly to the DVD value sets that apply specifically to travel trailers.

[Browse our RV Product Catalog now.](#)

Enjoy the Journey -  
Experience RVing

The image is a photograph of a white RV with a large, striped awning extended over a grassy area. The RV is parked next to a tree, and the background shows a line of green trees under a clear blue sky. The text 'Enjoy the Journey - Experience RVing' is overlaid on the image in a large, white, serif font with a blue outline.

# How to Beat the Summer Heat

By Mark Polk



It seems like we were just talking about how to stay warm in our RV and now we are talking about how to stay cool. Time flies when you're having fun!

For many folks the summer months are the most enjoyable for getting out and using their RVs. Having fun in the sun is great, but when it gets hot outside you want your RV to be ready to deal with all the heat.

Fortunately there are several things we can do to make our summer RV camping trips more pleasurable.

For starters when you arrive at your camping destination strategically park your RV to take advantage of any shade that is available, especially on the side where the refrigerator vent is located. Don't be afraid to ask for a shady site when you check-in at the campground. This will not only help cool the RV down, but your refrigerator

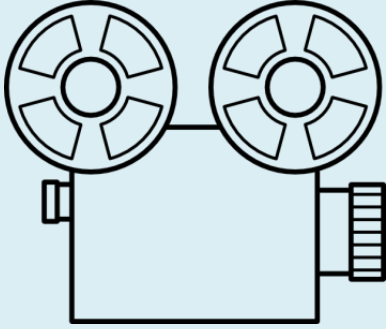
and roof A/C will work much more efficiently too.

You can also improve your RV air conditioners efficiency by keeping the A/C filters clean. In most cases you can wash the filters in warm soapy water, rinse thoroughly and allow them to dry before reinstalling. Another option is to clean the filters with a small hand-held vacuum cleaner. I recommend you keep a new set of filters on hand in the event the old filters have seen better days.

Use your main patio awning and any window awnings to assist in cooling the RV down. In addition to the awnings use your window blinds, curtains or day/night shades to help keep the sun out and the cooler air in.

Campground voltage can fluctuate, especially during the hot summer months when campers are running their A/C, placing a higher demand on

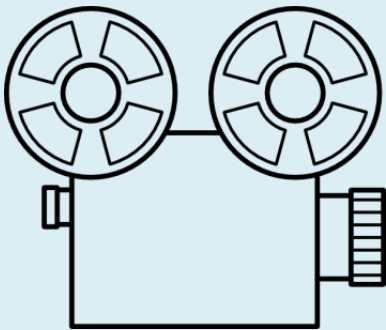
campground electricity. You should monitor the voltage coming in to your RV with a digital voltmeter or use some type of a surge protector.



[Watch Surge Guard Video](#)

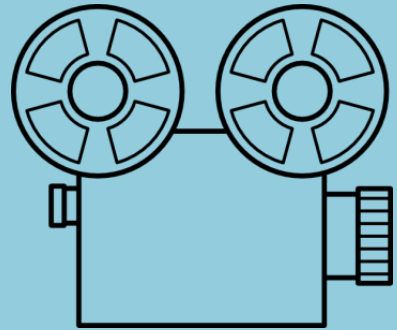
If voltage drops below 105-volts or goes above 130-volts turn your appliances and electronic equipment off until proper voltage is restored. Some surge protectors do this automatically.

You can increase the efficiency of your RV refrigerator by installing a vent fan that is thermostatically controlled. If you are mechanically inclined these fans are fairly simple to install, or you can have your local RV dealer install one for you. Either way it's worth it. Removing heat from behind the refrigerator can improve performance by up to 40%.



[Watch Refrigerator Efficiency Video](#)

Another ingredient to keeping your RV cool is proper ventilation. Proper ventilation helps prevent excess heat from building up in your RV. You can install vent covers, like Maxx Air vents, over the roof vents to allow for ventilation. They are inexpensive, easy to install and they let the fresh air in, even when it's raining, while the stale, musty air, smoke, cooking odors and heat escapes. I use a vent cover on each end of our RV to help promote cross ventilation.



[Watch MaxxAir Installation Video](#)

To help keep the inside of the RV cool start and run the roof AC early in the morning when it is cooler outside, try to avoid opening the door as much as possible and cook outside rather than inside whenever possible.

Of course when all else fails you can go enjoy the campground swimming pool.

