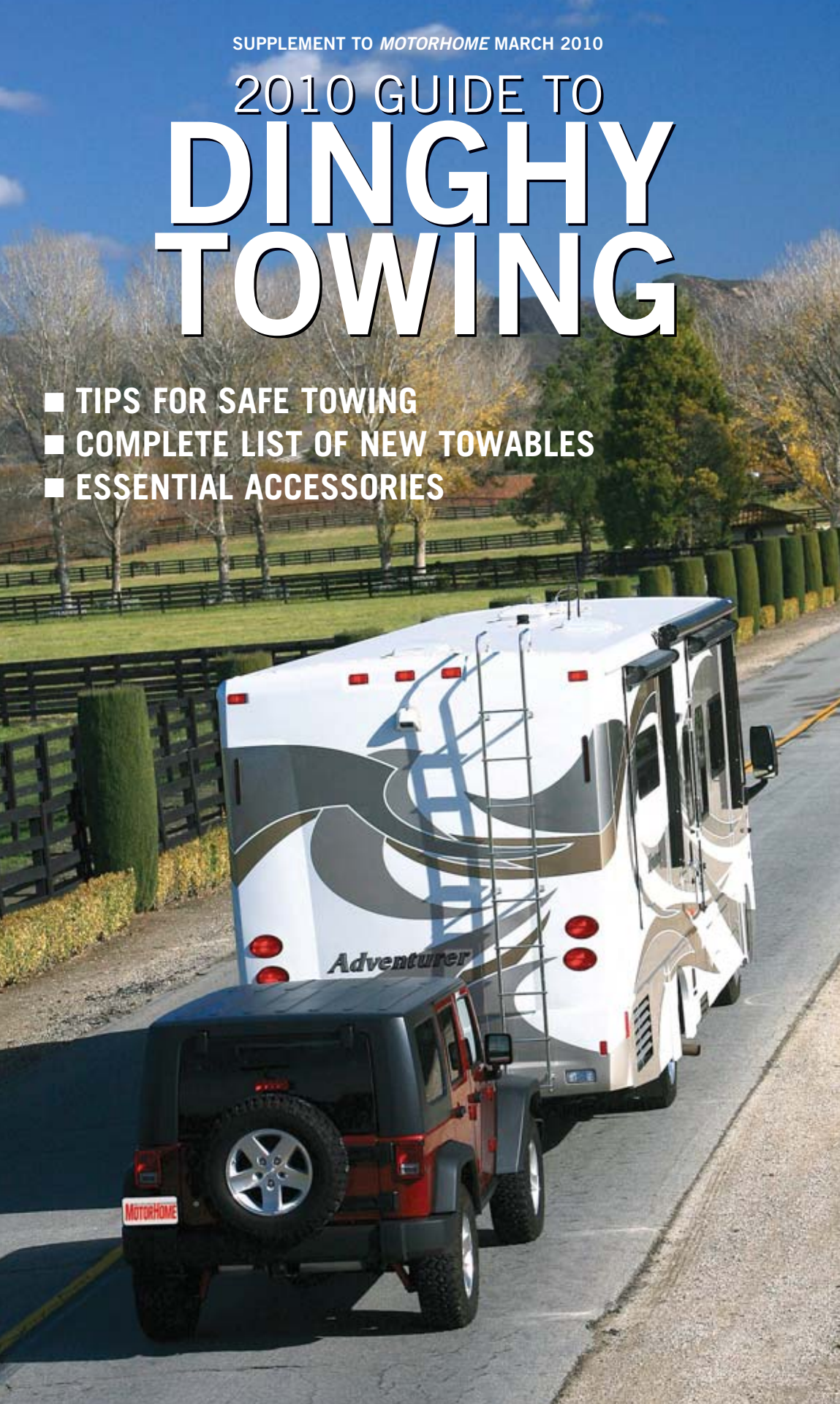
SUPPLEMENT TO *MOTORHOME* MARCH 2010

2010 GUIDE TO DINGHY TOWING

- TIPS FOR SAFE TOWING
- COMPLETE LIST OF NEW TOWABLES
- ESSENTIAL ACCESSORIES



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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 *2010 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 "What You Need to Know Before You Tow" (page 6), the hard hookup between motorhome and car (or truck or SUV) 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 refuse.

Yet another device to aid in safe dinghy transport, supplemental braking systems have likewise evolved. Portable systems can be installed in just a few minutes, and even permanent installations remain unobtrusive. Dinghy brakes may not be mandatory in some states — yet — but anytime you add a few tons of weight to the back of your motorhome, you really do 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 motorcoaches 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 "2010 Dinghy Roundup" (beginning on page 12) lists more than 125 passenger cars, SUVs, light trucks and hybrids that have been manufacturer-certified for four-wheels-down towing. The list includes many of the newest vehicles — including a plethora in the hybrid-car segment. 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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Linking up with the proper equipment

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Prepping your dinghy for safe travel

Roadmaster, Inc., go to www.motorhomemagazine.com/info

WHAT YOU NEED 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 replacing perishables.

A dinghy simplifies such tasks, and eliminates the need to break camp and stow everything 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.

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 "2010 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 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.

Drop receivers keep tow bars level.

Once the tow bar is pinned in the hitch receiver, make sure electric connections and safety cables are secure.

While driving your dinghy, this type of tow bar remains on the coach, tucked out of harm's way.

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

Roadmaster's all-aluminum Sterling All Terrain tow bar is rated to handle vehicles up to 6,000 pounds. Non-binding design facilitates hookup.

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 involves fewer steps.

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.

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.

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.

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

Baseplate installation does not require welding or specialized tools, but can be involved. If you have any reservations, have a professional do it.

To hook up using a telescoping tow bar, the dinghy vehicle only needs to be near the center and mid-length of bar.

An essential ingredient in safe dinghy towing involves a solid, properly designed-and-installed mechanical linkage 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 clearly 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.

