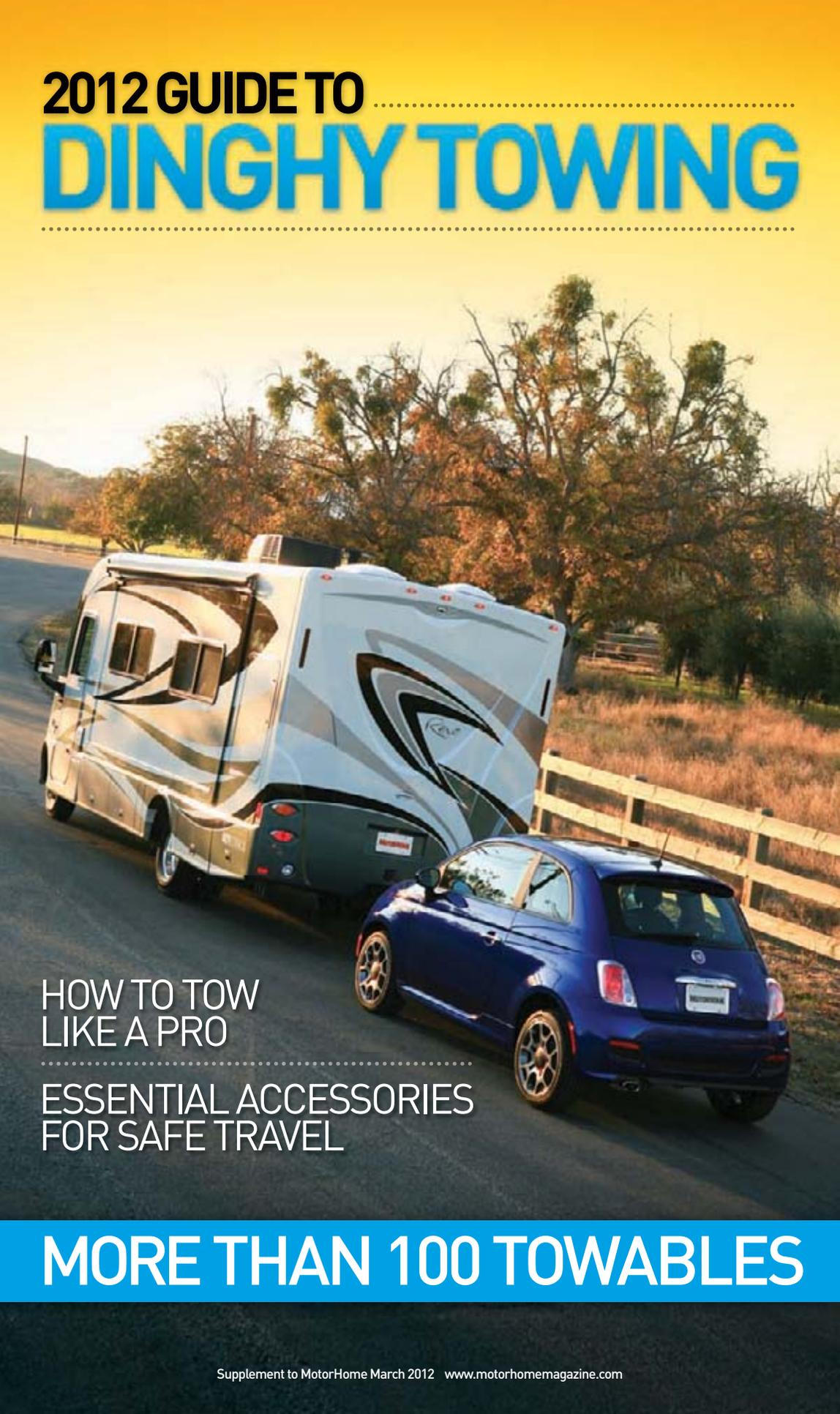


2012 GUIDE TO **DINGHY TOWING**



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TOW & GO

If you enjoy the thrill of exploring the open road in your motorhome, you've probably found a few instances where bigger is not always better. That's where towing a dinghy behind your coach becomes advantageous. Want to know more? The 2012 Guide to Dinghy Towing provides a selection of informative articles and a listing of new vehicles ready-made to enhance your RVing lifestyle.

Granted, no manufacturer has yet to engineer a plug-and-play setup directly from the factory, but it's never been simpler to equip both dinghy and motorhome for road duty.

For starters, as highlighted in "Things to Know Before You Tow" (page 6), the hard hookup between motorhome and dinghy has become an easy one-person operation: self-aligning tow bars make cinching up a breeze; with some tow-bar designs, even routing cables and wiring through hollow arms, the connection is more than easy, it's eye-pleasing. Plus, manufacturers are offering an array of accessories to help keep it that way: An RV underskirt, fitted beneath the equipment, will safeguard the dinghy vehicle and towing hardware from debris. For more ironclad protection, nearly indestructible rock guards are available that quickly attach to the tow bar and shield the dinghy from road debris.

Yet another device to aid in safe dinghy transport, supplemental braking systems have likewise evolved. Portable systems can be installed in just minutes, and permanent installations remain unobtrusive. Dinghy brakes may

not be mandatory in some states but anytime you add a few tons of weight to the back of your motorhome, you need a way to slow it down without taxing the brakes on your coach.

And make no mistake, contemporary motorhomes can accommodate a lot of dinghy weight. While many new chassis are rated to handle at least 4,000 pounds of dinghy weight, certain luxury coaches today carry gross combined weight ratings (GCWR) of 60,000 pounds or more — with up to 25 percent of that dedicated to towing.

The focus of our annual dinghy towing guide is the dinghies themselves. Manufacturers are becoming increasingly sensitive to the needs of the motorhome community, and the "2012 Dinghy Roundup" (beginning on page 12) lists more than 100 vehicles that have been manufacturer-certified for four-wheels-down towing. The list includes many of the newest vehicles — including seven hybrids. For all-terrain fun, there are plenty of 4WD vehicles to choose from. While some vehicles are easy to tow, others require that very specific procedures be followed before and during towing to prevent damage. This year we've included expanded information on the manufacturer guidelines required for flat towing, though you'll still need to check the owner's manual for more detailed procedures.

As motorhomes continue to grow in size and stature, life on the road has never been more comfortable. A dinghy adds to that enjoyment. ■

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THINGS TO KNOW BEFORE YOU TOW

The right equipment adds safety, simplicity and convenience

Traveling with a dinghy vehicle is almost a given with today's larger motorhomes. Although the trend to bigger coaches has injected camping with more creature comforts than a luxury hotel room, it's not without its drawbacks. Even rigs with a 60-degree wheel cut will encounter some difficulty negotiating narrow roads in smaller towns during sightseeing tours — and it's just not fun trying to park a 40-footer at local markets when picking up perishables.

A dinghy simplifies such tasks, and eliminates the need to break camp and stow every-

thing each time you need (or want) to venture away from the campground. Additionally, the dinghy can stow gear securely when motorhome storage is filled (within weight restrictions), and there is the security of having a spare set of wheels in the event of an emergency.

It's not without consequences; towing a dinghy will affect the acceleration, fuel economy and braking of any motorhome, to some degree. However, proper selection of a dinghy and towing equipment will enable you to safely and conveniently enjoy the benefits of auxiliary transportation.



