

## Information on Motor Homes:

[Motorhomes or Motor Homes...?](#)

[Motor Home with 53% Wheelbase-to-Length Ratio](#)

[Class A Motorhome](#)

[Class B Motorhome](#)

[Class C Motorhome](#)

## Information on Towables:

[Fifth Wheel](#)

[Trailer Coach](#)

[RV Reporter](#)

## Hints for Towables...from [How to Select, Inspect, and Buy an RV](#) by JD Gallant

### How to Save at the Fuel Pump

With fuel-efficient vehicles becoming popular, more RVers are switching to small trailers no more than 25 feet long, and manufacturers are creating new trailer lines to accommodate them. The easiest way to spot one of these lightweight RVs is to count the axles. If you don't count more than one, you can figure that the total weight of the trailer will be in the neighborhood of 2,000 pounds or less. (However, some may go over 3,000 pounds loaded.) You will actually find some single-axle trailers that weigh less than 1,000 pounds.



First of all, don't let the "single-axle" bother you. There has been, and probably still is, a floating myth that single-axle trailers wander a lot. This is bunk. Well-balanced single-axle trailers are superb at following the tow vehicle, providing the hitch weight is between 10% and 15% of the trailer's gross weight. They are excellent for weekend getaways and short trips, and they'll save you money at the pump.



### Buyer Beware

RV shows are designed to sell RVs—not to promote RVs. Many product shows are held primarily to introduce and promote various products, but not RV shows. The primary motivation for a dealer or manufacturer to be a vendor at an RV show is to sell products—to catch you "today". They are hyped to close on every interested attendee. They are aggressively seeking buying signs. Every salesperson is on commission with little interest in "promoting" the product. So, be on your guard.

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### Wheelbase needs to be understood

If, when towing a trailer or fifth wheel, the wheelbase of the towing vehicle is too short, control can be lost in a matter of seconds. Many accidents with trailer coaches occur because the wheelbase of the towing vehicle is much too short for the weight and size of the trailer. Some describe it as the "tail wagging the dog". Even though there are many warnings on the subject, some RV salespeople are still telling trailer buyers that their tow vehicle can pull anything on the lot. "Pull" may be partially true, but "control" may be way off. There is no question that insufficient wheelbase and lack of traction cause the majority of trailer coach accidents. This lack of control is compounded by poor design of the trailer relating to balance—especially hitch weights.



### Some things to ponder

A fold-down trailer is ideal for the many families who have a light-weight vehicle and want a portable camp. Although there are some negatives, it has served RVing families for over three decades. Fold-downs in the 1,000-pound range rarely give any problems (unless tongue weight is too light); but when they climb above 2,000 pounds, there are often serious problems with towing.



Whether you are considering an RV for fulltiming, snowbirding, vacationing, or simply weekend getaways, be sure to check our RV Ratings CD before you buy.