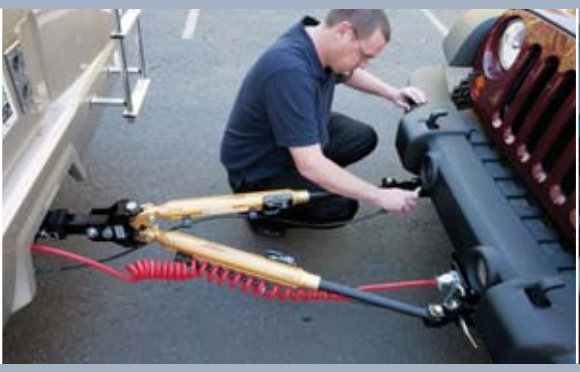
Tow bars are available in two basic styles: A-frame or self-aligning. A-frame tow bars (offered as "solid" or "folding"), while the most economical, are designed to fit a limited number of baseplates (the mounting brackets affixed to the dinghy) or specific applications; however, the folding design will 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-

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; hand 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.



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.

Once the pins are in, the motorhome is driven ahead slowly (or dinghy backed) to lock the arms in position.

lb.) models are available. Contact tow-bar manufacturers to find out if baseplates are offered for the dinghy you plan to tow.

Baseplates are perhaps the most critical variable in this link. While tow bars and, obviously, hitch receivers are intended for mass fitment, different 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.

Installing the baseplate can even be more involved, requiring temporary removal of the bumper covering, front fascia panels and some minor trimming of the grille inserts and shock absorption pads.

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.

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."

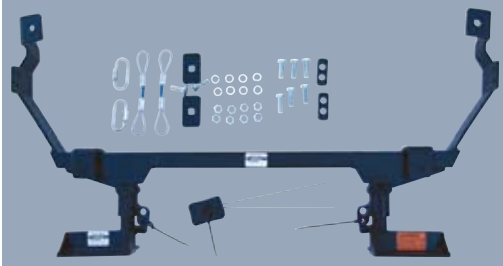
■ Plan ahead — most flat-towed dinghies can't be backed more than a few feet, so it's necessary to focus on easy ingress and egress. Most tow-bar manufacturers will not warrant damage caused by backing. Dollies tend to jackknife quickly. It's better to disconnect the dinghy and drive to a safe place 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.

OTHER TOWING EQUIPMENT



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

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.

Should you choose (or already own) a vehicle that is not flat-towable as produced, there are retrofit kits for many models. One retrofitter, 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 $650 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 28), along with dinghy wiring and lighting. ◆

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

2010 GUIDE TO DINGHY TOWING SPONSORS

Produced by the editors of *MotorHome* for the publication's March issue, the *2010 Guide to Dinghy Towing* was developed with assistance from the following manufacturers:

- **AUTOMATIC EQUIPMENT MANUFACTURING** (Blue Ox Products), 888-425-5382, www.blueox.com.
- **DETHMERS MANUFACTURING** (Demco), 800-543-3626, www.demco-products.com.
- **HOPKINS MANUFACTURING**, 800-835-0129, www.hopkinsmfg.com.
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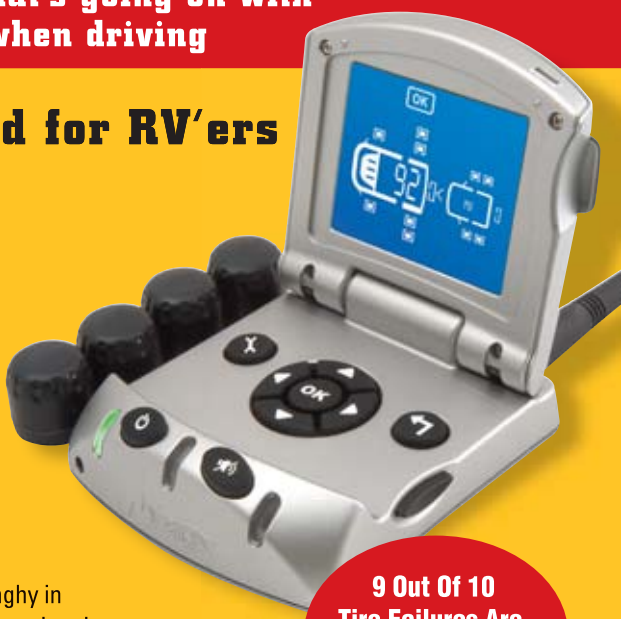

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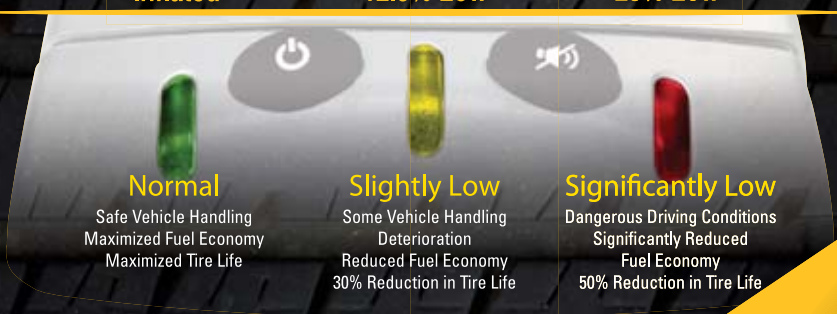

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Jeep Patriot

2010 DINGHY ROUNDUP

DESPITE AUTO INDUSTRY SETBACKS, THIS YEAR'S GUIDE IS CHOCK-FULL OF EXCITING NEW ENTRIES

by CHRIS HEMER

With the near-collapse of the U.S. automotive industry last year, one might surmise there is little good news to report for 2010. After all, there have been plant closures, layoffs and even the discontinuation of entire model lines. But if you think automotive designers and engineers have been sitting around feeling sorry for themselves, think again. Life (and cars) must go on, and while many of your favorite models are gone, there are many new, exciting, manufacturer-approved dinghy vehicles to talk about.

As in previous years, vehicles listed in this guide must be approved by the manufacturer for dinghy towing. That means the manufacturer is aware of the practice of dinghy towing, and has confirmed that the vehicle can be flat towed in this manner without voiding the warranty. Also, the vehicle must be towable without requiring significant mechanical modification (such as disconnecting the driveshaft). 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.

We've made every effort to check with each manufacturer to make sure that our listings are correct and current. However, bear in mind that much of the information we receive is preliminary, and can change by press time. Therefore, **it is the buyer's responsibility to check with the dealer to be certain that the vehicle under consideration is dinghy towable prior to purchase.** Ask to see a copy of the owner's manual; somewhere in the index there should be a notation for "recreational," "four-down," or "flat" towing. This will not only tell you if the vehicle is, in fact, towable, but what specific procedures are required to prevent damage to the transmission, drive system, etc.

