



HOME BASE BOLIVAR

RV Recommendations, Supplies, Setup, and Hacks

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This guide covers what to look for when buying an RV for full-time, four-season living, along with the supplies and hacks our Guests rely on most. It is provided as a courtesy and reflects general guidance. The dealer contact referenced below is included based on the Park's direct working relationship with them.

RV Purchasing Recommendations

An RV built for occasional summer trips is not built for a Missouri winter. Most Guests do not own a truck capable of towing a fifth wheel or travel trailer, so this list is qualified to models available through Blue Compass RV (Strafford) and Wehr RV's (Springfield), who can deliver to the Site and know Home Base Bolivar's requirements.

Local Contact: For any Blue Compass RV model below, ask for Tony Cox, 417-512-7595. He is familiar with Home Base Bolivar's Site requirements and has worked directly with our Guests.

Within each tier, models are listed in order of build quality, based on owner feedback, manufacturer track record, and service support after the sale.

What To Look For

- **Enclosed, heated underbelly:** forced-air ducted from the furnace, not just heat pads
- **Laminated construction:** rigid foam insulation in the walls, roof, and floor, not fiberglass batting alone
- **Dual-pane windows:** reduces condensation and heat loss versus single-pane glass
- **Adequate furnace capacity:** 30,000+ BTU for the floor plan
- **Protected plumbing:** PEX lines and tanks enclosed within the heated underbelly
- **Frame and axle margin:** rated above full-time loaded weight, not just dry weight
- **Published cold-weather rating:** ask what temperature the manufacturer tested the package to; ratings range from roughly 15°F to 0°F and below

Upper Tier – Locally Available

- **Grand Design Solitude:** the benchmark for full-time four-season living; local at Blue Compass RV
- **Brinkley Model Z:** residential interior, strong fit and finish; founded in 2022 by former Grand Design executives, an independent company rather than a Grand Design product line; local at Blue Compass RV

Mid Tier – Locally Available

- **Grand Design Reflection:** same engineering as Solitude in a smaller footprint; local at Blue Compass RV
- **Alliance Paradigm:** feature-rich, strong value at this tier; local at Blue Compass RV
- **Jayco Pinnacle / North Point:** Climate Shield package, residential interior finishes; local at Wehr RV's
- **Keystone Montana / Montana High Country:** strong four-season insulation, spacious layouts; local at Blue Compass RV
- **Forest River Rockwood Signature:** heated tanks, radiant foil insulation; local at Blue Compass RV

Entry Tier – Locally Available

- **Jayco Jay Feather (Climate Shield package):** an exception to the “Feather” naming caution below: the Climate Shield package specifically upgrades insulation and tank protection beyond the base lightweight frame; compact but genuinely four-season capable; local at Wehr RV's
- **Keystone Outback (Elements package):** heated enclosed underbelly, tank pad heaters, 35,000 BTU furnace; local at Blue Compass RV
- **Forest River Flagstaff / Rockwood (Climate Protection package):** heated tanks, radiant foil, thermopane windows; local at Blue Compass RV
- **Forest River Puma / Puma Tracks (Extended Season package):** enclosed heated underbelly and laminated roof and rear wall; owners report solid protection into the teens with proper skirting, not true arctic-rated; local at Blue Compass RV

RVs To Avoid

Units marketed as “four-season” without a tested cold-weather package are typically built for summer use and winter storage. Warning signs include:

- Single-pane windows and unheated, exposed underbelly
- Low insulation values (R-3 to R-5) with no enclosed tank protection
- Stapled particleboard cabinetry and thin, unlaminated wall panels

Watch the model name itself. “Lite,” “Ultra Lite,” and “Feather” branding signals a weight-optimized build: thinner walls, reduced insulation, and lighter-gauge frames and axles, designed to be towed easily by an SUV or half-ton truck for weekend and summer use. The same construction choices that keep the trailer light are what fail in a Missouri winter. Treat this naming pattern as a caution flag and confirm a genuine cold-weather package is present before considering a unit in this category.

Brands and product lines most frequently cited for this pattern: entry-level Forest River lines outside the Rockwood/Flagstaff/Puma cold-weather trims, Thor Hurricane, Four Winds, Cruiser RV, Gulf Stream, recent-production Fleetwood travel trailers, and base Keystone lines without the Elements package.

