

RV Today.com

Shakedown Cruise™

Before you take off on that cross-country adventure we suggest beginning a bit more modestly with a Shakedown Cruise™.

This simply is a trip to a campground fairly close to home. By not going far, you'll spend less time on the road and more time learning about and enjoying your RV. It's ideal if you can go with friends who already own an RV. If not, you will make new friends at the campground. Don't be intimidated because you're new; RVers are friendly folks. Besides, we can spot a new owner a mile away so don't be embarrassed when you ask for help.

We'll soon have agreements with local (Southern California) RV campgrounds to host new owners on their Shakedown Cruise™. In the meantime, here are some ideas on how to get started.

To find a campground in your area, search the Internet or pick up an RV directory from an RV store.

When you make your reservation, ask if they offer any assistance to new RVers; when you check into the campground, tell them you're new and ask for help. If they don't have staff to assist you, they might be able to ask one of the campers to volunteer. It's always easier to park and set up if you have someone experienced to guide you through the process.

Once you select your site, verify that power and water hook ups function properly before setting up. Also, make sure that your utility connections (water hose, sewer hose, shore power cord) are within reach of the hookups; nothing like leveling your coach and then finding that your power cord is six inches short of the power pedestal!

Since anything mechanical may have some bugs to be worked out, take a notepad and pen along so you can jot down any questions or issues you have regarding your coach. By making a list, you'll save time when you have the coach serviced.

Now that you're set up, enjoy! Get acquainted with your RV, the campground, the campers and the local area. You'll meet new friends who are anxious to share their RV knowledge and experience with you so get ready to learn. You'll have such a great time you'll wonder why you didn't do this years ago!