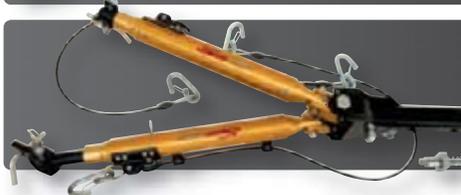
A) Once the tow bar is pinned in the hitch receiver, make sure electric connections and safety cables are secure. **B)** While driving your dinghy, this type of tow bar remains on the coach, tucked out of harm's way.



Roadmaster's aluminum Sterling All-Terrain tow bar is rated to handle vehicles up to 6,000 pounds. Non-binding design facilitates hookup. Roadmaster's Black Hawk 2 All-Terrain has a rating up to 10,000 pounds.



Aventa LX from Blue Ox uses a ball-in-socket design, which allows the arms to swivel 360 degrees for quick hookup. The tow bar is rated to tow vehicles up to 10,000 pounds.



Demco's Dominator aluminum tow bar has a rating up to 7,500 pounds. Easy trigger release and self-supporting arms provide convenient connection to baseplate.

FLAT TOWING

The first and most essential step in selecting a dinghy vehicle is to make sure it is approved by its manufacturer for flat towing (see "2012 Dinghy Roundup," page 12). While you do have other options — many passenger cars or light trucks can safely be used as a dinghy, provided a towing accessory (such as a transmission lube pump) is available for that specific model as an aftermarket add-on, or towing on a dolly or trailer is planned — these vehicles have been certified for four-wheels-down towing without affecting their warranties. However, **buyers should always first confirm flat-towability by consulting the vehicle's owner's manual before the purchase is finalized.**

When selecting a dinghy, first find out the maximum towing limit of your motorhome and then determine which vehicles fall within that limit. Towing limits aren't the only factor to consider, but they help to eliminate many choices based on weight alone. The weight rating of the motorhome's hitch receiver is another concern, although most are adequate, and receivers can be upgraded. Keep in mind, however, that an upgraded hitch receiver cannot increase the specified towing limit set by the chassis manufacturer.

An economical four-passenger compact car can double as a family's second car when not traveling, but even a larger SUV or sport truck can be towed, providing its weight is within the towing limit of your chassis.

Most flat-towed dinghies track so well that many motorhome drivers don't even know it's there. Front-wheel-drive (FWD) vehicles with manual transmissions and most compact 4WD vehicles with manual transfer cases are among the easiest and most economical to tow. Plus,

Drop receivers keep tow bars level.

they tend to rank among the lightest vehicles.

Some auto manufacturers also produce FWD vehicles equipped with automatic transmissions that are flat-towable. They are popular because the expense of towing equipment is minimal, and readying for towing usually involves fewer steps.

But some vehicles do require special procedures, such as starting the engine every 200 miles to circulate transmission fluid. Note that this cannot simply be circumvented by overfilling the transmission before towing, because the problem isn't caused by lack of sufficient fluid but rather by lack of oil circulation. Such practices, although inconvenient, are designed to prevent drivetrain damage and must be incorporated into the towing routine.

Another vehicle-specific consideration is that towing some dinghies with the ignition switch in a position that allows the steering column to remain unlocked also leaves power applied to various electrical circuits. Over the course of a full day of towing, this can lead to significant battery drain. While strategies for dealing with this vary considerably by model, most fixes involve temporarily unplugging one or more fuses from the vehicle's fuse box before towing. A more involved alternative is to connect the offending circuit through an owner-added switch, allowing these circuits to be made tow-ready by the mere flip of a switch.





THE MOTORHOME/DINGHY LINK

An essential ingredient in safe dinghy towing involves a solid, properly designed and installed mechanical link-age between the motorhome and the towed vehicle. Hitch receivers, tow bars and baseplates must all be in good working order, rated for the weight you intend to pull and, when applicable, designed for the specific application.

HITCH RECEIVERS

Check the rating of your hitch receiver to ensure that it is rated for the heaviest load you intend to pull. If a receiver is already installed on your coach, the weight limits and class should be visible on it.

However, the riding height of a motorhome rarely matches up with that of the chosen dinghy, oftentimes necessitating the use of an adjustable-height drop receiver to allow the tow bar to ride level. Receivers should be bolted (not welded) in place, using at least Grade 5 bolts and lock washers, locking nuts and thread-locking sealer.

TOW BARS

Tow bars are available in two basic styles: A-frame or self-aligning. A-frame tow bars (offered as "solid" or "folding"), while the most economical, are designed to fit a limited number of baseplates (the mounting brackets affixed to the dinghy) or specific applications; however, the folding design will fit a wider range than the solid design. These types of tow bars are strong, but heavy, and require storage space when not in use. Hitching is easier with a helper to guide alignment.

Self-aligning tow bars are available in two styles: dinghy-mounted and coach-mounted. Coach-mounted units are the most desirable, as there is less chance of damage when not in use — and hitching is a one-person operation.

Highly adaptable, self-aligning tow bars fit a broad range of vehicles by attaching to model-specific baseplates: Class III (5,000-lb) or Class IV (10,000-lb) models are available. Contact tow-bar manufacturers to find out if baseplates are offered for the dinghy you plan to tow.

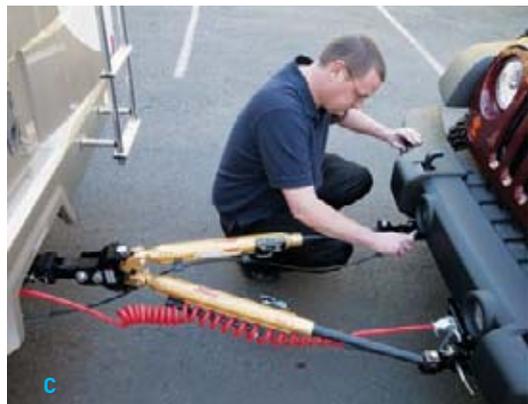
BASEPLATES

Baseplates are perhaps the most critical variable in this link. While tow bars and, obviously, hitch receivers are intended for mass fitment, various brands, models and years of dinghy vehicles require different baseplates and installation procedures, so proper selection and installation are essential.

Installing a baseplate typically entails very specific procedures. On some vehicles the bumper covering (fascia) must be temporarily removed. Some minor drilling may be required and the bumper covering and/or grille may also require some trimming.

On some vehicles, the baseplate installation process can be even more intricate. For example, the air dam may need to be trimmed or the factory-installed belly pan may require either trimming or permanent removal. Such requirements are described in the manufacturer's fitment charts — hopefully eliminating any unpleasant surprises at installation time. Today's baseplates do a good job of blending into the exterior lines of the dinghy vehicle.

Remember, too, that all 50 states require properly rated safety chains or cables to keep the dinghy from separating from the motorhome if the tow bar or ball fails. Safety chains or cables should be connected securely to the dinghy and crossed under the tow bar, then secured to the hitch receiver. They should be long enough to allow full turning without binding, but not drag when slack.



C



D

A) Baseplate installation does not require welding or specialized tools, but can be involved. If you have any reservations, have a professional do it. B) To hook up using a telescoping tow bar, the dinghy vehicle only needs to be near the center and mid-length of the bar. C) Connecting tow-bar arms to the baseplate requires the use of pins and clips. Then secure the safety cables and plug in the electrical umbilical cord. D) Once the pins are in, the motorhome is driven ahead slowly (or the dinghy is backed up) to lock the arms in position.