If the owner's manual states that the vehicle is not towable, or skips the subject entirely, there are kits and products available to make towing a "non-towable" vehicle possible. However, there is the possibility that the act of flat towing, and/or the installation of a towing product on a nonapproved vehicle, can void the vehicle's warranty, so it's best to deal with a reputable aftermarket provider — such as Remco — that can guide you accordingly.

We know that there will be some vehicles that are not listed in this guide that can be towed with success, despite the manufacturer's claims to the contrary. How can that be? Usually, it's because the manufacturer has not officially verified that the vehicle in question is towable or because it does not want to deal with any potential warranty claims that may arise as a result of dinghy towing. But that does not necessarily mean that the vehicle can't be safely dinghy towed. When in doubt, it is probably best to stick with the vehicles that are officially approved.

Now … without further ado, let's look at the many changes for the 2010 model year.

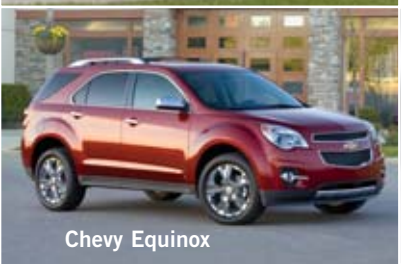
CHRYSLER GROUP

There aren't a lot of cars from Chrysler's roster that are towable, but for 2010, it has submitted the Caliber as the lone tow-friendly passenger

Buick LaCrosse

Cadillac Escalade Hybrid

Chevy Silverado Hybrid


Chevy Equinox

Ford Fusion Hybrid

Dodge Caliber

car Dodge entry.

Though not a new model, the 2010 five-door Caliber features an all-new interior, and two "World Engine" offerings: a 2.0-L four cylinder (which replaced the previous 1.8-L) and a 2.4-L four cylinder. The compact Jeep Compass and Jeep Patriot are also approved for 2010, and are available in either 2WD or 4WD configurations. Offering the same engine choices as the Caliber, the Compass and Patriot boast up to 25 MPG in 2WD configuration with the five-speed manual transmission. They could be an ideal solution for those who want some off-road capability but don't want to tow a large and/or heavy vehicle.

FORD MOTOR

Ford and its other divisions, Lincoln and Mercury, have some significant products on tap for 2010. Perhaps most noteworthy is the all-new Ford Taurus, which is mechanically similar to the Lincoln MKS. The Taurus is powered by the popular 3.5-L Duratec V-6 engine, and offers a choice of two six-speed automatic transmissions (one with SelectShift steering-wheel-mounted shift paddles) and either front- or all-wheel drive.

Designed to go head-to-head with segment leaders like the Toyota Camry and Honda Accord, the Taurus features standard and available technologies such as Adaptive Cruise Control with Collision Warning, Intelligent Access with Push Button Start, Blind Spot Information System with Cross Traffic Alert, Rain-Sensing Wipers, Easy Fuel capless refueling, Ford SYNC and Voice-Activated Navigation with Sirius Travel Link.

The more luxurious Mercury Milan steps things up with a standard 270-HP 3.7-L Duratec V-6, or a new 3.5-L EcoBoost twin-turbocharged V-6 that delivers an impressive 355 HP. As you might expect, the MKS is available with all the features found in the Taurus, plus niceties such as a THX-II-Certified audio system, adaptive HID headlamps and more.

Want to fly your eco-friendly flag, but don't want to sacrifice room and comfort? Then perhaps the Ford Fusion Hybrid or Mercury Milan Hybrid are what you're looking for. Powered by a 2.5-L Duratec four-cylinder engine that produces 156 HP and a permanent magnet electric motor that churns out 106 HP, these cars have got plenty of get up and go, yet achieve up to 41 MPG city, 36 MPG highway.

Ford raised some eyebrows last year when it introduced its SUV alternative, the Ford Flex. This year, the Lincoln division puts a decisively upscale spin on the concept with the unique Lincoln MKT. Powered by your choice of a 268-HP 3.7-L V-6 or the 3.5-L, twin-turbocharged EcoBoost engine, the MKT comes standard with a six-speed SelectShift automatic transmission, and is available with front- or all-wheel drive. The MKT is available in either six- or seven-passenger variations with two second-row seating configurations. Power "fold and tumble" second-row seats with heating, cooling and power-assisted lumbar adjustment are optional, as is a rear console-mounted five-quart capacity refrigerator (six-passenger version only). Got a long trip planned with the family? Then you may want to go for the available dual headrest Family Entertainment System with twin 7-inch DVD playback screens that offer individual or simultaneous programming.

KIA MOTORS

For 2010, the Kia brand gains momentum with three new models: Forte, Forte Koup and Soul.

Positioned against such well-established economy sedans as the Toyota Corolla and Mazda 3, the Forte is offered in LX, EX and SX trim levels, of which the latter two are very well equipped. Standard features include power windows and door locks, remote keyless entry, air conditioning and steering wheel-mounted audio and cruise controls. The SX also offers optional power moonroof and

Ford Taurus

GMC Yukon Hybrid

Jeep Compass

Kia Forte Koup

Kia Soul

Lincoln MKS

leather-trimmed seats with front seat warmers.

The whimsically named Forte Koup is Kia's first-ever two door, and it is available in two trim levels: EX and SX. Both are similarly equipped to the Forte Sedan, and the drivetrain choices are the same, too. Choose from either a 156-HP 2.0-L engine in the base models, or a 2.4-L that produces 173 HP in the SX.

The Soul, meanwhile, is Kia's entry into the "tall car" market that it will share with the likes of the Scion xB and Nissan Cube. Like those vehicles, the Soul will offer its owner more opportunities to personalize the vehicle by offering several package and styling combinations. Available in Soul, Soul+, Soul! and Soul Sport trim configurations, the Soul can be outfitted with features like 18-inch wheels, power moonroof, fog lights, air conditioning, cruise control and more. It's powered by either a 122-HP 1.6-L, or a 142-HP 2.0-L, depending on the trim level selected.

