

# RV Quick Facts

## *What is a recreation vehicle (RV)?*

- An RV is a vehicle that combines transportation and temporary living quarters for travel, recreation and camping.
- Two main categories of RVs are *motorhomes* (motorized) and *towables* (towed behind the family car, van or pickup). Type A motorhomes are generally the largest; Type B motorhomes or van campers are the smallest and Type C motorhomes generally fall in between. Types of towable RVs are folding camping trailers, expandable trailers, truck campers, conventional travel trailers and fifth-wheel travel trailers. Sports utility RVs (also sometimes called “toy haulers”), which feature a built-in garage for hauling cycles, ATVs or sports equipment, are available in both motorhomes and towable RVs.
- There’s an RV for every taste and budget. Prices for new RVs are typically \$5,000-\$22,000 for folding camping trailers; \$6,000-\$55,000 for truck campers; \$8,000-\$95,000 for conventional travel trailers; \$43,000-\$200,000 for Type C motorhomes and \$60,000-\$500,000 for Type A motorhomes.

## *What is the RV industry’s economic impact?*

- There are more than 12,000 RV-related businesses in the U.S. with combined annual revenues of more than \$37.5 billion. The RV industry employs more than a quarter million Americans. Effects of the recession caused significant RV-related job losses. Since June 2007, RV-related layoffs totaled approximately 280,000 — 55% of the industry’s workforce. RV shipments began to improve in the last half of 2009 and RV manufacturers continue to rehire workers to keep pace with demand. Shipments in 2013 were 12% higher than in 2012.
- RVs are made by American companies employing American workers that are located in America. In fact, more than 60% of recreation vehicles are made in Elkhart County, Indiana.

## *Who is the RV traveler?*

- U.S. ownership of RVs has reached record levels, according to a 2011 University of Michigan study commissioned by Recreation Vehicle Industry Association (RVIA). Approximately 8.9 million households own an RV.
- Today’s typical RV owner is 48 years old, married, with an annual household income of \$62,000 — higher than the median for all households, according to the Michigan study. RV owners are likely to own their homes and spend disposable income on traveling — an average of three weeks annually, RVIA research shows.
- A leading force behind RV ownership’s upswing is the enormous baby boomer generation, supported by strong ownership gains among both younger and older buyers. In fact, high RV ownership rates now extend across a 40-year span from age 35-to-75, the Michigan study found.
- More RVs are now owned by those ages 35-to-54 than any other group, according to the University of Michigan study.
- More than 11 percent of U.S. households headed by 35-to-54 year olds own an RV, exceeding the 9.3 percent ownership rates of those 55 and over. The 35-to-54 age group posted the largest gains in the 2011 Michigan survey.

## *Why do people choose and use RVs?*

- **Flexibility and convenience** — RVs offer a convenient, hassle-free way to see America. RV travelers enjoy the freedom and flexibility to go where they want, when they want — without the worry and stress of inflexible schedules, advance reservations, airport waits and luggage restrictions.
- **Comfort** — With fully-equipped kitchens and baths, rooms that slide out at the touch of a button, central air and heat, flat-screen TVs, surround-sound stereos and more, today’s RVs provide travelers with all the amenities of home while on the road or at the campground.
- **Family appeal** — RVing is a uniquely enjoyable way to travel as a family. In fact, families that frequently vacation by RV say it fosters an increased sense of togetherness and helps improve family communication. RV owners say that strengthening family relationships is important for their pleasure trips.
- **Affordability** — RV vacations are more affordable than travel by personal car, commercial airline or cruise ship, according to vacation cost-comparison studies by PKF Consulting. Even factoring in RV ownership costs, and considering resulting tax benefits, a family of four can spend up to 59 percent less when traveling by RV.
- **Lure of the outdoors** — RVers can enjoy the mountains, beaches, parks, popular tourist attractions and small towns whenever they want, without giving up the comforts of home. With sport utility RVs, RV travelers can easily haul their ATVs, snowmobiles, motorcycles or other outdoor vehicles right on board.

- **Versatility** — In addition to travel, camping and outdoor recreation, RVs are used year-round for a variety of other purposes, like shopping, tailgating at sporting events, pursuing special interests like horse, dog and antique shows and other hobbies.
- **Rentals available** — Renting an RV is a popular way to “try before you buy.” The RV rental business is a \$350 million industry, which is continuing to grow.

### ***Where do RVers travel?***

- With more than 16,000 public and privately owned campgrounds nationwide, RVers are free to roam America’s roads for a weekend — or months at a time.
- Privately owned RV parks and campgrounds are found near popular destinations, along major tourist routes and even in metropolitan areas. These campgrounds appeal to travelers by offering a variety of activities to keep the whole family happy, including swimming pools, game rooms, playgrounds and snack bars.
- RV travelers seeking a resort atmosphere are attracted to the growing number of luxury RV resorts with facilities such as tennis courts, golf courses and health spas.
- Facilities at public campgrounds tend to be simple, but offer great scenic beauty. Public lands are popular for hiking, fishing, white water rafting and many other outdoor recreational opportunities enjoyed by RVers.

### ***What does the future hold for the RV market?***

- Changes in the frequency and duration of vacations favor the RV industry. Americans are traveling shorter distances and on weekends with less planning, according to recent studies. For RV owners, this is a convenient travel pattern.
- RV demand remains robust and the potential for future sales is bright, according to a University of Michigan study. Among U.S. households that have never owned an RV, more than one in seven expressed interest in purchasing an RV in the future.
- Both parents and empty-nesters are strong potential RV buyers, and promising future prospects are emerging among younger, ethnically diverse consumers, reveals a Harris Interactive study commissioned by the Go RVing Coalition. Generation Xers exhibit interests in outdoor activities that are highly compatible with RVing, the study found.
- Ownership and demographic trends favor substantial RV market growth, according to the University of Michigan. Baby boomers are entering an age range — 55 to 64 — with high RV ownership rates historically, according to the Michigan study.
- RV manufacturers are innovating to give consumers an array of product choices. Manufacturers are producing lightweight towables and smaller, fuel-efficient motorhomes. Green technologies such as solar panels are appearing on an increasing number of RVs.

### ***How can I learn more about RVs?***

- **Surf the web** — Check out [RVIA.org](http://RVIA.org) and [GoRVing.com](http://GoRVing.com) for information on RV travel trends, vehicles types, show listings and lists of RV dealers and campgrounds in your area.
- **Visit an RV dealer** — Check [GoRVing.com](http://GoRVing.com) to find local dealerships.
- **Attend an RV show** — A variety of RVs of all shapes, sizes and costs are displayed at dozens of RV shows around the nation. Show dates and locations are searchable at [GoRVing.com](http://GoRVing.com).
- **Rent an RV** — More than 460 RV rental outlets are located across the country. Renting allows potential buyers to try RV travel and determine which vehicle types best suits their needs. Check [GoRVing.com](http://GoRVing.com) for the nearest rental outlet.

### ***Who can talk about the RV experience?***

RVIA offers expert RV media spokespersons: For information, visit [www.rvia.org/media](http://www.rvia.org/media) or call RVIA Public Relations, 703-620-6003, ext. 304.