Supplies – Essential

Listed in order of importance: life safety first, then what protects the RV from expensive damage, then what the utility hookups require, then Site stability, then cold-weather protection, then routine maintenance and convenience.

- **Working CO / propane detector:** life-safety equipment, non-negotiable
- **Fire extinguisher:** life-safety equipment, non-negotiable
- **Surge protector / EMS:** matched to Site amperage; protects the RV's entire electrical system from a single bad pedestal
- **Power cord matching Site amperage:** 30A: TT-30P/TT-30R; 50A: 14-50P/14-50R
- **Adjustable water pressure regulator:** protects your plumbing from Site pressure fluctuations
- **Sewer hose:** sized to the number of waste lines, with sufficient connections to tie them all together
- **Leveling blocks or jacks:** sufficient to level and secure your RV
- **Wheel chocks**
- **Water filter:** a whole-house system with replaceable cartridges is the best long-term value and needs freeze protection in winter
- **Heated water hose:** required for cold-weather months
- **Pipe insulation / heat tape:** for exposed lines beyond the heated hose
- **RV-specific skirting:** handles ventilation, moisture, and pests better than DIY foam board
- **Tire pressure gauge**
- **Basic tool kit**

Negotiating tip: smart buyers negotiate these essentials into the RV purchase itself. Dealers commonly throw in items like these at no extra cost, or will include them in the purchase package so they are not an additional out-of-pocket expense after closing.

Supplies – Nice To Have

- **RV roof maintenance supplies:** sealant and a periodic resealing schedule; roof leaks are the most common and costly source of RV damage
- **X-chocks:** improve axle and RV stabilization; do not replace standard wheel chocks
- **Sewer hose support:** keeps the hose properly sloped for full drainage
- **Tank treatment chemicals:** grey and black; use plenty of water in an extended-stay setting
- **Water flow meter:** tracks exactly how much water enters your fresh tank
- **Brass Y-splitter:** runs multiple water connections from a single source
- **Pest and rodent control:** check slide-out seals; sealing those gaps must not interfere with slide retraction
- **Spare fuses and basic RV spare parts:** prevents a small failure from becoming a trip into town
- **Dehumidifier**
- **Interior surge-protected power strips**
- **Steps with handrail**
- **Exterior entry rug or mat**
- **Porch or ground-level deck addition:** see the Guest Guide for approval requirements
- **Storage building:** available only at Lot 13, Lot 14, and Lot 31
- **Cordless drill**
- **Backup generator:** authorized only during extended power outages

Arrival And Setup

Knowing what to expect makes your first setup far less stressful, especially if this is your first RV. Our team walks you through every step below; you are never doing this alone.

Positioning And Leveling

- Staff meets you at the office and leads the way to your Site.
- Your RV is positioned within reach of the utilities, with room for slide-outs and vehicle parking.
- The RV is leveled side-to-side, then chocked and secured before anything is unhitched.
- Mark a tape measure at full slide-out extension, then use it to check clearance from utilities, trees, and other RVs before you park.
- Use a free phone leveling app to check side-to-side and front-to-back level before chocking the wheels.

Unhitching

- Staff walks you through the correct unhitch procedure for your trailer type, travel trailer or fifth wheel.

Important: You, or your driver, decide when the RV is sufficiently secured and ready to be unhitched from the tow vehicle. That call belongs to you, not staff.

Utility Connections

Connections are made in this order for a reason: electrical first protects your RV's systems, water second gets your plumbing safely pressurized, sewer third keeps the connection sanitary, and slides come out last once everything else is secure.

- **1. Electrical:** breaker off at the pedestal, EMS/surge protector connected, shore cord connected, breaker on, power verified
- **2. Water:** flush the connection, attach the pressure regulator and filter, connect the potable hose, vent air from the lines, pressurize slowly, check for leaks; heated-hose requirements apply in cold weather

- **3. Sewer:** gloves on, valves closed, hose threaded and sealed at both ends, hose support set for slope; black and gray valves stay closed until you are ready to dump
- **4. Slide-Outs:** exterior clearance checked again, interior checked for obstructions, people and pets kept clear, then extended and inspected

Hacks And Best Practices

Water And Sewer

- Label or color-code fresh and waste water hoses to prevent cross-connection.
- Run a dedicated white, RV-rated hose for drinking water only; never substitute a garden hose.
- Hang pantyhose with a bar of soap from your brass Y-splitter for a quick outdoor hand-washing station.
- Replace the stock shower head with a low-flow, high-pressure model to improve pressure without using more tank water.
- Install a clear elbow at the end of your sewer hose to see when the tank is empty and catch clogs early.
- Always dump black before gray. The gray water rinses the line clean on its way out.
- Keep a wye fitting and swivel fittings on hand for faster, cleaner connect and disconnect at the dump valve.