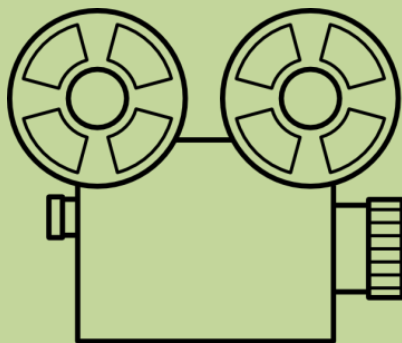
Have a great camping season.

**~RV101**

# MADE IN THE SHADE



Awnings are a great way to increase the shade and help cool the RV on those hot summer days. Most RVs come equipped with a patio awning, but not with window awnings. Window awnings are aesthetically pleasing, pack lots of features and are not difficult to install. Watch the video to learn more about window awnings.



[RV Window Awnings](#)



How will you  
**Remember**  
your travels?



*The laptop we would've used to  
keep in touch with the kids.*



*The guy from Ed's Towing.  
Spent three hours with him.*



*Cook's Field, the week after we  
missed the Bluegrass Festival.*

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# Q&A with Mark

## Question:

While cleaning what I thought was a rubber roof, some of the coating started to peel. I discovered that I actually have a fiberglass roof under the coating someone put on the roof. Any suggestion of what I should do now? Remove the coating completely? Re coat? Patch the exposed area? The coating is embedded with mold that I cannot remove and is getting worse. Any suggestions would be much appreciated.

## Mark's Answer:

A while ago I produced a video for Dicor on how to coat a fiberglass roof. It's important that you prepare the roof properly before coating it. You need to get any old and loose material removed first. This includes cleaning the mold and mildew! You can use a small house type pressure washer to assist with removing the old material, dirt and debris. Next you need to sand the surface so it really holds the new coating. It's a big job, but if done correctly it will last for many years to come. I recommend you watch the video.

[How to Coat a Fiberglass RV Roof](#)

# RV Roof Care & Maintenance

For more  
information  
on how to  
clean,  
maintain and  
repair your RV  
roof check out  
our other  
Dicor RV roof  
care videos

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**Insider TIP:** Each additional DVD added to your order will receive the same discount: 7 for \$70, 8 for \$80 etc.

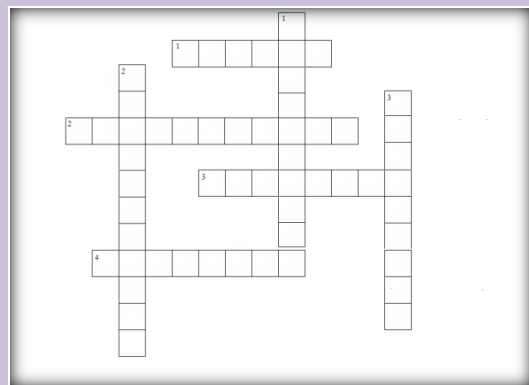
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Play & Learn RV Crossword  
Trailer Sway

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R U  
RV  
Educated?



[Trailer Sway Puzzle](#)

# RV Buying Resources

If you are considering purchasing an RV, especially for the first time, it's important that you research the RV buying process so you can make informed RV buying decisions. To help with this I want to offer some RV buying resources.

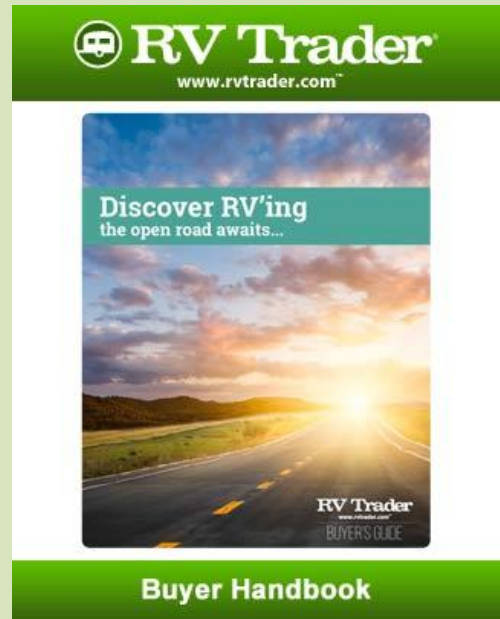
At our RV Consumer website we offer [an entire section for the RV buyer](#).

This valuable resource includes information on the different types of RVs, RV buying guides, RV buying articles, RV buying resources and RV online training.

