

How to Cut Costs While RVing

If one were to write a list of the most thriving auto trends, you wouldn't think to put RVs there. But recreational vehicles are seeing a resurgence, particularly among the youth.

So what accounts for younger generations getting into an old man's game? A combination of skyrocketing housing costs and that all-American urge to see the country. Still, it's not necessarily the cheapest way to see the purple mountains' majesty.

Traveling via RV can be costly in ways you don't expect, even outspending hotels and airplanes' standard rates. But there are tricks to keeping your journey within your budget. Here are just a few ways to cut costs while RVing.

Stick to the Accessories You Need

The first way to reduce cost revolves around the vehicle itself. Most first-timers will rent, but if it becomes a passion, the more luxurious RVs can be upwards of over \$1 million. But if you are going to rent, you're probably looking at around \$250 per night.

Either way, the dealership is going to push every frill they can. If you're new to the pastime, you likely won't need many of them or even necessarily know how to use them. This is why it's wise to stick with only the accessories you know you're going to need.

Gas is Expensive

It's no secret that RVs are gas-guzzling machines. This is where a good chunk of your budget is going to go. But a lot of it can be avoided by careful planning. Planning for a single destination, or staying in a few for more extended periods, ultimately means less fuel burned.

Never forget that you're meant to enjoy the ride, so slow down on the highway. Not only will you appreciate the trip more (and be safer), you'll save on gas.

You can also get apps such as GazBuddy, which notifies you of the cheapest gas in the area.

If you're staying at a campground, many offer discounts for longer stays. You can also buy a camping pass. It also helps to plan to travel only in the winter months, avoiding the higher rates.

Plan for Free Activities

Many campgrounds and parks you'll be staying around offer plenty of free activities, and you can always plan for hikes and nature walks. Buy an annual National Park Pass to ensure you don't miss any of the country's wonders while saving a bundle, too.

Biking is also always an option, and it's an excellent alternative that's great for your health and wallet! This is also a time to save on food. Since you have a kitchen, you can easily save on restaurants.

Get Handy

There is nothing more certain when traveling cross-country than car trouble. No matter how careful you are, it's something for which you can't prepare.

As your RV passion deepens, you'll learn your way around the inner workings of your rig. This will no doubt start to save cost on repairs or any emergency fixes you'd otherwise be calling AAA for.

Boondocking

If you have your own generator, then you may not even need to pay to camp anywhere. Dry camping, or boondocking, is a great way to save money.

There are plenty of locations around the country that legally allow you to boondock – this is actually Justice Thomas' preferred method. Walmart parking lots often allow it, as do many National Parks.

Storing Your RV

What to do with your motor vehicle in the off-months? There are storage facilities in every state and city, running anywhere from \$75 a month to \$200.

However, it's cheaper to store it on your property. Installing a second storage garage or roof cover on or adjacent to your home is reasonably inexpensive, and in the long run, you'll save on rental fees.

Final Thoughts

RVing can be costly, but there are ways to make it fit your budget. The best part? None of this cost-cutting is going to reduce the amount of joy you get hitting the open road and seeing the country.

"Go West" was once the motto of America, the manifest destiny upon which the country was founded. And no American can really experience the totality of the country without driving through and taking in all of its beauty.