BEFORE YOU TOW

- Make sure your equipment is rated for the dinghy's weight and that you are not exceeding your motorhome's gross combination weight rating (GCWR).
- Confirm hitch height is correct.
- Confirm all hitch bolts and tow-bar and baseplate fasteners are securely tightened.
- Confirm all hitch and wiring connections are engaged and secure; all safety chains or cables are attached; and all locking pins are properly installed.
- Connect brake system and breakaway device.
- Check motorhome and dinghy for proper function of taillights, brakelights and turn signals.
- Check tire pressure of all tires on motorhome and dinghy — including spare tires.
- Make sure the dinghy is set up for towing: steering unlocked; emergency brake off; gear selector in the position specified by manufacturer; ignition in proper position; lube-pump switch, driveshaft coupler, 4WD transfer case and hubs (if applicable) in proper position.

AS YOU GO

- Observe the speed limit for towing in each state or province you traverse.
 - Maintain adequate stopping distance from the vehicle in front of you. A minimum five-second interval is recommended.
 - Avoid towing in snowy or icy conditions.
 - Pay particular attention to traffic merging onto the freeway, and be prepared to take evasive action to avoid "daydreamers."
 - Plan ahead — most flat-towed dinghies can't be backed more than a few feet, so it's necessary to focus on easy ingress and egress. Most tow-bar manufacturers will not warrant damage caused by backing.
- Dollies tend to jackknife quickly. It's better to disconnect the dinghy and drive to a safe place to reconnect.
- Avoid having to make tight turns; they put a lot of pressure on tow bars.
 - Towing in deep sand or gravel may cause the dinghy's front wheels to turn to one side. If this happens, you must manually recenter them before continuing.
 - Walk around the coach and dinghy to inspect all connections, check tire pressure (or use a monitoring system like the nVision TPMS from Hopkins) and look for signs of trouble every time you stop.



Modern baseplates are secured to the frame of the dinghy vehicle. While some installations are a little more complicated, the end result is a clean appearance.

OTHER TOWING EQUIPMENT

Should you choose (or already own) a vehicle that is not flat-towable as produced, there are retrofit kits for many models. One refitter, Remco Manufacturing (www.remcotowing.com) estimates 80 percent of passenger vehicles can be modified to serve as dinghies with its line of retrofit products.

For rear-wheel-drive (RWD) and some 4WD applications, couplers enable the driveshaft to be easily disconnected from the transmission or differential by a cable or lever mounted near the driver's seat. These kits run about \$750 and can be installed in about three hours.

A transmission-lube pump can be mounted and plumbed into some automatic transmissions to keep fluid circulating while the vehicle is in tow.

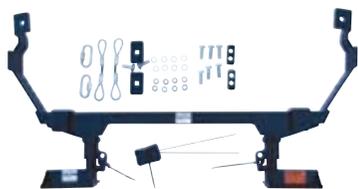
Other FWD vehicles can be adapted using a Remco axle-lock disengagement device. Check

with your dealer to make sure a specific modification does not affect the dinghy's warranty.

Tow dollies also offer an alternative to flat towing, although they take up space in camp. Remember that the dolly weight must be figured in with the total weight of the dinghy.

Trailers track better than dollies, but they take up even more precious space in camp. Also, the weight of the trailer drastically cuts into the total weight that can be pulled behind a motorhome, thereby making this method a distant third choice.

There are a number of other accessories for dinghy towing. Some, like dinghy braking devices, should be considered mandatory, while others (such as rock guards and RV underskirts) protect against road debris. These components are addressed in "Towing Accessories" (page 24), along with dinghy wiring and lighting. ■



Baseplate kits are designed for specific models, and come complete with all mounting hardware.

Lube pumps allow towing of some automatic transmission-equipped vehicles not manufacturer-approved for flat towing.



2012 GUIDE TO DINGHY TOWING SPONSORS

Produced by the editors of MotorHome for the publication's March issue, the 2012 Guide to Dinghy Towing was developed with assistance from the following manufacturers:

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« BUICK REGAL

2012 DINGHY ROUNDUP

Some Old Friends as Well as New Players Make the List for Some Exciting Dinghy Towing Choices

by Chris Hemer

It is an interesting, transitional time for the automobile industry. As we all come to terms with rising gas prices and a shaky economy, manufacturers are offering more choices than ever before, ranging from die-hard favorites like SUVs and V-8 sedans to environmentally conscious hybrids and subcompacts. So if you're in the market for a dinghy towing choice that fits your particular lifestyle, there really is no better time than the present.

So what constitutes a dinghy-towable vehicle? As we're sure you're all aware, there are many vehicles that can be dinghy towed, but many of those don't make our list. That's because vehicles listed in our guide must be **approved by the manufacturer** for dinghy towing. That means the manufacturer is familiar with the practice of dinghy towing, and has confirmed that its vehicle can be towed in this manner without causing damage to the drivetrain or otherwise voiding the warranty. Second, the vehicle must be towable without requiring significant mechanical modification (such as disconnecting the driveshaft, for example). Lastly, the vehicle must be towable at a speed of at least 55 MPH for no fewer than 200 miles before some sort of prescribed start-

up procedure is required to circulate fluid through the transmission.

You'll note that some vehicles will appear and disappear from the list every year, and that's largely because of changes to the vehicle and/or its drivetrain. For example, the Toyota Camry is no longer dinghy towable, as its recent redesign did away with the manual transmission entirely, and the automatic version isn't approved. In other instances, a manufacturer may not have had time to test a new vehicle's dinghy towing worthiness in time for last year's guide, and has since determined that the vehicle is towable — as is the case with the Lincoln MKZ Hybrid.

Keep in mind that we've made every effort to check, and double check with each manufacturer to make sure that our listings are correct and current. However, much of the information we receive is preliminary when the guide is compiled, and can change by the time this issue goes to press. Therefore, we cannot stress enough that you **check with the dealer to be certain that the vehicle you are considering is dinghy towable**. If he/she isn't sure, ask to see a copy of the owner's manual; somewhere in the index, there should be a no-

tation for “recreational,” “four-down” or “flat” towing. If the owner’s manual states that the vehicle is not towable, consider something else, or be prepared to soldier on without factory approval.

With all that being said, let’s take a look at some of the new dinghy-towable offerings for 2012, in alphabetical order.

BUICK REGAL

The Buick Regal is back for 2012, and it’s towable with either the six-speed automatic or manual and 182-HP Ecotec 2.4-L cylinder engine. Designed to compete with the best imports in the world, even the base model comes standard with dual-zone air conditioning, seven-speaker audio system, OnStar, Bluetooth phone system, leather-appointed and heated driver/front passenger seats and remote keyless entry. Also standard is Buick’s IntelliLink, which rolls out later this year, according to Buick. This system uses Bluetooth or the USB port to connect the driver’s smartphone to a new high-resolution, full-color touch screen display radio. IntelliLink expands on Buick’s current Bluetooth and USB capabilities to allow smartphone control via voice recognition and steering-wheel-mounted controls.

CHEVROLET SONIC AND SPARK

The all-new 2012 Chevy Sonic is towable with the six-speed manual transmission, and can even be towed with the five-speed automatic when the base 1.8-L engine is specified. Available in four-door sedan or five-door hatch, the Sonic comes standard with 10 air bags and is the only subcompact built in the United States, according to GM. And after barely ringing in 2012, GM is already releasing details on the diminutive 2013 Chevy Spark, which we’re being told is towable with the standard five-speed manual transmission. Fuel economy and final pricing is unknown at press time, but we do know that the Spark is a South Korean-built mini car powered by a 1.2-L four-cylinder engine producing 85 HP. Like the Sonic, the Spark offers the safety of 10 air bags and is the only car in its segment to offer a 7-inch color touch-screen radio capable of displaying smartphone-based nav-



« CHEVY SPARK



DODGE CHALLENGER »

igation, media contacts and hands-free calling. Already on sale in Europe, Asia, Australia, Mexico and South America, the U.S. version is protected by a five year, 100,000-mile powertrain warranty.