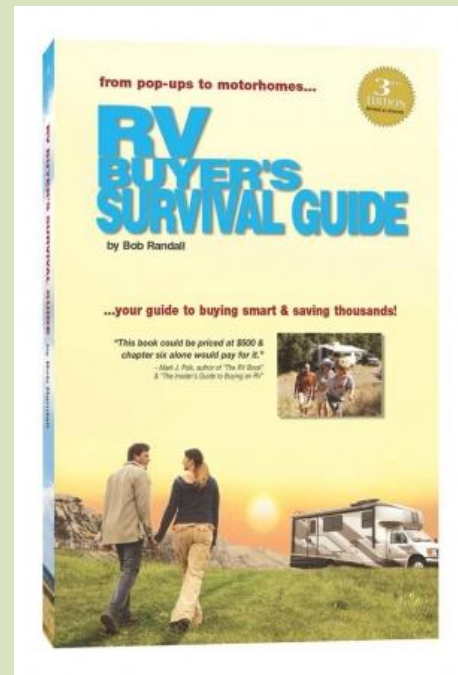
Taking some time to review this material will help immensely when it's time to purchase your RV.

Another great RV buying resource is [RV Trader](#). Whether you are buying or selling an RV you will find some great RV tips, articles and other resources, and a huge selection of RVs to choose from.

In addition to all these resources RV Trader offers a RV Buyer Handbook that is available for download. It has some very helpful information, including a couple of my articles as well. If you are interested in downloading a copy of the RV Buyer handbook just click on the link.



[RV Buyer Handbook](#)

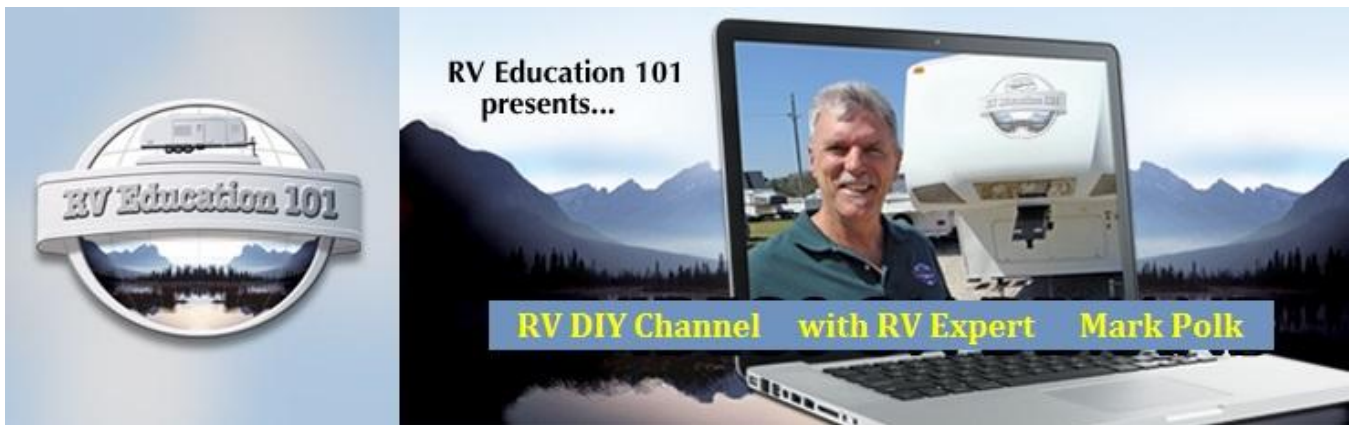


[RV Buyers Survival Guide E-Book](#)



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## Coming Soon to a Computer near you, RV DIY Channel

And stay tuned, soon we will present our brand new RV DIY Channel. If you are a do-it-yourselfer this new site was designed with you in mind. We will be posting helpful RV DIY videos on a regular basis to help you become more proficient with your RV.

I will keep you posted on our progress in upcoming issues of RV Consumer Magazine.

# Trailer Sway - Part 2

by Mark Polk & Jose Adauto de Souza

Last month I discussed what trailer sway is and ended the article by listing some important items that contribute to trailer sway. This month I want to discuss ways to help control trailer sway based on the items that contribute to trailer sway.