Climate And Moisture Control

- Crack cabinet doors at night so trapped moisture can escape instead of condensing in enclosed spaces.
- Use DampRid in closets and cabinets as a cheap supplement wherever airflow is poor.
- Cover roof vents with insulating cushions to cut heat loss in winter and heat gain in summer.
- Cover windows with bubble wrap during cold snaps for quick, cheap insulation against single-pane glass.
- Add a foam pad or yoga mat under the mattress for insulation and comfort over a cold subfloor.
- Favor electric heat over propane when plugged in. Propane combustion adds moisture to the air.
- Add a door sweep or weatherstripping at the entry door to cut drafts; this covers the seal skirting does not reach.
- Use silica gel packets in tight, low-ventilation spots like under sinks where a dehumidifier cannot reach.

Connectivity

- Pair your main internet source with a backup, Starlink plus a cellular hotspot or vice versa, so you are covered if one drops.
- Position your router or hotspot near a window or high point to improve signal reach.
- Add a cell signal booster if you rely on a hotspot; it amplifies a weak signal into something usable.

Storage And Organization

- Use a hanging shoe organizer in the bathroom or bedroom; it is the most versatile single storage item for a tight space.
- Line drawers and shelves with non-slip liner to keep items in place and protect surfaces.
- Switch to square storage containers instead of round; they fit more into the same cabinet or fridge shelf.
- Use Command hooks and strips to hang items without drilling.
- Mount a peg board for kitchen tools to keep pots, pans, and utensils visible and off the counter.
- Keep a magnetic dry erase board on the fridge for the Wi-Fi password, grocery list, and to-do items.
- Hang a tension rod in the shower as a spot to dry damp towels or wet clothes.
- Hold curtains back with Velcro tabs instead of separate hardware.

Kitchen

- Place a baking stone in the oven to even out heat and stop the burned-bottom problem common in small RV ovens.
- Stock free condiment packets from takeout orders; they take up far less space than full bottles.

- Crack eggs into a water bottle, shake, and pour to scramble them with one less dish to wash.

Maintenance

- Lubricate slide-out tracks on a regular schedule to prevent sticking or binding before it becomes a service call.
- Label your breaker panel switches by what they actually power, so you are not guessing during an outage.
- Apply UV protectant to tires and exterior rubber seals a few times a year; sun exposure breaks rubber down faster on an RV parked in one spot.
- Check and patch window screens as soon as they tear; pests get in through a torn screen as easily as an unsealed slide-out gap.

Pest Control

- Place Irish Spring soap bars in outdoor compartments; mice are reported to avoid the scent.
- Tuck cut-up flea collars into outdoor compartments near propane fittings to help keep wasps from nesting there.
- Wipe counters and awnings with a 50/50 Pine-Sol and water solution to keep flies from gathering.

Comfort And Safety

- Add a mattress topper; it is the single biggest comfort upgrade for a stock RV mattress.
- Keep a portable fan running for extra circulation on the hottest days, supplementing the AC and ceiling fan.
- Put glow-in-the-dark tape on your steps for safer nighttime entry and exit.
- Install motion-sensor LED lights in closets and cabinets for hands-free light in storage spaces.
- Place an anti-fatigue mat at the kitchen sink; standing on RV subflooring for meal prep adds up over months.
- Add felt or rubber pads under chair and table legs; RV subflooring scratches and dents more easily than hardwood.
- Keep a boot tray or mat just inside the door for wet or muddy shoes.
- Keep a remote propane tank gauge or sensor to check fuel level without climbing out to look.
- Keep a go bag by the door with copies of ID, insurance, and medications for fast evacuation during severe weather.
- Run a small duct booster fan in a back bedroom if the furnace leaves it colder than the rest of the rig.
- Use a weatherproof lockbox or bin at your Site for packages when you are out.
- Trade spare-key access with a trusted neighbor on your row.

Share your advice or hack: homebasebolivar@gmail.com

A Better Place To Stay Longer