DODGE CHALLENGER

Who says your dinghy vehicle has to be small and economical? Not the Chrysler Corp., that’s for sure. This year you can recapture the American muscle car era with a snarling Dodge Challenger R/T. Towable with its six-speed manual transmission, the Challenger is powered by a 375-HP 5.7-L HEMI V-8 engine and is available in a total of seven colors. Standard features include four-wheel disc brakes with ABS, stability control, a Boston Acoustics audio system, Bluetooth connectivity, USB port with iPod control, eight-way power adjustable driver’s seat and more.

DODGE DURANGO

If you’re looking for something with more passenger volume and off-road capability, then perhaps the newly reintroduced Dodge Durango is for you. Towable in the 4 x 4 version with the 5.7-L HEMI V-8 engine, the Durango rides on four-wheel independent suspension and features room for seven thanks to its three passenger rows. Standard safety equipment includes electronic stability control, Electronic Roll Mitigation and front/side air bags for front passengers, side curtain air bags for all three

rows, Trailer Sway Control and Hill Start Assist. With 85 cubic feet of rear cargo space, the Durango has more than enough room to pack your adventure gear, too.

FIAT 500

Now that Chrysler is under Fiat's corporate umbrella, we're starting to see the first Fiats arrive on our shores in decades. The first of these is the compact Fiat 500, which is towable with its five-speed manual transmission. Designed in Italy, built in Mexico and powered by an American-assembled 1.4-L four-cylinder engine, the Fiat 500 comes standard with seven air bags, active head restraints, electronic stability control, anti-lock brakes with electronic brake-force distribution, hill-start assist and traction control. Available in three trim grades (Pop, Sport and Lounge), the Fiat 500 offers a choice of 14 colors and creature comforts such as air conditioning, cruise control, six-speaker audio system and Fiat's BLUE&ME Handsfree Communication system, which includes voice-activated Bluetooth phone capability and a USB port with iPod control. A sunroof, leather and navigation are among the many available options. If you prefer open air motoring, consider the Fiat 500 Cabrio, which offers the same features plus a convertible top.

HYUNDAI VELOSTER

Continually challenging the limits of automotive design, Hyundai has introduced yet another interesting model, the Veloster. The Veloster has the sleek lines of a sporty coupe plus the functionality of a rear hatch and a practically invisible passenger side, forward-hinged rear door. Powered by a 138-HP 1.6-L direct-injected engine, the Veloster boasts a highway fuel economy figure of 40 MPG, and is towable with the standard six-speed manual transmission. Targeted at younger, tech-savvy buyers, the Veloster comes standard with Pandora Internet radio capability; Gracenote display technology with voice recognition; video game console connectivity with 115-volt-AC power outlet; Bluetooth hands-free phone system with voice recogni-

« FIAT 500 CABRIO



tion and a 7-inch multifunction touch-screen display.

LINCOLN MKZ HYBRID

Lincoln's first-ever hybrid, the MKZ Hybrid was introduced last year, but is officially approved for dinghy towing for 2012. Priced the same as the gasoline version, the MKZ Hybrid is the most fuel-efficient luxury sedan in America, according to the company. Powered by a 2.5-L Atkinson-Cycle inline four-cylinder engine, the hybrid powertrain delivers 191 net horsepower and can travel more than 700 city miles on a tank of gas. But it is still a Lincoln, and that means an abundance of luxury and convenience features, such as leather appointed seats (heated and cooled driver/front passenger) and Lincoln SYNC with Bluetooth phone, audible text and MP3 capabilities. Options include voice-activated navigation, Blind Spot Information System and adaptive headlights that rotate according to speed and steering inputs for better visibility around turns. ■

« LINCOLN MKZ





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Before

Unfolded Kar Kaddy™ SS length is 133".

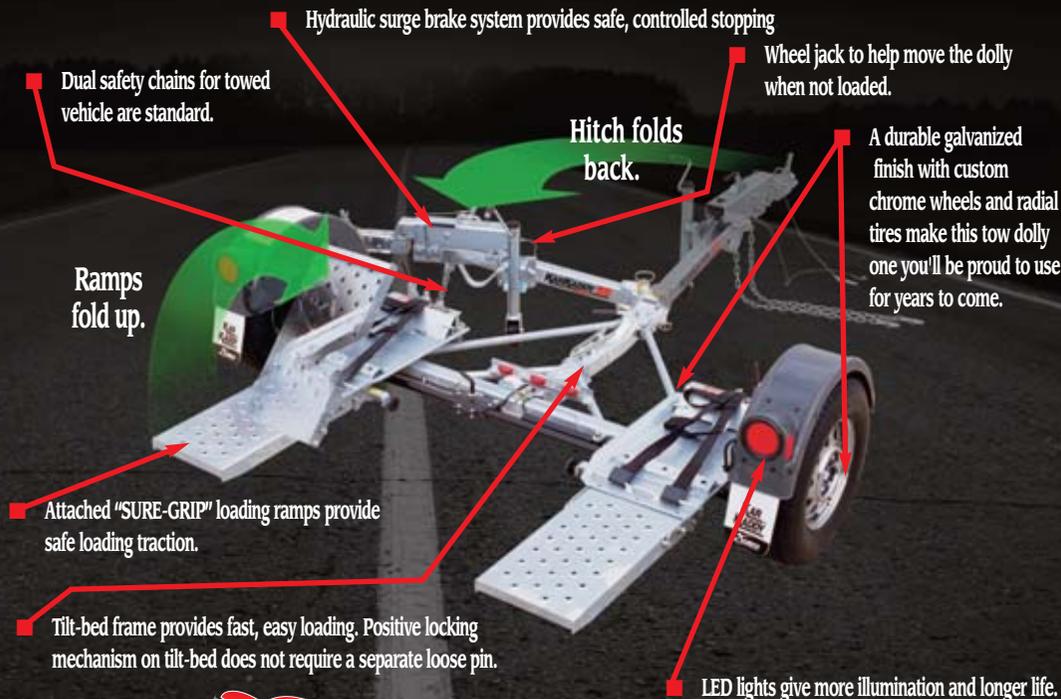
Many RV park lots are not deep enough to accommodate your motorhome and tow dolly.