If you missed last month's article you can read it here: [Trailer Sway Part 1](#)

## The most important items associated with trailer sway are:

- a) underinflated tires
- b) improper weight distribution
- c) improper hitch adjustments
- d) no sway control
- e) air pressure from transfer trucks passing
- f) long downhill (descent)
- g) lateral wind
- h) towing speed
- i) inadequate towing vehicle
- j) overload conditions
- k) hitch to tow vehicle rear axle distance
- l) poor trailer design
- m) Mismatched tow vehicle & trailer
- n) Not completing trailer/tow vehicle checklist



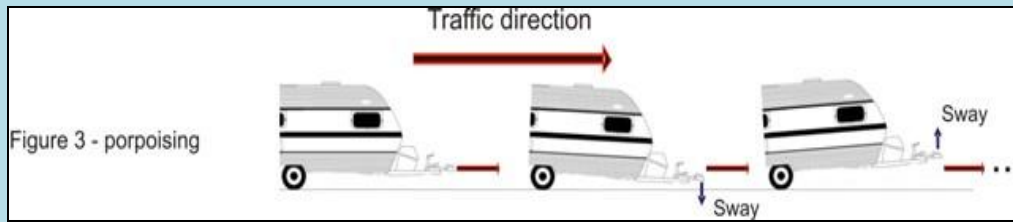
So, to help avoid trailer sway, we recommend the following remedies:

**a) Underinflated tires:** Never leave on a trip without a tire inspection. If necessary, adjust the inflation pressure according to manufacturer recommendation. Always check and inflate tires when they are cold, before traveling more than one mile. Whenever you stop, inspect the tow vehicle and trailer conditions to include tire conditions. Check tire and hub temperature. In case of abnormally hot tires, or hubs there is something wrong. It may be wheel bearing problems, underinflated tires or axle overloads. Try to identify the problem and correct it.

**b) Improper weight distribution:** When a trailer is manufactured it has very stringent weight balances. When you add after-market equipment or load the trailer try to balance the loaded weight from side-to-side and front to back. Bad lateral



weight distribution can provoke sways and bad front to back weight distribution may generate up/down sways (Figure 3). Remember that the weight over the hitch ball should be 10 to 15% of the total loaded trailer weight. If the trailer has less than 10% tongue weight, load more weight towards the front of the trailer.



**c) Hitch adjustments:** Whenever using a weight distribution hitch it is extremely important that it is adjusted properly. If you are not sure how to adjust the hitch components take it to an authorized RV service center to have it adjusted.

**d) No sway control:** Sway controls help to limit the possibility of sway starting. Whenever possible have a sway control installed and make sure you understand how to adjust it.

**e) Transfer trucks passing:** Large trucks will pass you and you need to be prepared to make slight steering adjustments. When a truck passes you the main factor is the air displacement. The air pressure coming off of the truck pulls and pushes against the trailer. Try to observe wind intensity and direction, as well the air moisture which is the main villain. Humid air is heavier and increases lateral trailer displacements when being passed. Being aware of the situation is the best defense. Be prepared to make slight steering corrections, but do not over steer.

**f) Long downhill (descent):** When descending inclines reduce your speed, use a lower gear and apply weak vehicle braking, if necessary. Never do any abrupt vehicle braking. Continued use of the vehicle brakes can cause them to fade and not work properly. It may be necessary to manually activate the trailer brakes periodically to help slow down and/or to control sway. Slowly slide the brake lever over to activate the trailer brakes. It is important to manage a safe and manageable speed when descending inclines.

**g) Lateral wind:** Strong cross winds and windy days in general can be very dangerous when towing a trailer. It is better not to travel on very windy days. If you do experience lateral wind reduce your speed substantially and remain alert.

**h) Towing speed:** It is difficult to state what a safe speed is when towing a trailer. There are many variables, but not exceeding a speed of 60 miles/hour is a fair assessment. Use lower speeds if the traffic conditions are not normal (lateral winds, high humidity, rain, road conditions, downhill, etc).

**i) Inadequate towing vehicle:** Your tow vehicle may have enough power to move a trailer down the road, but what must be considered is whether the tow vehicles weight is adequate to support slowing down and to help prevent trailer sway. Every tow vehicle has weight limits and ratings. It is very important that these weight ratings are not exceeded. The farther you are from exceeding weight limits the safer it is for you and your family. A very general rule is the tow vehicles towing capacity should be capable of towing the Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR) of the trailer you are towing.

**j) Overload:** Never overload the tow vehicle or the trailer. Overloading tires, axles, Gross Vehicle Weight Ratings (GVWR) and Gross Combined Weight Ratings (GCWR) is extremely dangerous. Make sure all cargo loaded in the trailer is secured and that all weight added is properly distributed.