GENERAL MOTORS

It's not often a full-size luxury sedan makes our dinghy towing guide, but that changes with the introduction of the new Buick LaCrosse. Redesigned from the ground up, the LaCrosse features contemporary styling and an interior that has won acclaim for its comfort, fit and finish. It's powered by either a 3.0-L direct-injection V-6 with 255 HP, or a 3.6-L direct injection V-6 delivering 280 HP. It's available in front- or all-wheel drive, and both versions are towable.

Speaking of luxury, the Cadillac Escalade Hybrid and new SRX crossover also make the list this year. While few would consider the Escalade a fuel-efficient or green vehicle, it does leave a shallower carbon footprint thanks to a tall 3.08 axle ratio and a 6.0-L V-8 that is now E85 FlexFuel compatible. The more exclusive Escalade Platinum Hybrid features a distinctive front fascia, unique 22-inch wheels, LED headlamps and exclusive interior appointments. The new SRX, meanwhile, is an all-new design featuring a unique chassis and the smallest V-6 engine Cadillac offers in North America. It will be introduced with a 3.0-L direct injected V-6 that delivers 265 HP, but a 2.8-L turbo V-6 that churns out an estimated 300 HP will be available by mid-2010. Both engines are backed by a six-speed automatic transmission. The SRX is available in either front-wheel drive or with a new all-wheel-drive system featuring an electronic limited slip differential (ELSD).

The popular Chevy Equinox has been redesigned, and it now has a new sibling, the GMC Terrain. Both vehicles are powered by a new 2.4-L direct-injected four cylinder that delivers a segment-best EPA fuel economy rating of 32 MPG on the highway. An available 3.0-L direct-injected V-6 makes an impressive 264 HP, and both engines are mated to a six-speed automatic transmission. Available in front- or all-wheel drive, the Equinox and Terrain come standard with six air bags, four-wheel disc brakes, StabiliTrak stability control, traction control, OnStar and XM Satellite Radio.

If a fuel-efficient pickup or SUV is what you're looking for, the Chevy Silverado/GMC Sierra Hybrids and the Chevy Tahoe/GMC Yukon Hybrids are also deemed towable for 2010. With a 6.0-L V-8 on board, these vehicles aren't shy on power, yet deliver a significant improvement in fuel economy, especially in city driving.

As you've undoubtedly heard by now, GM has discontinued the entire Pontiac and Saturn lines, though a limited number of 2010 Pontiac Vibes, Saturn VUEs and Saturn Outlooks will hit the marketplace. With that in mind, GM has requested that no Pontiac or Saturn models be listed in this year's guide. ◆

This guide addresses only 2010 vehicles. Guides for earlier model years are available online at www.motorhomemagazine.com.

Demco KarKaddy™ SS

Before

Unfolded Kar Kaddy™ SS length is 133".

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

After

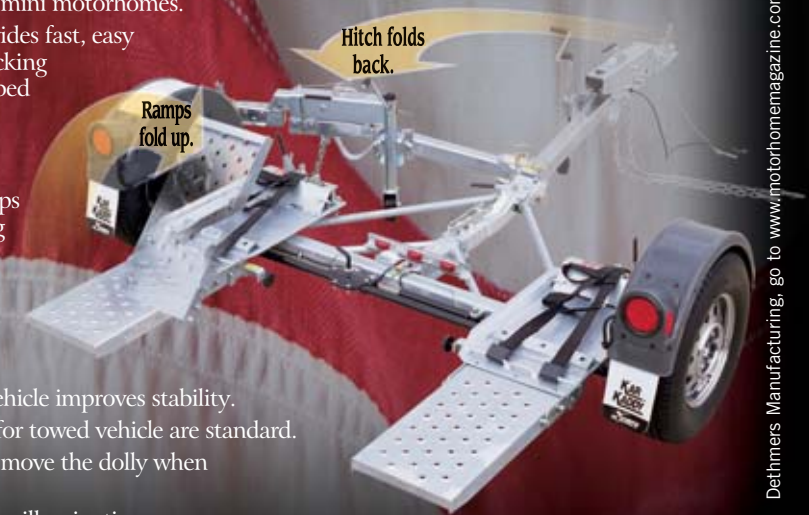
A folded Kar Kaddy™ SS length is 67".

By using only half the space, you can fit both motorhome and tow dolly comfortably in almost any RV lot. Or, you can store your tow dolly in front of your car in your garage at home.

Standard Features:

- Hydraulic surge brake system provides safe, controlled stopping.
- A durable galvanized finish with custom chrome wheels and radial tires make this tow dolly one you'll be proud to use for years to come.
- Will accommodate front wheel drive standard or automatic transmission vehicles.
- Less than 100 lbs. tongue weight, when loaded, for improved ride and handling of towed vehicles. Ideal for towing by mini motorhomes.
- Tilt-bed frame provides fast, easy loading. Positive locking mechanism on tilt-bed does not require a separate loose pin.
- Attached "SURE-GRIP" loading ramps provide safe loading traction.
- Auto-steer cornering makes turns problem-free.
- Lower center of gravity for towed vehicle improves stability.
- Dual safety chains for towed vehicle are standard.
- Wheel jack to help move the dolly when not loaded.
- LED lights give more illumination and longer life.

Kar Kaddy™ SS will tow almost any vehicle, large or small, without difficult, time consuming adjustments to axles or ramps. This means no bolts to tighten and no heavy components to reposition.