After

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BUICK							
Enclave FWD/AWD	4,780/4,985	65 MPH/None	N/A	Yes	17/24-16/22	\$36,600-\$46,685	Run engine at the beginning of each day and at each fuel stop for 5 minutes. Remove 50-amp BATT1 fuse while towing.
LaCrosse FWD/AWD	3,829/4,196	65 MPH/None	N/A	Yes	25/36-17/27	\$29,960-\$36,040	Run engine at the beginning of each day and at each fuel stop for 5 minutes.
Regal	3,600	60 MPH/None	Yes	Yes (a)	19/31	\$26,670-34,450	(a) With 2.4-L engine only. Run engine at the beginning of each day and at each fuel stop for 5 minutes.
CADILLAC							
SRX FWD	4,277	65 MPH/None	N/A	Yes	17/24	\$35,185-\$46,850	Run engine at the beginning of each day and at each fuel stop for 5 minutes.
SRX AWD	4,442	65 MPH/None	N/A	Yes	16/23	\$43,085-\$49,660	Run engine at the beginning of each day and at each fuel stop for 5 minutes.
CHEVROLET							
Avalanche 1500 4WD	5,645	None	N/A	Yes	15/21	\$39,770-\$50,225	Requires optional Active, 2-Speed Transfer Case.
Colorado 4WD	3,366	None	Yes	Yes	17/23	\$20,990-\$30,240	
Cruze	3,102	None	Yes	No	28/42	\$16,720-\$23,110	
Equinox	3,786	65 MPH/None	N/A	Yes	22/32	\$23,450-\$29,140	Run engine at the beginning of each day and at each fuel stop for 5 minutes. Remove Fuse 32 while towing.
Equinox AWD	3,951	65 MPH/None	N/A	Yes	20/29	\$25,200-\$30,890	Run engine at the beginning of each day and at each fuel stop for 5 minutes. Remove Fuse 32 while towing.
Malibu	3,415	65 MPH/None	N/A	Yes	22/30	\$21,995-\$30,085	Run engine at the beginning of each day and at each fuel stop for 5 minutes. Remove IGN SENSOR fuse while towing.
Silverado 1500 4WD	4,892	None	N/A	Yes	15/21	\$25,185-\$42,440	
Silverado 1500 4WD Hybrid	5,882	None	N/A	Yes	20/23	\$42,415-\$49,195	
Suburban 1500 4WD	5,921	None	N/A	Yes	15/21	\$44,760-\$57,810	Requires optional Active, 2-Speed Transfer Case.
Tahoe 4WD	5,814	None	N/A	Yes	15/21	\$43,600-\$55,770	Requires optional Active, 2-Speed Transfer Case.
Tahoe 4WD Hybrid	5,891	None	N/A	Yes	20/23	\$54,470	
Sonic	2,690	65 MPH/None	Yes	Yes*	TBD	\$13,735-\$18,495	Remove Fuse DL1S. *1.8 model only
Spark	2,269	None	Yes	No	TBD	TBD	
Traverse	4,720	65 MPH/None	N/A	Yes	17/24	\$29,430-\$38,805	Run engine at the beginning of each day and at each fuel stop for 5 minutes. Remove 50-amp BATT1 fuse while towing.
Traverse AWD	4,925	65 MPH/None	N/A	Yes	16/23	\$31,430-\$40,805	Run engine at the beginning of each day and at each fuel stop for 5 minutes. Remove 50-amp BATT1 fuse while towing.
DODGE							
Caliber	2,940	None	Yes	No	23/29	\$17,380-\$18,730	
Challenger R/T	4,082	65 MPH/None	Yes	No	16/23	\$24,995-\$33,595	Trans must be in NEUTRAL.

MAKE/ MODEL	BASE CURB WEIGHT	SPEED/ DISTANCE LIMITS	TOWABLE WITH MANUAL TRANS.	TOWABLE WITH AUTO TRANS.	MILEAGE CITY/ HWY.	APPROX. RETAIL PRICE	SPECIAL PROCEDURES (SEE OWNER'S MANUAL FOR DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS)
Durango 4WD	5,330	None	N/A	Yes (a)	13/20	\$35,695-\$42,995	Trans in PARK, transfer case must be set to NEUTRAL. (a) 4 x 4 V-8 only.
RAM 1500 4WD	4,893	None	N/A	Yes	14/20	\$25,490-\$46,270	
RAM 2500 4WD	5,997	None	No	Yes	Not Rated	\$31,405-\$48,875	For models with manual shift transfer case, shut engine off, press brake pedal, shift transmission into NEUTRAL, shift transfer case lever to NEUTRAL, start engine, shift transmission into REVERSE, release brake pedal for 5 seconds, shift transmission into DRIVE, release brake pedal for 5 seconds, turn engine off, shift transmission to PARK.
RAM 3500 4WD	7,152	None	No	Yes	Not Rated	\$39,520-\$56,570	For models with manual shift transfer case, shut engine off, press brake pedal, shift transmission into NEUTRAL, shift transfer case lever to NEUTRAL, start engine, shift transmission into REVERSE, release brake pedal for 5 seconds, shift transmission into DRIVE, release brake pedal for 5 seconds, turn engine off, shift transmission to PARK.
FIAT							
500	2,363	None	Yes	No	30/38	\$15,500-\$17,500	Transmission must be in NEUTRAL.
500 Cabrio	2,416	None	Yes	No	30/38	\$19,500-\$23,500	Transmission must be in NEUTRAL.
FORD							
Edge 2.0 EcoBoost FWD	3,998	65 MPH/None	N/A	Yes	21/30	\$27,750	Stop every 6 hours and run the engine for 5 minutes to cool the transmission fluid.
Edge 3.5/3.7-L FWD/AWD	4,056	65 MPH/None	N/A	Yes	19/27	\$31,060	Stop every 6 hours and run the engine for 5 minutes to cool the transmission fluid.
Escape I-4	3,229	70 MPH/None	Yes	Yes (a)	23/28	\$21,440-\$28,120	(a) Maximum speed with automatic transmission is 65 MPH. For automatic transmission, stop every 6 hours and run the engine for 5 minutes to cool the transmission fluid. Transmission fluid level must be lowered during four-wheel-down towing.
Escape V-6	3,389	65 MPH/None	N/A	Yes	19/25	\$26,065-\$29,315	Stop every 6 hours and run the engine for 5 minutes to cool the transmission fluid. Transmission fluid level must be lowered during four-wheel-down towing.
Escape Hybrid	3,651-3,810	75 MPH/None	N/A	Yes	34/31-30/27	\$30,570-\$33,080	
Explorer 2.0 EcoBoost FWD	4,503	65 MPH/None	N/A	Yes	20/28	\$28,280	Stop every 6 hours and run the engine for 5 minutes to cool the transmission fluid.
Explorer FWD/AWD	4,557-4,731	65 MPH/None	N/A	Yes	17/25	\$28,280-\$37,855	Stop every 6 hours and run the engine for 5 minutes to cool the transmission fluid.