**k) Hitch to tow vehicle rear axle distance:** The distance from the tow vehicles rear axle to the hitch ball can contribute to sway. Less distance is always better. Ideally a longer wheelbase vehicle with a shorter overhang from the rear axle to the hitch ball is the best scenario. Basically it is associated with the lever effect. The distance between the rear axle and the hitch ball position may be understood as the lever length; and the longer the distance it is the higher the lateral forces applied to the axle position.

**l) Poor trailer design:** When there is too much weight behind the trailers axles causing the tongue weight to be less than 10% of the trailers weight it has a natural tendency to sway. In this case it will be necessary to load some of the weight towards the front of the trailer to increase tongue weight. Ideally tongue weight should be between 10 to 15% of the loaded trailer weight.

**m) Mismatched tow vehicle & trailer:** The tow vehicle and trailer need to be properly matched to make a safe towing system. An improperly matched tow vehicle and trailer can result in trailer sway. A tow vehicle without the proper towing capacity for the trailer it is towing, too light of a suspension system for the amount of tongue weight, too short of a wheelbase for the size of trailer can all contribute to trailer sway. The tow vehicle should be rated to tow the GVWR of the trailer you purchase.

**n) Tow vehicle/trailer checklist:** The tow vehicle and trailer must be in good mechanical condition to safely tow. The brakes and suspension on both the vehicle and trailer must be in proper operating condition. Prior to leaving on a trip inspect the suspension (shock absorbers, springs, bars, tires and other components on the trailer and the vehicle) and the operation and adjustment of the electric brakes for

the trailer. Tires must be in good condition and inflated properly for the load. A checklist can help you remember what items to check.

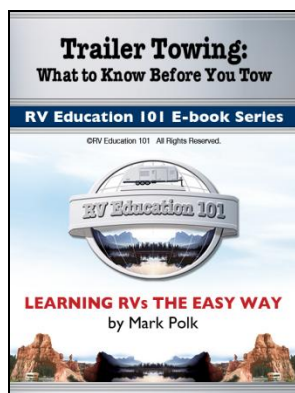
**Note:** Adhering to these recommendations can help prevent trailer sway from starting, but keep in mind there are no guarantees you will not encounter sway. If you do experience trailer sway you should gradually reduce speed, avoid using the vehicle brakes if possible, avoid harsh steering movements if possible and manually apply the trailer brakes by sliding the lever over on the electronic brake control to help bring the sway under control.

Everyone who tows a trailer, even the most experienced, is a potential trailer sway victim. When it comes to trailer sway caution is a necessity, but not always sufficient. Safety first! Being aware of what sway is and what you can do to help prevent it can help prepare you in the event your trailer starts to sway.

**Note:** Something else to keep in mind is wheel bearing and brake maintenance on your trailer. With routine wheel bearing and brake inspections and maintenance you can rest assured that not only will the bearings and brakes operate properly and safely, but you can prevent costly and untimely breakdowns.

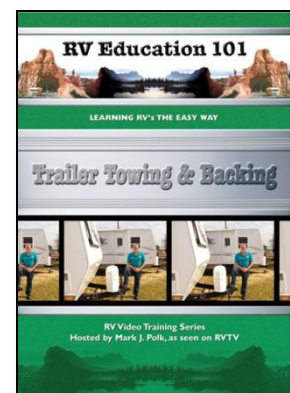
This article was written by Mark Polk & Jose Adauto de Souza. Adauto is a retired Petroleum Geologist/Geophysicist in Brazil. He is a member of a regional RVing group in Rio de Janeiro State called “Amigos do Rio RV Group (Rio’s friends ) (Brazil)”.

“One of the most important factors in controlling trailer sway is the hitch you use to tow the trailer. I have tried many brands of hitches over the years, and the only hitch I use now for towing trailers is a [Equalizer Sway Control Hitch](#).” ~ Mark Polk



[E-Book](#)

## Trailer Towing Resources



[DVD](#)



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THE SUN WILL SHINE,  
GEYSERS WILL SPOUT  
OR LEAVES WILL TURN  
GOLDEN-RED FOR YOU.

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# RV Education 101 YouTube Channel Surpasses 3 Million Views



If you want access to informative RV how-to videos, RV product videos, RV installation videos and more take a minute to check out our [YouTube channel](#).

You can subscribe to our channel and get notified every time we post a new video. We currently have over 190 RV Education 101 videos, produced in-house, posted on our YouTube channel and over 10,000 subscribers.