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2010 DINGHY ROUNDUP

MAKE/ MODEL	BASE CURB WEIGHT	SPEED/ DISTANCE LIMITS	TOWABLE WITH MANUAL TRANS.	TOWABLE WITH AUTO TRANS.	MILEAGE CITY/ HWY.	APPROX. RETAIL PRICE RANGE	SPECIAL PROCEDURES (SEE OWNER'S MANUAL FOR DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS)
BUICK							
Enclave CX/CXL	4,780	65 MPH/ None	N/A	Yes	17/24	$35,165-$41,695	Run engine at the beginning of each day and at each fuel stop for 5 minutes. Remove 50-amp BATT1 fuse while towing.
Enclave AWD CX/CXL	4,980	65 MPH/ None	N/A	Yes	16/22	$37,165-$43,695	Run engine at the beginning of each day and at each fuel stop for 5 minutes. Remove 50-amp BATT1 fuse while towing.
LaCrosse CX/CXL/CXS	3,929-4,045	65 MPH/ None	N/A	Yes	17/26	$27,085-$33,015	Run engine at the beginning of each day and at each fuel stop for 5 minutes.
LaCrosse AWD CXL	4,196	65 MPH/ None	N/A	Yes	16/25	$31,820-$38,110	Run engine at the beginning of each day and at each fuel stop for 5 minutes.
CADILLAC							
Escalade Hybrid 4WD	6,016	None	N/A	Yes	19/20	$75,975-$87,725	
SRX 3.0-L V-6	4,224	65 MPH/ None	N/A	Yes	18/25	$33,330-$43,895	Run engine at the beginning of each day and at each fuel stop for 5 minutes.
SRX 3.0-L V-6 AWD	4,307	65 MPH/ None	N/A	Yes	17/23	$39,405-$47,540	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	14/20	$38,775-$48,865	Requires optional Active, 2-Speed Transfer Case.
Cobalt Sedan/Coupe	2,780-2,793/ 2,730-2,975	65 MPH/ None	Yes	Yes	24/33	$14,990-$23,525	Remove fuse 8 from Floor Console Fuse Block while towing.
Colorado 4WD	3,584	None	Yes	Yes	17/23	$20,490-$28,915	
Equinox	3,761-3,838	65 MPH/ None	N/A	Yes	22/32	$22,440-$28,045	Run engine at the beginning of each day and at each fuel stop for 5 minutes. Remove fuse 32 while towing.
Equinox AWD	3,929-3,975	65 MPH/ None	N/A	Yes	20/29	$24,190-$29,795	Run engine at the beginning of each day and at each fuel stop for 5 minutes. Remove fuse 32 while towing.
HHR	3,155-3,353	65 MPH/ None	Yes	Yes	22/30	$18,720-$26,255	Remove fuse 8 from Floor Console Fuse Block while towing.
Malibu	3,415-3,649	65 MPH/ None	N/A	Yes	22/30	$21,825-$26,605	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	4,892-5,509	None	N/A	Yes	14/18	$24,090-$30,495	

2010 DINGHY ROUNDUP

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Silverado 1500 4WD Hybrid	5,882	None	N/A	Yes	21/22	$41,490-$48,190	
Suburban 1500 4WD	5,836	None	N/A	Yes	14/20	$43,480-$55,625	Requires optional Active, 2-Speed Transfer Case.
Tahoe 4WD	5,524	None	N/A	Yes	14/19	$41,340-$53,615	Requires optional Active, 2-Speed Transfer Case.
Tahoe 4WD Hybrid	5,936	None	N/A	Yes	20/20	$53,525-$61,345	
Traverse	4,720	65 MPH/ None	N/A	Yes	17/24	$29,224-$37,985	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	$31,224-$39,985	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	23/31	$17,090-$25,470	
Dakota 4WD	4,369-4,405	None	N/A	Yes	14/18	$27,745-$33,920	Before towing, press NEUTRAL button on transfer case for 4 seconds, start the engine, shift into REVERSE, release brake pedal for 5 seconds, shift into DRIVE, release brake pedal for 5 seconds, shut engine off, shift into PARK and disconnect negative battery cable.
Ram 1500 4WD	4,893	None	N/A	Yes	13/18	$25,965-$43,550	
Ram 2500 4WD	6,232	None	Yes	Yes	Not Rated	$31,140-$44,100	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	6,948	None	Yes	Yes	Not Rated	$38,545-$51,595	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.

2010 DINGHY ROUNDUP

MAKE/ MODEL	BASE CURB WEIGHT	SPEED/ DISTANCE LIMITS	TOWABLE WITH MANUAL TRANS.	TOWABLE WITH AUTO TRANS.	MILEAGE CITY/ HWY.	APPROX. RETAIL PRICE RANGE	SPECIAL PROCEDURES (SEE OWNER'S MANUAL FOR DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS)
FORD							
Edge	4,078	65 MPH/ None	N/A	Yes	18/25	$26,920-$33,920	
Edge AWD	4,288	65 MPH/ None	N/A	Yes	17/23	$31,770-$49,200	
Escape I-4	3,299	70 MPH/ None	Yes	Yes [a]	22/28	$20,550-$25,305	[a] Maximum speed with automatic transmission is 65 MPH. For automatic transmission, run engine at the beginning of each day for 5 minutes (shift into DRIVE, then REVERSE then NEUTRAL) and then every six hours.
Escape V-6	3,421	65 MPH/ None	N/A	Yes	19/25	$23,575-$28,055	Run engine at the beginning of each day for 5 minutes (shift into DRIVE, then REVERSE then NEUTRAL) and then every six hours.
Escape Hybrid	3,669-3,829	75 MPH/ None	N/A	Yes	34/31	$29,750-$36,420	
Explorer 4WD V-6	4,628	None	N/A	Yes	14/20	$28,880-$38,200	Only 4WD models with dealer-installed Neutral Tow Kit (part #1L2Z-7H332-AB) are towable.
Explorer 4WD V-8	4,719	None	N/A	Yes	14/19	$36,510-$42,985	Only 4WD models with dealer-installed Neutral Tow Kit (part #6L2Z-7H332-A) are towable.
F-150 4WD	4,951	None	N/A	Yes	14/18	$25,750-$42,690	Only 4WD models equipped with manual-shift transfer case (not Electronic Shift-On-the-Fly or 2WD vehicles) are towable. Shift manual transfer case into NEUTRAL.
F-250/F-350/ F-450 Super Duty 4WD	6,181	None	Yes [b]	Yes [b,c]	Not Rated	$28,275-$62,625	[b] Only 4WD models with manual-shift transfer case (not Electronic Shift-On-the-Fly or 2WD vehicles) are towable. Shift manual transfer case into NEUTRAL, set hub locks to free. [c] Only 4WD models with dealer-installed Neutral Tow Kit (part #6L2Z-7H332-A) are towable.
Flex (2WD/AWD)	4,471-4,839	65 MPH/ None	N/A	Yes	17/24	$28,550-$49,200	Run engine at the beginning of each day and at each fuel stop for 5 minutes.
Focus	2,588	70 MPH/ None	Yes	No	24/35	$15,995-$18,485	
Fusion (2.5-L I-4/ 3.0-L V-6)	3,285	70 MPH/ None	Yes	Yes [d]	22/31	$19,620-$24,330	[d] Maximum speed with automatic transmission is 65 MPH. For automatic transmission, run engine at the beginning of each day for 5 minutes (shift into DRIVE, then REVERSE then NEUTRAL) and then every six hours.

