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### **Tips for first-time RV buyers**

OKEMOS, Mich.—Purchasing a recreational vehicle (RV) is a big decision and an exciting moment in your life. When starting the process, there are many things to keep in mind when researching an RV and knowing as much as you can about RVs can make your final decision much easier.

**Determine your needs:** Bigger doesn't always mean more room. Most Class A RVs—the largest available—usually only have sleeping quarters for two or four. If you will be travelling with children, other friends, or lots of equipment consider travel trailers or a sports utility RV which often offer either bunk beds or drop down beds.

**Preferences:** Are you planning on living in your RV for extended periods, or appreciating it on weekends? Do you need room to haul lots of outdoor gear, or do you require lots of personal space? Determining your preferences early can save time when looking at the many options available.

**Where are you going?** Are you a close-to-home camper or are you envisioning cross-country caravans? Do you want to drive or tow your new vehicle? Creature comforts are important on long travels, but so is gas mileage. Many newer RV models are getting better-than-average mileage, thanks to advances in aerodynamics and composition materials.

**Roads more or less travelled:** While most people think RVs can go anywhere—there are actually some road and RV park size restrictions. With proper planning though, these issues can be avoided.

**Set a budget:** Know what you can afford and consider getting a pre-approved loan prior to setting foot on a dealer's lot. A high credit score will allow for the best financing. RVs are considered luxury purchases, so lenders are especially cautious. All those bells and whistles add up, so leave some padding in your budget.

**Do your research:** Read, read and read! Begin your research at the Michigan Association of Recreation Vehicles and Campgrounds (MARVAC) website [www.michiganrvandcampgrounds.org](http://www.michiganrvandcampgrounds.org). Follow up with online reviews and stories of current RV owners. When you are finished reading, a trip to an area RV show is an absolute must. There you will find hundreds of models, dealers and additional products you never knew you'd need for your RV.

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After doing due diligence, it is time to begin the actual shopping. Plan on spending time at the dealership—not only picking out your RV, but learning about it during a detailed walk-through orientation.

Try not to get overwhelmed with the abundance of information being passed onto you. As thrilling as RV ownership can be, it also takes some preparation, so it's important to absorb what's being communicated to you during the orientation. You may want to consider bringing a notebook or another set of eyes and ears with you, so you don't miss anything. Don't forget to take a photo of you and your new vehicle.

Above all, remember to enjoy your RV! RVs are the perfect way for families to escape the stresses of everyday life. Packed with essentials—bathrooms, kitchens and sleeping accommodations—RVs provide a convenient way to travel with all the comforts of home. Plus, RVs have all the “extras” like TVs, stereos, air conditioning, fireplaces and more.

To search for RV dealers near you, visit [www.michiganrvandcampgrounds.org](http://www.michiganrvandcampgrounds.org). A MARVAC dealer can guide you through the process of purchasing your first RV.

The Michigan Association of Recreation Vehicles and Campgrounds (MARVAC) is a statewide, nonprofit organization dedicated to encouraging growth in the recreation vehicle and private campground industries while contributing to the quality of Michigan tourism. For more information, visit MARVAC's website, [www.michiganrvandcampgrounds.org](http://www.michiganrvandcampgrounds.org). MARVAC, 2222 Association Drive, Okemos, Mich. 48864-5978; 517.349.8881.

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