We are proud to announce that our YouTube channel recently surpassed 3,000,000 video views. It's a great place to learn more about your RV and keep up with what is new and exciting in the RV industry.



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**RV Education 101 recently teamed up with Explorer RV Insurance to provide the RV consumer with a free [RV driving video series](#) & [RV Care & Maintenance](#) download brochure.**



# Marinated Beef Kebobs



**The Cooking Ladies**

*The Cooking Ladies, Phyllis Hinz and Lamont Mackay, are freelance writers, restaurant consultants, cookbook authors, event speakers, and RVers. Please take a minute to visit their website:*

[www.thecookingladies.com](http://www.thecookingladies.com)

(Makes 3 to 4 servings)

3/8 cup (90 mL)	canola oil
3/8 cup (90 mL)	cider vinegar 1
1/2 tablespoons (22.5 mL)	worcestershire sauce
1/2 teaspoon (2.5 mL)	salt
1/2 teaspoon (2.5 mL)	coarsely ground pepper
1	clove garlic, minced
1/2 tablespoon (7.5 mL)	dried basil
1/8 teaspoon (0.63 mL)	dried crushed red peppers
1 pound (454 g)	thick cut sirloin steak

[Watch Video](#)

- Combine the canola oil, cider vinegar, Worcestershire sauce, salt, pepper, garlic, basil and crushed red peppers in a bowl. Mix well.
- Cut the sirloin steak into 1-inch (2.5 cm) cubes.
- Place the marinade in a large Ziploc bag or flat covered dish. Add the cubed beef. Toss and shake the beef to coat every piece with the marinade. Refrigerate for 12 to 24 hours.
- Remove the beef from the marinade. Discard the marinade. Thread the beef cubes on metal skewers without squeezing the pieces too tightly together.
- Preheat the barbecue on high for 10 minutes then turn the heat down to medium-high. Oil the grate.
- Grill the beef for about 10 to 12 minutes with the lid closed, turning the kebobs every few minutes to brown the meat on all sides.

[Happy Hour Recipes PDF E-book](#)

This #1 best selling e-book is the first in The Cooking Ladies' Favorite series. And to make this cookbook even more outstanding, The Cooking Ladies have included a photo of each finished dish. Recipe ingredients are given in both Imperial and metric measurements.



# RV Awning Know How

Awnings are a great feature to have on your RV. There are several different types of RV awnings and they serve different purposes. Window and door awnings provide shade and keep rain away from your RV windows or entry door. Slide-out awnings help protect the top of the slide-out from debris and water., and patio awnings can extend the living area of our outdoor world.



The awnings on your RV will provide years of reliable, trouble-free operation if you take the time to do a little preventive maintenance and cleaning. Here are some tips to help extending the life of your RV awnings.

- 1.** The first step to maintaining your awnings is understanding the different types of awning fabrics. Fabric used on RV awnings is one of two types, acrylic or vinyl. Acrylic fabric is a woven cloth that lets air circulate through the fabric. This air circulation allows the fabric dry quicker when it gets wet. Acrylic fabrics are water repellent, but not waterproof. Vinyl awning fabric is mildew resistant, but not necessarily mildew proof. Mildew can form on the dirt and dust that collects on the vinyl fabric. The mildew will be worse in high temperatures, high humidity and if the fabric is stored when it is wet.
- 2.** When you open the awnings for the first time each year, or if the awning has been stored for awhile, you will need to inspect the awning fabric for any signs of mildew or stains. Remember, vinyl awnings will mildew. To prevent dirt from embedding in the woven fabric of an acrylic awning fabric you should simply hose the fabric off on a regular basis. Avoid scrubbing acrylic awning fabrics. Scrubbing can remove the water retardant finish. For stubborn stains, blot an approved cleaner on the acrylic fabric with a sponge or soft cloth.
- 3.** For more difficult stains or mildew on a vinyl awning fabric, use an aftermarket commercial cleaner made just for awning fabrics. One method that seems to work well is to spray the inside and outside of the awning fabric with the appropriate

cleaner and then roll it up and let it sit for several minutes. This distributes the cleaner over the entire surface of the awning fabric and allows the cleaner time to work. Open the awning and thoroughly rinse both sides of the fabric. It may be necessary to scrub stubborn stains with a brush on a vinyl awning fabric before rinsing. You can clean the awning hardware with the same cleaner you use to wash the RV.