2010 DINGHY ROUNDUP

MAKE/ MODEL	BASE CURB WEIGHT	SPEED/ DISTANCE LIMITS	TOWABLE WITH MANUAL TRANS.	TOWABLE WITH AUTO TRANS.	MILEAGE CITY/ HWY.	APPROX. RETAIL PRICE RANGE	SPECIAL PROCEDURES (SEE OWNER'S MANUAL FOR DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS)
Fusion SEL (3.0-L V-6 AWD)	3,638	65 MPH/ None	N/A	Yes	17/24	$27,790-$28,755	Maximum speed with automatic transmission is 65 MPH. For automatic transmission, run engine at the beginning of each day for 5 minutes (shift into DRIVE, then REVERSE then NEUTRAL) and then every six hours.
Fusion Hybrid	3,720	65 MPH/ None	N/A	Yes	41/36	$27,625-$31,590	Run engine at the beginning of each day and at each fuel stop for 5 minutes.
Ranger	3,030	55 MPH/ None	Yes	No	22/27	$17,440-$21,925	
Ranger 4WD	3,668	55 MPH/ None	Yes [e]	Yes [f]	15/19	$24,730-$26,570	[e] On manual transmission models, put 4WD switch in 2WD mode; Electronic Shift-On-the-Fly rotary control in 2-high position. [f] Only 4WD models with dealer-installed Neutral Tow Kit (part #3L2Z-7H332-AA) are towable.
Sport Trac 4WD V-6	4,753	None	N/A	Yes	13/19	$30,335-$31,770	Only 4WD models with dealer-installed Neutral Tow Kit (part #1L2Z-7H332-AB) are towable.
Sport Trac 4WD V-8	4,840	None	N/A	Yes	14/19	$37,835-$39,045	Only 4WD models with dealer-installed Neutral Tow Kit (part #6L2Z-7H332-A) are towable.
Taurus (2WD/AWD)	4,015-4,224	65 MPH/ None	N/A	Yes	18/28	$25,170-$47,760	Run engine at the beginning of each day and at each fuel stop for 5 minutes.
GMC							
Acadia	4,722	65 MPH/ None	N/A	Yes	17/24	$31,740-$40,185	Run engine at the beginning of each day and at each fuel stop for 5 minutes. Remove 50-amp BATT1 fuse while towing.
Acadia AWD	4,936	65 MPH/ None	N/A	Yes	16/23	$33,740-$42,185	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	3,685	None	Yes	Yes	17/22	$20,490-$28,915	
Sierra 1500 4WD	4,798	None	N/A	Yes	14/18	$24,090-$30,495	
Sierra 1500 4WD Hybrid	5,882	None	N/A	Yes	21/22	$41,490-$48,190	
Terrain	3,853	65 MPH/ None	N/A	Yes	22/32	$25,850-$27,450	Run engine at the beginning of each day and at each fuel stop for 5 minutes. Remove fuse 32 while towing.

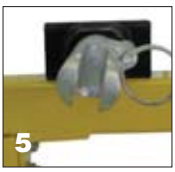
MAKE/ MODEL	BASE CURB WEIGHT	SPEED/ DISTANCE LIMITS	TOWABLE WITH MANUAL TRANS.	TOWABLE WITH AUTO TRANS.	MILEAGE CITY/ HWY.	APPROX. RETAIL PRICE RANGE	SPECIAL PROCEDURES (SEE OWNER'S MANUAL FOR DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS)
Terrain AWD	4,020	65 MPH/ None	N/A	Yes	20/29	$27,600-$29,200	Run engine at the beginning of each day and at each fuel stop for 5 minutes. Remove fuse 32 while towing.
Yukon 4WD	5,560	None	N/A	Yes	14/19	$41,340-$53,615	Only 4WD models equipped with a two-speed automatic transfer case are towable.
Yukon 4WD Hybrid	5,527	None	N/A	Yes	20/20	$53,525-$61,345	
Yukon XL 1500 4WD	5,836	None	N/A	Yes	14/20	$43,480-$55,625	Only 4WD models equipped with a two-speed automatic transfer case are towable.
HONDA							
CR-V	3,386	65 MPH/ None	N/A	Yes	21/28	$21,545-$26,495	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	3,503	65 MPH/ None	N/A	Yes	21/27	$22,795-$27,745	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	2,489-2,575	65 MPH/ None	Yes	Yes (g)	28/35	$14,900-$19,110	(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	2,365	None	Yes	No	28/34	$9,970-$13,645	
Elantra Blue	2,723	None	Yes	No	26/35	$14,145	
Elantra Touring	2,937	None	Yes	No	23/31	$15,995-$19,795	
Santa Fe GLS 2WD	3,868	None	Yes	No	19/26	$21,695-$30,545	

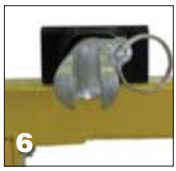
Strong As An Ox™

Choosing Blue Ox is having a baseplate custom-made for your vehicle, only faster. Our baseplates are easy on your suspension and even easier on the eye. We've designed them with hidden reinforcement. We don't offer a one-size-fits-all support system, but rather a system that's shock absorbing and integrated into the individual bumper frame with the bumper design of your vehicle. Our philosophy is to let the baseplate torsion, or flex, similar to receiver hitches allowing the baseplate to absorb the forces of towing rather than rigidly transferring the forces to the frame of the vehicle. **All Blue Ox baseplates have a *three year warranty.***

- Built like a receiver hitch to absorb towing forces
- Typically single piece design to increase durability
- Custom fit design
- Spreads towing force equally without undue stress
- Keeps weight placed on suspension to a minimum
- Bolts securely to the chassis
- Baseplate safety cables come standard for additional baseplate to frame security
- Convenient location for electrical plug
- Safety cable convenience links come standard for connection of safety cables between motorhome and towed vehicle
- Removable tabs allow for more cosmetically appealing installation
- Provides a clean-looking front bumper

See Blue Ox Application Guide for model information.





1. Locate the removable tab receiver on the front of your vehicle.
2. Place the removable tab into the receiver.
3. Push the removable tab into the receiver as far as it will go.
4. Begin turning in a counter-clockwise direction to lock the tab.
5. Continue to turn the tab until you have heard a "click" like noise.
6. After the "click" noise, the removeable tab is successfully locked into the baseplate and ready for towing.