MAKE/ MODEL	BASE CURB WEIGHT	SPEED/ DISTANCE LIMITS	TOWABLE WITH MANUAL TRANS.	TOWABLE WITH AUTO TRANS.	MILEAGE CITY/ HWY.	APPROX. RETAIL PRICE	SPECIAL PROCEDURES (SEE OWNER'S MANUAL FOR DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS)
F-150 4WD	4,925	None	N/A	Yes	N/A	\$27,635-\$48,720	
F-250/ F-350/ F-450 Super Duty 4WD	6,985	None	N/A	Yes	Not Rated	\$29,455-\$64,205	Only with manual shift transfer case vehicles, not Electronic Shift-On-the Fly or 4 x 2 vehicles. Transmission must be in NEUTRAL, manual transfer case shifted into NEUTRAL.
Fiesta	2,578	70 MPH/None	Yes	Yes	29/38	\$13,200-\$18,595	On automatic transmission-equipped vehicles, transmission must be in NEUTRAL during four-wheel-down towing (ignition must be "ON" before shifting into NEUTRAL). See Owner's Guide for more details.
Flex FWD/AWD	4,448-4,781	65 MPH/None	N/A	Yes	17/24	\$29,465-\$43,600	Stop every 6 hours and run the engine for 5 minutes to cool the transmission fluid.
Focus	2,907	70 MPH/None	Yes	Yes	26/36	\$16,500-\$22,700	Automatic transmission must be in NEUTRAL during four-wheel-down towing (ignition must be "ON" before shifting into NEUTRAL). See Owner's Guide for more details.
Fusion FWD/AWD	3,285-3,638	70 MPH/None	Yes	Yes (d)	18/27	\$20,200-\$29,100	(d) Maximum speed with automatic transmission is 65 MPH. Transmission fluid level must be lowered during four-wheel-down towing. Stop every 6 hours and run the engine for 5 minutes to cool the transmission fluid.
Fusion Hybrid	3,720	75 MPH/None	N/A	Yes	41/36	\$28,700	
Taurus FWD/AWD	4,015-4,224	65 MPH/None	N/A	Yes	18/28	\$25,555-\$38,155	Stop every 6 hours and run the engine for 5 minutes to cool the transmission fluid.
GMC							
Acadia FWD/AWD	4,720-4,925	65 MPH/None	N/A	Yes	17/24-16/23	\$32,605-\$45,880	Run engine at the beginning of each day and at each fuel stop for 5 minutes. Remove 50-amp BATT1 fuse while towing.
Canyon 4WD	3,684	None	Yes	Yes	17/23	\$22,305-\$31,710	
Sierra 1500 4WD	4,877	None	N/A	Yes	14/18	\$25,185-\$42,940	
Sierra 1500 4WD Hybrid	5,791	None	N/A	Yes	20/23	\$42,785-\$49,565	
Terrain FWD/AWD	3,798	65 MPH/None	N/A	Yes	22/32-20/29	\$25,480-\$32,930	Run engine at the beginning of each day and at each fuel stop for 5 minutes. Remove Fuse 32 while towing.
Yukon 4WD	5,560	None	N/A	Yes	15/21	\$43,790-\$48,120	Only 4WD models equipped with a two-speed automatic transfer case are towable.
Yukon 4WD Hybrid	5,917	None	N/A	Yes	20/23	\$54,975-\$62,825	
Yukon XL 1500 4WD	5,836	None	N/A	Yes	15/21	\$46,040-\$50,220	Only 4WD models equipped with a two-speed automatic transfer case are towable.

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When traveling in your motorhome, it should be about creating new friendships, breathing the fresh air of the outdoors, and spending time with those you love. Too often you're spending precious time holding your breath as you slowly make your way through unavoidable mountain passes and steep hills. Blue Ox offers a braking system built of all-electric components that stops your towed car smoothly and proportionally. It is compatible with all towed vehicles, even hybrids, so you don't have to worry.

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MAKE/ MODEL	BASE CURB WEIGHT	SPEED/ DISTANCE LIMITS	TOWABLE WITH MANUAL TRANS.	TOWABLE WITH AUTO TRANS.	MILEAGE CITY/ HWY.	APPROX. RETAIL PRICE	SPECIAL PROCEDURES (SEE OWNER'S MANUAL FOR DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS)
HONDA							
CR-V	3,305	65 MPH/None	N/A	Yes	23/31	\$22,295	Run engine at the beginning of each day, press brake pedal and move shifter through all positions, shift into DRIVE and hold for 5 seconds, then to NEUTRAL and let engine run for 3 minutes. Repeat at least every 8 hours thereafter. When towing for long periods, remove 7.5-A accessory radio fuse.
CR-V 4WD	3,426	65 MPH/None	N/A	Yes	22/30	\$23,545	Run engine at the beginning of each day, press brake pedal and move shifter through all positions, shift into DRIVE and hold for 5 seconds, then to NEUTRAL and let engine run for 3 minutes. Repeat at least every 8 hours thereafter. When towing for long periods, remove 7.5-A accessory radio fuse.
Fit	2,496-2,577	65 MPH/None	Yes	Yes (g)	28/35	\$15,175-\$19,540	(g) On automatic transmission models, run engine at the beginning of each day, press brake pedal and move shifter through all positions, shift into DRIVE and hold for 5 seconds, then to NEUTRAL and let engine run for 3 minutes. Repeat at least every 8 hours thereafter. When towing for long periods, remove 30A radio fuse.
HYUNDAI							
Accent	2,396	None	Yes	No	30/40	\$12,445-\$15,795	
Elantra GLS	2,661	None	Yes	No	29/40	\$15,195	
Elantra Touring	2,937	None	Yes	No	23/31	\$15,995-\$19,495	
Genesis Coupe 2.0T	3,294	None	Yes	No	21/30	\$22,250	
Sonata	3,161	None	Yes	No	24/35	\$19,695	
Tucson GL FWD	4,365	None	Yes	No	20/27	\$19,045	
Veloster	2,584	None	Yes	No	28/40	\$17,300	
INFINITI							
G37S Sport 6MT Convertible	4,149	70 MPH/ 500 miles	Yes	No	16/24	\$50,850	Idle engine in NEUTRAL for 2 minutes every 500 miles.
G37S Sport 6MT Coupe	3,708	70 MPH/ 500 miles	Yes	No	17/25	\$43,800	Idle engine in NEUTRAL for 2 minutes every 500 miles.
G37S Sport 6MT Sedan	3,709	70 MPH/ 500 miles	Yes	No	17/25	\$40,600	Idle engine in NEUTRAL for 2 minutes every 500 miles.
JEEP							
Compass	3,074	None	Yes	No	21/25	\$19,350-\$24,015	
Compass 4WD	3,222	None	Yes	No	21/24	\$21,100-\$25,765	
Grand Cherokee	4,850	None	N/A	Yes	16/23	\$26,995-\$42,995	Only 4WD vehicles equipped with Quadra-Trac II (V-6 models) and Quadra-Drive II systems (V-8 models) are towable. Press brake pedal, turn ignition key on, engine off, shift transmission into NEUTRAL, shift transfer case into NEUTRAL, start engine, shift transmission into DRIVE, release brake pedal, shut engine off, shift transmission to PARK.

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Liberty 4WD	4,290	None	N/A	Yes	15/21	\$24,975-\$28,560	With engine off and ignition switch in ON position, press brake pedal, shift transmission into NEUTRAL, press recessed transfer case neutral button for 4 seconds, start engine, shift transmission into REVERSE, release brake pedal, shift transmission into DRIVE, release brake pedal, turn engine off, shift transmission to PARK.
Patriot 2WD	3,111	None	Yes	No	23/28	\$15,995-\$22,195	
Wrangler 4WD	3,760	None	Yes	Yes	17/21	\$22,045-\$29,995	With engine off, press brake pedal, shift automatic transmission into NEUTRAL or press clutch pedal on manual transmission, shift transfer case lever into NEUTRAL, start engine, shift automatic transmission into DRIVE or manual transmission into gear, release brake pedal, turn engine off.
Wrangler Unlimited 4WD	4,075	None	Yes	Yes	16/20	\$25,545-\$33,570	With engine off, press brake pedal, shift automatic transmission into NEUTRAL or press clutch pedal on manual transmission, shift transfer case lever into NEUTRAL, start engine, shift automatic transmission into DRIVE or manual transmission into gear, release brake pedal, turn engine off.
KIA							
*** This guide originally stated a 2012 FWD/AWD Sorento with automatic transmission and a 2012 2WD/4WD Sportage with manual or automatic transmission can be flat towed. This is incorrect. According to the owners manual – and confirmed by KIA – these vehicles should only be towed in an emergency situation. MotorHome apologizes for and regrets this error.							
LEXUS							
IS 250	3,455	None	Yes	No	19/27	\$33,595-\$39,890	
LINCOLN							
MKS/ MKS AWD	4,127 4,276	65 MPH/None	N/A	Yes	17/24 16/23	\$41,500- \$48,390	Stop every 6 hours and run the engine for 5 minutes to cool the transmission fluid.
MKT FWD/ AWD	4,695 4,882	65 MPH/None	N/A	Yes	17/24 16/23	\$44,300- \$46,295	Stop every 6 hours and run the engine for 5 minutes to cool the transmission fluid.
MKX FWD/ AWD	4,236 4,413	65 MPH/None	N/A	Yes	19/26 17/23	\$39,525- \$41,375	Stop every 6 hours and run the engine for 5 minutes to cool the transmission fluid.
MKZ Hybrid FWD	3,756	75 MPH/None	N/A	Yes	41/36	\$34,755	
NISSAN							
370Z Coupe	3,245	70 MPH/500 miles	Yes	No	18/26	\$31,450-\$40,830	Idle engine in NEUTRAL for 2 minutes every 500 miles.
370Z Roadster	3,459	70 MPH/500 miles	Yes	No	18/25	\$39,500-\$43,500	Idle engine in NEUTRAL for 2 minutes every 500 miles.
Cube	2,768	70 MPH/500 miles	Yes	No	25/30	\$14,470-\$21,120	Idle engine in NEUTRAL for 2 minutes every 500 miles. Models with Continuously Variable Transmission (CVT) are not flat towable.
Frontier King/ Crew Cab 2WD I-4	3,690	None/500 miles	Yes	No	19/23	\$18,500-\$22,510	Idle engine in NEUTRAL for 2 minutes every 500 miles.
Frontier King/	4,152	None/500 miles	Yes	No	16/20	\$21,680-\$29,180	Idle engine in NEUTRAL for