**Note:** Never use oil-based or abrasive cleaners on awning fabrics. Clean and thoroughly rinse both sides of the awning fabric. Carefully follow all awning and cleaner manufacturer directions.

**4.** Inspect the awning fabric for any tears or excessive wear. Talk to your RV dealer about what materials to use to repair or patch the awning fabric. While the awning is out, inspect the awning hardware. The bottom awning brackets support most of the load from the awning. Check the lag screws in the awning brackets for secure mounting. Inspect the arm pivot holes for any enlarged holes or broken rivets in the handles. Check for a warped roller tube. If the roller tube is warped it will be noticeable when you roll the awning out. Inspect the awning end caps for secure mounting and any broken or loose rivets. Make sure the awning rail is securely mounted to the side of the RV.

**Caution:** Never attempt to remove the awning end caps. Spring tension can result in serious injury. Have any damaged or broken parts repaired before using the awning.

**5.** In addition to cleaning and inspecting your awnings there are a few things to keep in mind when using the awnings, especially the patio awning. Always lower one end of the awning to allow for water runoff. The weight from water pooling on the awning fabric can cause extensive and costly damage. Any wind gusts over 20 miles per hour can also cause extensive damage to the awning and to the RV. Never leave the awning out unattended. If you are leaving the campsite store the awning in the travel position. When you go to bed, store the awning. Even when you are at the campsite you should use awning tie downs to prevent any sudden damage caused by high wind gusts or a sudden storm.

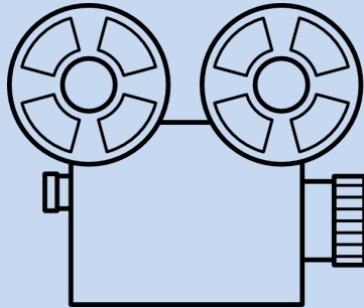
You have the option to position the awning arms straight down and stake them to the ground, but you will get better support if they're attached to the bottom awning brackets on the side of the RV.

Remember, it is much easier to prevent damage to your awning than it is to repair it.

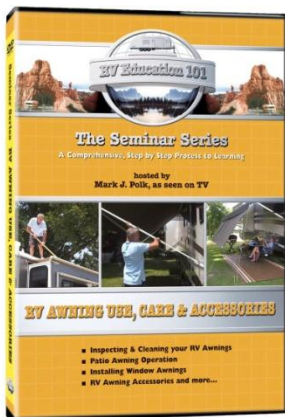


6. Never store the awning when the fabric is wet. Allow enough time for it the fabric to dry completely, on both sides, before storing the awning.
7. Check with your RV insurance provider to make sure your RV awning is covered in the event of any damage. Some insurance companies require separate insurance coverage on the RV awnings.