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2010 DINGHY ROUNDUP

MAKE/ MODEL	BASE CURB WEIGHT	SPEED/ DISTANCE LIMITS	TOWABLE WITH MANUAL TRANS.	TOWABLE WITH AUTO TRANS.	MILEAGE CITY/ HWY.	APPROX. RETAIL PRICE RANGE	SPECIAL PROCEDURES (SEE OWNER'S MANUAL FOR DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS)
Sonata	3,292	None	Yes	No	21/32	$18,700	
Tucson GLS 2WD	3,179	None	Yes	No	22/30	$18,995	
INFINITI							
G37S Sport 6MT Convertible	4,099	70 MPH/ 500 miles	Yes	No	TBD	TBD	Idle engine in neutral for 2 minutes every 500 miles.
G37S Sport 6MT Coupe	TBD	70 MPH/ 500 miles	Yes	No	18/25	$40,400	Idle engine in neutral for 2 minutes every 500 miles.
G37S Sport 6MT Sedan	3,640	70 MPH/ 500 miles	Yes	No	18/25	$37,000	Idle engine in neutral for 2 minutes every 500 miles.
JEEP							
Commander LTD 4WD	5,119	None	N/A	Yes	13/19	$43,610-$46,125	Only 4WD vehicles equipped with Quadra-Trac II and Quadra-Drive II systems 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.
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 Laredo X 4WD (5.7-L V-8 with Quadra-Drive II)	4,488	None	N/A	Yes	15/20	$37,975-$41,170	Only 4WD vehicles equipped with Quadra-Trac II and Quadra-Drive II systems 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.
Liberty 4WD	4,290	None	N/A	Yes	15/21	$25,610-$29,480	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	3,115	None	Yes	No	21/25	$18,245-$23,430	
Patriot 4WD	3,261	None	Yes	No	21/24	$20,175-$25,180	

2010 DINGHY ROUNDUP

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Wrangler 4WD	3,972	None	Yes	Yes	15/19	$21,915-$29,525	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	4,242	None	Yes	Yes	15/19	$29,655-$32,800	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							
Forte	2,707	None	Yes	No	25/34	$13,695-$18,495	
Forte Koup	2,716	None	Yes	No	25/34	$16,595-$18,695	
Optima LX	3,157	None	Yes	No	22/32	$17,495	
Rio	2,365	None	Yes	No	28/34	$11,695-$14,895	
Rio 5	2,438	None	Yes	No	27/32	$13,895-$15,195	
Sorento 2WD 2.4-L I-4	3,763	None	Yes	No	20/27	$19,995	Only 2011 model-year Base units are towable.
Soul	2,560	None	Yes	No	26/31	$13,300-$18,195	
Sportage 2WD 2.0-L I-4	3,230	None	Yes	No	20/25	$16,995	
LEXUS							
IS 250	3,840	None	Yes	No	18/26	$31,845-$38,940	
LINCOLN							
MKS	4,127	65 MPH/ None	N/A	Yes	17/24	$40,870-$44,860	Run engine at the beginning of each day and at each fuel stop for 5 minutes.
MKS AWD	4,276	65 MPH/ None	N/A	Yes	16/23	$42,760-$48,770	Run engine at the beginning of each day and at each fuel stop for 5 minutes.
MKT	4,680	65 MPH/ None	N/A	Yes	17/23	$44,200-$45,495	Run engine at the beginning of each day and at each fuel stop for 5 minutes.
MKT AWD	4,857	65 MPH/ None	N/A	Yes	16/22	$46,195-$49,200	Run engine at the beginning of each day and at each fuel stop for 5 minutes.

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MKX	4,210	65 MPH/ None	N/A	Yes	18/25	$38,345-$41,525	Run engine at the beginning of each day and at each fuel stop for 5 minutes.
MKX AWD	4,400	65 MPH/ None	N/A	Yes	17/23	$40,195-$44,980	Run engine at the beginning of each day and at each fuel stop for 5 minutes.
MAZDA							
Tribute	3,272-3,337	70 MPH/ None	Yes	Yes (h)	22/28	$20,840-$27,600	(h) Maximum speed with automatic transmission is 65 MPH. Run engine at the beginning of each day for 5 minutes and then at each fuel stop.
Tribute 4WD	3,483	65 MPH/ None	N/A	Yes	19/25	$24,635-$29,350	Run engine at the beginning of each day and then at each fuel stop.
MERCURY							
Mariner I-4	3,341	65 MPH/ None	N/A	Yes	21/28	$23,035-$25,305	Run engine at the beginning of each day for 5 minutes (shift into DRIVE, then REVERSE then NEUTRAL) and then every six hours.
Mariner V-6	3,421	65 MPH/ None	N/A	Yes	19/25	$24,035-$26,105	Run engine at the beginning of each day for 5 minutes (shift into DRIVE, then REVERSE then NEUTRAL) and then every six hours.
Mariner Hybrid	3,669	75 MPH/ None	N/A	Yes	34/31	$29,750-$36,420	
Milan I-4	3,308	70 MPH/ None	Yes	Yes (i)	22/31	$21,535-$24,675	(i) Maximum speed with automatic transmission is 65 MPH. For automatic transmission, run engine at the beginning of each day for 5 minutes (shift into DRIVE, then REVERSE then NEUTRAL) and then every six hours.
Milan V-6	3,699	65 MPH/ None	N/A	Yes	18/25	$26,305-$28,155	Run engine at the beginning of each day for 5 minutes (shift into DRIVE, then REVERSE then NEUTRAL) and then every six hours.
Milan Hybrid	3,720	65 MPH/ None	N/A	Yes	41/36	$31,590-$33,430	Run engine at the beginning of each day and at each fuel stop for 5 minutes.
NISSAN							
370Z Coupe	3,232	70 MPH/ 500 miles	Yes	No	18/26	$29,930-$39,130	Idle engine in neutral for 2 minutes every 500 miles.
370Z Roadster	3,426	70 MPH/ 500 miles	Yes	No	18/25	$36,970-$43,320	Idle engine in neutral for 2 minutes every 500 miles.
Altima Coupe	3,180	None/ 500 miles	Yes	No	23/31	$22,440-$27,270	Idle engine in neutral for 2 minutes every 500 miles.