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Frontier King/ Crew Cab 2WD V-6	4,152	None/500 miles	Yes	No	16/20	\$21,680-\$29,180	Idle engine in NEUTRAL for 2 minutes every 500 miles.
Frontier King/ Crew Cab 4WD V-6	4,294	None/500 miles	Yes	No	15/19	\$24,970-\$31,830	Place transfer case in the 2H range. Idle engine in NEUTRAL for 2 minutes every 500 miles.
Juke FWD	2,959	70 MPH/500 miles	Yes	No	27/32	\$19,770-\$23,400	Idle engine in NEUTRAL for 2 minutes every 500 miles.
Sentra	2,959	None/500 miles	Yes	No	24/31	\$15,520	Idle engine in NEUTRAL for 2 minutes every 500 miles.
Versa	2,350	None/500 miles	Yes	No	30/38	\$10,990-\$16,900	Idle engine in NEUTRAL for 2 minutes every 500 miles.
Xterra	4,143	None/500 miles	Yes	No	16/20	\$24,560-\$26,550	On 4WD models, place transfer case in the 2H range. Idle engine in NEUTRAL for 2 minutes every 500 miles.
SCION							
tC	3,060	None	Yes	No	23/31	\$18,265	
xB	3,020	None	Yes	No	22/28	\$16,420	
xD	2,625	None	Yes	No	27/33	\$15,045	
SUBARU							
Forester 2.5X	3,250	None	Yes	No	21/27	\$20,495-\$29,995	
Impreza WRX, STI	3,208	None	Yes	N/A	19/25	\$24,995-\$37,345	STI model requires that the driver's control center differential (DCCD) be set in manual mode and DCCD control dial be set to the farthest rearward position.
Legacy 2.5i	3,270	None	Yes	No	19/27	\$19,995-\$31,995	
Outback 2.5i	3,386	None	Yes	No	19/27	\$23,195-\$24,495	
SUZUKI							
Grand Vitara Limited 4WD	3,627	55 MPH/200 miles	N/A	Yes	19/23	\$25,249	Only 4WD Grand Vitara models fitted with Full-time Four-Mode 4WD system with transfer switch are flat towable. See owner's manual for specific instructions.
Kizashi FWD	3,241	55 MPH/200 miles	Yes	No	21/31	\$18,999-\$25,099	
SX4 Crossover AWD	2,866	55 MPH/200 miles	Yes	No	22/30	\$16,999-\$18,549	
SX4 Sedan	2,734	55 MPH/200 miles	Yes	No	23/33	\$13,699-\$15,495	
SX4 SportBack FWD	2,734	55 MPH/200 miles	Yes	No	22/30	\$16,799	
TOYOTA							
Corolla 1.8-L	2,767	None	Yes	No	27/34	\$15,900-\$17,770	After towing, run engine in idle for at least 3 minutes before driving.
Matrix 1.8-L	2,844	None	Yes	No	26/32	\$18,845	After towing, run engine in idle for at least 3 minutes before driving.
Matrix 2.4-L	2,976	None	Yes	No	21/28	\$19,565	After towing, run engine in idle for at least 3 minutes before driving.
Yaris	2,295	None	Yes	No	30/38	\$14,115-\$16,400	After towing, run engine in idle for at least 3 minutes before driving.



VICTORY SERIES TOW BARS

Patent# 6502847, 6612604, 6764092,
7837216 & Patent Pending

Demco Dominator



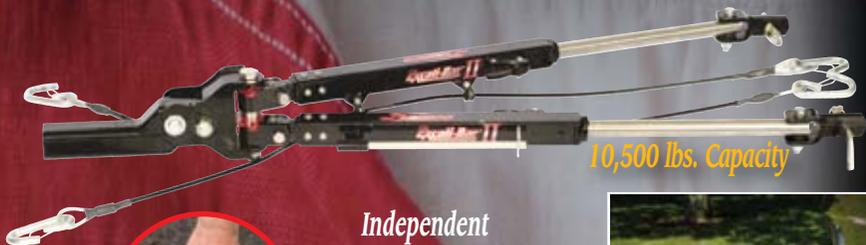
7,500 lbs. Capacity

Demco Commander



6,000 lbs. Capacity

Demco Excali-Bar II



10,500 lbs. Capacity

Easy Trigger Release

Makes unhooking the Tow Bar
safe and easy.



Independent Self-supporting Arms

If it was any easier, it would
hook-up itself.

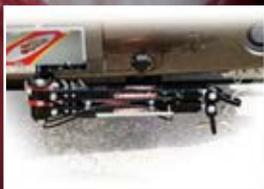


Standard Victory Series Features:

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- Independent arms for easy hook-up
- Ergonomic friendly adjustable mounting clips
- Raise or drop male receiver (standard)
- Stores in multiple positions
- Adjustable towing angle
- Includes safety cables
- Easy trigger release
- Self supporting

4 -Position Storage Lock

Folds to either side
and rides neatly on
the bumper when
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TOWING ACCESSORIES

The research has been done, the financing arranged, the papers signed ... and that new dinghy vehicle is now sitting in your driveway. You've shopped carefully to pick a model that's certified by its manufacturer for flat towing, you've checked the vehicle's weight to confirm that it's within your motorhome's safe towing capabilities and you've ordered it with any requisite factory options to make it towable with all wheels rolling.

Now what?

As any seasoned motorhome owner will tell you, there are a lot of steps involved in getting a new vehicle to the point where it can be towed safely. Unfortunately, no automaker offers a plug-and-play solution that makes its products ready for safe dinghy towing right from the factory. Thus, it's up to you (and perhaps a knowledgeable towing equipment dealer) to get the job done right.

DINGHY WIRING

One of the most important aspects of dinghy prep involves connecting the wiring between the two vehicles. Tail-, brake- and turn signals on the back of the dinghy are required in all 50 states and all Canadian provinces, so this isn't a step that you can overlook. (Neither side clearance nor backup lights are required, and are rarely used.)