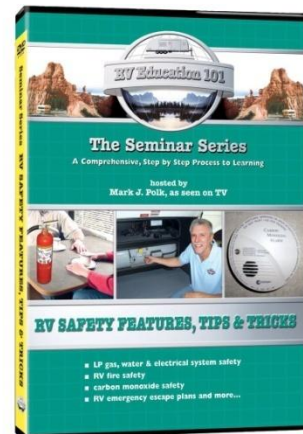
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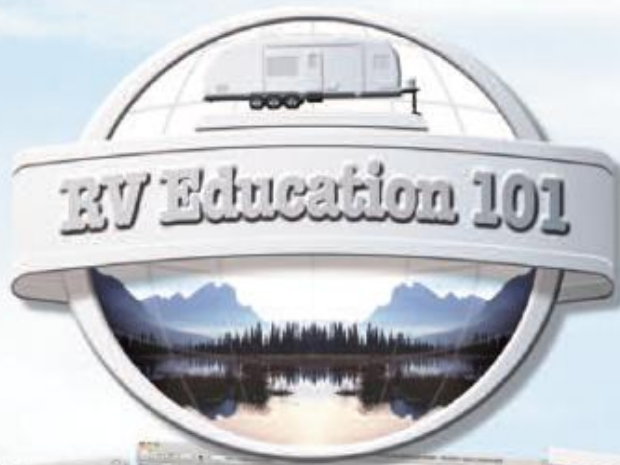
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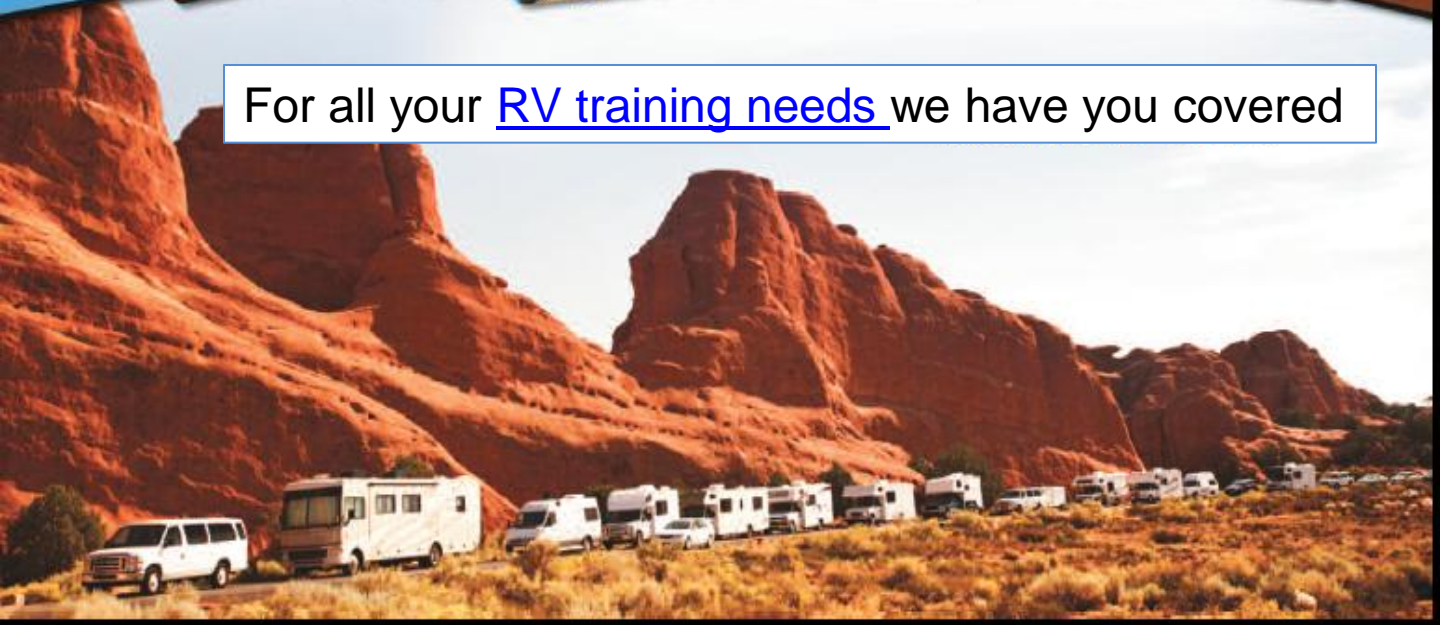
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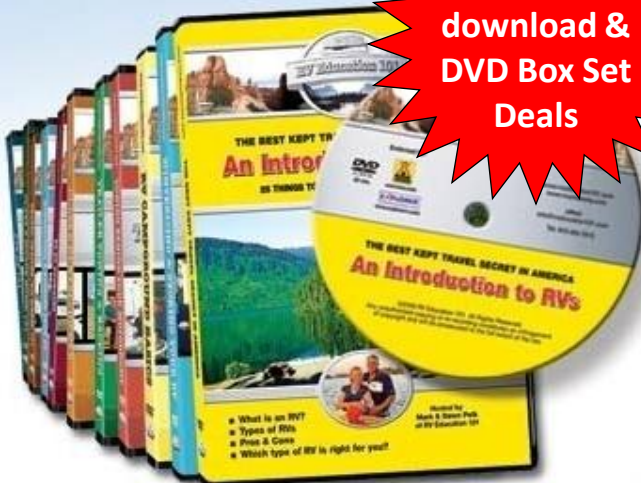


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Our goal with RV Consumer E-Magazine is to provide you with helpful information to make all of your RV experiences more enjoyable. I left my position as an RV Sales and F&I manager in 2000 to start RV Education 101.

We produce RV educational videos & DVDs and publish books and e-books on how to safely & properly use and maintain your RV. The reason I left my job was because of my concern about the lack of educational and safety awareness material available to the RV consumer, in other words you.

My wife Dawn left her position in RV sales to help start the company, and is our Sales and Marketing Director. We currently have a 35-foot Class A motor home. We have two boys, Tyler 17 and Josh 23, both avid RVers and two dogs, Roxie and Gracie.

If you would like to learn more about us and about RV Education 101 please visit [www.rveducation101.com](http://www.rveducation101.com)

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