2010 DINGHY ROUNDUP

MAKE/ MODEL	BASE CURB WEIGHT	SPEED/ DISTANCE LIMITS	TOWABLE WITH MANUAL TRANS.	TOWABLE WITH AUTO TRANS.	MILEAGE CITY/ HWY.	APPROX. RETAIL PRICE RANGE	SPECIAL PROCEDURES (SEE OWNER'S MANUAL FOR DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS)
Cube 1.8, 1.8S	2,768	70 MPH/ 500 miles	Yes	No	25/30	$13,990-$15,030	Idle engine in neutral for 2 minutes every 500 miles. Models with Continuously Variable Transmission (CVT) are not flat towable.
Frontier SE, XE 2WD I-4	3,678	None/ 500 miles	Yes	No	19/23	$17,540-$20,690	Idle engine in neutral for 2 minutes every 500 miles.
Frontier SE 2WD V-6	4,149	None/ 500 miles	Yes	No	16/20	$20,440-$25,010	Idle engine in neutral for 2 minutes every 500 miles.
Frontier SE, PRO-4X 4WD V-6	4,282	None/ 500 miles	Yes	No	15/19	$23,140-$27,710	Place transfer case in the 2H range. Idle engine in neutral for 2 minutes every 500 miles.
Sentra 2.0	2,862	None/ 500 miles	Yes	No	26/34	$15,420-$16,790	Idle engine in neutral for 2 minutes every 500 miles.
Versa 1.6 Base, 1.8 S	2,516	None/ 500 miles	Yes	No	26/34	$9,990-$16,100	Idle engine in neutral for 2 minutes every 500 miles.
Xterra X	4,154	None/ 500 miles	Yes	No	16/20	$22,450-$28,350	On 4WD models, place transfer case in the 2H range. Idle engine in neutral for 2 minutes every 500 miles.
Xterra Off Road 4WD	4,365	None/ 500 miles	Yes	No	16/20	$24,500-$30,400	Place transfer case in the 2H range. Idle engine in neutral for 2 minutes every 500 miles.
SCION							
tC	2,932	None	Yes	No	20/27	$17,670	
xB	3,020	None	Yes	No	22/28	$16,420	
xD	2,625	None	Yes	No	27/33	$15,470	
SMART USA							
smart fortwo	1,800	55 MPH/ None	Yes	N/A	33/41	$11,990-$16,990	Equipped with an automatic manual transmission. Battery must be disconnected to tow.
SUBARU							
Forester 2.5X, 2.5X Premium	3,250	None	Yes	No	20/26	$20,295-$28,495	
Impreza 2.5i, 2.5i Premium, Outback Sport	3,075	None	Yes	No	20/27	$17,495-$19,995	
Impreza WRX	3,174	None	Yes	N/A	18/25	$24,995-$34,995	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, 2.5i Premium, 2.5GT Premium, 2.5GT Limited	3,270	None	Yes	No	19/27	$19,995-$29,995	Models with Continuously Variable Transmission (CVT) are not flat towable.
Outback 2.5i, 2.5i Premium	3,386	None	Yes	No	19/27	$22,995-$24,295	Models with Continuously Variable Transmission (CVT) are not flat towable.

2010 DINGHY ROUNDUP

MAKE/ MODEL	BASE CURB WEIGHT	SPEED/ DISTANCE LIMITS	TOWABLE WITH MANUAL TRANS.	TOWABLE WITH AUTO TRANS.	MILEAGE CITY/ HWY.	APPROX. RETAIL PRICE RANGE	SPECIAL PROCEDURES (SEE OWNER'S MANUAL FOR DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS)
SUZUKI							
Grand Vitara X Sport V-6 4WD	3,876	55 MPH/ 200 miles	N/A	Yes	18/24	$25,499	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.
Grand Vitara Limited V-6 4WD	3,876	55 MPH/ 200 miles	N/A	Yes	18/24	$26,999	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.
Grand Vitara Limited with Optional Full-Time Four-Mode 4WD	3,479	55 MPH/ 200 miles	N/A	Yes	19/25	$26,324	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.
SX4 Crossover 2WD	2,723	55 MPH/ 200 miles	Yes	No	22/30	$15,849	Models with Continuously Variable Transmission (CVT) or I-AWD are not flat towable. Console-mounted selector must be in the 2WD position.
SX4 Sedan, LE	2,723	55 MPH/ 200 miles	Yes	No	23/33	$13,359-$14,949	Models with Continuously Variable Transmission (CVT) are not flat towable.
SX4 Sport S	2,723	55 MPH/ 200 miles	Yes	No	22/32	$16,149	Models with Continuously Variable Transmission (CVT) are not flat towable.
SX4 SportBack GTS 2WD	2,732	55 MPH/ 200 miles	Yes	No	22/30	$17,949	Models with Continuously Variable Transmission (CVT) are not flat towable.
TOYOTA							
Camry LE, SE	3,285	None	Yes	No	22/33	$19,395-$22,165	After towing, run engine in idle for at least 3 minutes before driving.
Corolla 1.8-L	2,767	None	Yes	No	27/35	$15,350-$16,420	After towing, run engine in idle for at least 3 minutes before driving.
Corolla XRS	2,877	None	Yes	No	22/29	$18,860	After towing, run engine in idle for at least 3 minutes before driving.
Matrix 1.8-L	2,865	None	Yes	No	26/32	$16,650-$18,640	After towing, run engine in idle for at least 3 minutes before driving.
Matrix 2.4-L	3,065	None	Yes	No	21/28	$20,770	After towing, run engine in idle for at least 3 minutes before driving.
Yaris	2,311	None	Yes	No	29/36	$12,355-$13,115	After towing, run engine in idle for at least 3 minutes before driving.

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TOWING **ACCESSORIES**

Accessory kits like 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.

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

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 revolves around 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 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 isn't for the squeamish, since it 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 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

Adding large rubber flaps at the rear of a motorhome, like these from Blue Ox, will minimize towed-vehicle damage from debris, dirt and grime kicked up by coach tires.

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.

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 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 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 foresight 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

One-way diodes, left, 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, above.

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.

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.

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 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. Boost model is designed for vehicles equipped with full-time power brakes.

DINGHY BRAKING SYSTEMS

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 package 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 some 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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