The most common source of dinghy wiring confusion centers on differences in the way the turn-signal lights are wired on various cars and motorhomes. Some models are wired to supply turn-signal power to the same bulbs that are

One-way diodes, such as this one from Roadmaster, prevent electrical feedback when using the dinghy's lighting circuit. As an alternative, you can install an extra pair of lamps on your dinghy independent of its electrical system, below.



Plug receptacles added to the dinghy and coach allow easy hookup of an electrical connector for taillights, turn signals and the supplemental braking system.

used for the brakelights (commonly referred to as a 4-wire system), while others use separate amber bulbs for the rear turn signals (a 5-wire system). Note that 4- and 5-wire systems are used on both motorhomes and cars, so any one of four solutions may be needed for any particular application. Adapters are readily available to electronically match the wiring systems of the dinghy and motorhome.

The traditional method of wiring a dinghy vehicle involves the use of steering diodes, which function as one-way gates to the flow of electricity, allowing power from either the motorhome or vehicle to be supplied to the rear bulbs. Because no electricity can flow backward through a diode, it also prevents power from the motorhome from being inadvertently introduced to any other circuits in the dinghy vehicle.

Many late-model vehicles are equipped with on-board diagnostics that continuously check for proper operation of turn-signal and brakelight bulbs. Unfortunately, the introduction of aftermarket steering diodes into the vehicle's wiring can "fool" this diagnostic function, typically causing it to give false warnings about burned-out bulbs.

For this reason, it is becoming more common to modify each of the vehicle's tail-lamp assemblies to accept a separate bulb. This bulb is then connected directly to the motorhome, eliminating any connections to the vehicle's existing wiring harness. This modification usually involves drilling a large hole in the tail-lamp reflector. Fortunately, special snap-in sockets are available that make this job somewhat easier. Since the new socket takes up considerable space behind the lamp assembly, care must be taken in selecting a location for the new hole that avoids socket interference with any other

Accessory kits such as this one from Demco include everything needed for a safe hookup, including wiring kits, pins, locks, receptacles — and a cover to keep the tow bar protected from the elements.



objects behind it.

Note that most states allow the turn signals to be either red or amber in color, but only permit the brakelights to be red. Thus, on automobiles equipped with amber turn signals, the new socket is typically installed behind the red brake-lamp lens.

In situations where modifications to the dinghy's original wiring either aren't desirable or practical, a set of removable towing lights often provides a workable solution. Most of these products are affixed with magnets, although some models can be equipped with suction cups or hook-and-loop fasteners (ideal

connections to the motorhome, further increasing the connector-pin count.

Ideally, the industry-standard connection scheme should be observed when installing this new connector, so that it can also be used when towing boats, ATVs, horse trailers, etc.

Unfortunately, since no industrywide standard exists for wire color codes used in automobiles, another hurdle in dinghy wiring involves identifying the proper wires for the stop, turn and tail lamps (as well as a suitable ground connection). If you've had the fore-



Left: Adding large rubber flaps at the rear of a motorhome, such as these from Blue Ox, will minimize towed-vehicle damage from debris, dirt and grime kicked up by coach tires. Right: The Kargard shield, from Blue Ox, attaches to the tow bar and adds yet another level of dinghy protection, guarding against potential damage from road debris.

for use on plastic or fiberglass surfaces). A cable is then snaked across the vehicle to the connector at the motorhome hitch receiver.

In some cases, the cable is semipermanently routed inside or underneath the vehicle, allowing the lights to be quickly removed and stowed inside the trunk. Several companies offer wireless, removable towing lights, thereby eliminating the need for this cable altogether.

Although many motorhomes come with a factory-installed 4- or 5-pin connector, there are situations where a different connector is necessary. Some unapproved dinghies equipped with an automatic transmission must also be equipped with an electric lube pump, which requires a connector pin for 12-volt DC power (and ideally, a separate connector pin for ground, in order to avoid drawing excessive current through the existing one). Also, some auxiliary braking systems require

sight to purchase a service manual for your particular vehicle, this can sometimes be accomplished by visual inspection of the wire harness. More often than not, it involves connecting a test light to each suspected wire in order to match it with the corresponding bulb. Note that on 4-wire systems, the same wire may be "hot" when either the brake or one of the turn signals is operated.

When splicing diodes or other connections into the vehicle's wiring harness, it is important to use top-quality connectors or splices. In order to prevent any chance of corrosion, all connections should be waterproof. Heat-shrink tubing works very well for this purpose, as does self-vulcanizing plastic tape.



Hopkins nVision Tire Pressure Monitoring System keeps an eye on motorhome and dinghy tire air pressure. The wireless system can be easily transferred between vehicles and used in the dinghy without the motorhome.

DINGHY BRAKING SYSTEMS



Roadmaster Even Brake full-time proportional braking system uses a wireless monitor to communicate with the braking device in the dinghy. It features self-diagnostics and a low-battery warning.



Blue Ox's Patriot proportional portable braking system has an LED display and one setup button. The unit is controlled by an in-coach wireless module. The Patriot has a built-in battery and utilizes an electric cylinder to activate the braking arm.



BrakeBuddy's Vantage Select offers full or proportional braking. The self-contained housing is lightweight, fully adjustable and features advanced terrain sensing that prevents false activation. A boost model is designed for vehicles equipped with full-time electric brakes (including hybrids).

Adequate dinghy braking is an important consideration, because builders tend to push the weight of their motorhomes right to the edge of the chassis manufacturer's ratings — and the addition of up to several tons of extra rolling weight can be enough to put the combined vehicle pair's braking performance into unsafe territory.

Furthermore, some chassis manufacturers specify that towed loads in excess of 1,500 pounds should have independent brakes and safety breakaway systems.

Although a diverse range of dinghy braking systems is available, all aim to perform essentially the same task: to apply the dinghy's brakes in tandem with those on the motorhome.

One approach uses electronic signals generated in the motorhome to activate the dinghy-vehicle brakes. The motorhome components of the system measure deceleration and send a signal to a power unit connected to the dinghy-vehicle brake pedal. As the electronic signal varies with motorhome deceleration, the amount of brake-pedal pull varies in concert for variable braking.

The system includes a vacuum pump in the dinghy vehicle that maintains full power-brake performance. An actuation lever on the control unit in the motorhome allows the motorhome driver to apply brakes manually, if desired.

Other products include those that utilize a self-contained power pack that temporarily attaches to the dinghy's brake pedal. This pack-

age usually contains an air compressor, air cylinder and control circuitry. Most models have a built-in inertia sensor in the dinghy that automatically applies the brakes without any direct signals from the motorhome; in most cases, a radio link or control wire is used to receive braking signals from the motorhome.

Other systems use a removable air cylinder to push the pedal, with motive power for the cylinder usually supplied by the motorhome's existing air compressor (if air brakes are present) or an add-on electric compressor. A signal from the motorhome's brakelights is often used to control operation of the cylinder, although inertia-sensing control boxes are sometimes used instead. One variation of this scheme uses an electric linear actuator in lieu of an air cylinder, thereby dispensing with the need for a compressed air supply.

Finally, a few systems use the movement in a special hitch drawbar as the motive power to operate the dinghy brakes. As the motorhome decelerates, the dinghy forces the drawbar to move forward, and the dinghy's inertia is used to operate a flexible cable connected to the brake pedal or to move a master brake cylinder that pressurizes the dinghy's brake lines.

Self-contained systems — like those from Blue Ox, BrakeBuddy and Roadmaster — generally have a significant edge in ease of installation. The use of a supplemental braking system represents a wise investment in ultimate dinghy towing safety. ■

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