

## SPRING TIME CHECK LIST



### The Road Lights

Depending on your electrics on your caravan, you may have a 13 pin connector or 2 7 pin connectors that attach to your towing car. Most problems with caravan road lights are caused by a bad earth in the plug connecting to the car. The first thing to do is a visual check of the plug.



#### Check the Plug

Inspect the plug for cracks in the housing and pins that are not broken or corroded. If the pins are corroded, use some switch cleaner and an old toothbrush to clean the contacts. If the plug is broken replace the plug with a new one. If your unsure on the wiring, consult a caravan dealer or auto electrician.



#### Check the bulbs

Connect the caravan to the car and get someone to help you check each light is working. Remember to put all the side lights on, the fog lights, the hazards and if possible the reversing light. Check to ensure you have no flickering. If you do it's a sign of a bad earth connection from the car.



#### Lenses and Markers

Go round your 'van and check for cracks and missing screws in lenses and marker lights.



#### Spare bulbs & fuses

Make sure you have a good set of spare bulbs for all your road lights in-case you encounter a failure when touring. Check that they are all in good order. Also ensure you carry some spare fuses for the caravan, these are usually the blade style as found in a car.



### The Gas

Caravan gas systems should be checked yearly by a qualified engineer as part of your regular service schedule. You can ensure that everything is still operating well and that it remains safe. If you find any issues. Stop immediately and contact your local dealer.



#### Check the hose & regulator

When preparing for the season you should also check the rubber hose in your gas bottle box for splits or cracks and change it every 3 years regardless of condition as they degrade over time.



#### Check the supply

Connect a gas bottle and ensure and check to ensure your gas supply is working by lighting the oven, the hob and if possible your internal fire.



#### Smoke Alarm

Now is also a good time to replace the battery in the smoke alarm and Carbon Monoxide detector. Do this regardless of age !



#### Fire blanket & Fire Extinguisher

This is also the time you should check that if you have a fire blanket and fire extinguisher, they are still in date and in good working order.

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## The Battery

When the caravan was put away at the end of the season, you may have removed your leisure battery, attached a trickle charger or, like us left it all connected with a solar panel attached to maintain the charge in the battery. We leave ours connected to allow the caravan alarm and tracker to remain active while sat in storage. But, your battery will need some simple checks to ensure it is functioning correctly.



### Clean the contacts

Clean the caravan leads and battery terminals with contact cleaner and a small wire brush. Remove grey powder from the terminal posts and ensure the battery terminals are bright and shiny. You can apply some petroleum jelly to the contacts to reduce the risk of corrosion.



### Reconnect the battery

Be sure to get the connections the right way round ! and don't over tighten the clamps when reconnecting.



### Check the voltage

With the battery disconnected from the caravan for at least 2 hours, check the voltage. If the voltage is 12.0v or below it is discharged and will need recharging. Use a dedicated battery charger and not the inbuilt caravan battery charger. If the battery is 12.4v it is 50% charged, at 12.8v or above the battery is fully charged.



### Test the system

Ensuring the Electric Hook up is disconnected, Check the system by switching on the lights, and running the water pump.

### If your battery won't hold a charge

If your battery has been allowed to go completely flat and will not hold a charge at all and will need replacing. Consult your caravan dealer for advice on a leisure battery replacement.



## The Water

When we leave any campsite we ensure the hot water drain tap is left open. We also ensure the taps are open set to the neutral position. This will prevent any frost damage to the delicate pipework, hot water tank and taps. But at the beginning of the season you should follow the following points.



### Test the system

Close the drain down tap, Close the taps in the caravan, don't forget the shower !. Fill your Aqualor and run the system through. Visually check for leaks. We fill the hot water tank, but don't actually run the water heater. Its also a good idea to run some tank cleaner down the plug holes, to ensure waster water pipes are also clean.



### Sterilise the system

Drain the water from the on board tanks, pipes and refill with a solution of Puriclean. Leave this to work for a few hours before flushing the system with fresh water. You may need to flush the system through a couple of times to remove the taste.



### Change the filter

Remove the old water filter and replace with a fresh one. This should last you through the season. On average we change ours at the beginning of each year.

If you do discover a leak, switch off the pump immediately, drain the system and mop up any spillage as much as you can. Consult your local dealer.

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## The Hitch, Brakes & Steadies.

Hopefully when you parked up last time you did cover the hitch. For long periods of standing still it may also be wise to chock the wheels and release the handbrake to prevent the possibility of brakes seizing on.



### Visual check of the hitch

Remove the hitch cover and visually check everything is clean and dry.



### Break away cable

Check the break away cable is in good order. Pay attention to the connectors and ensure no frayed wire exists at any point along the breakaway cable.



### Check the hitch & Stabiliser

Make sure the hitch is still in good order. Many hitches these days have stabiliser friction pads that need to remain grease & moisture free. You can feel the friction pads using a clean cloth inside the hitch. Check that no residue is on the pads and that they are in good order.



### Corner steadies

Pull up all the corner steadies ensuring they all move freely and wind correctly. Don't use a drill – use a manual winder, so you can feel how stiff they are.



### Jockey wheel

Check the jockey wheel raises and lowers correctly and is not stiff or seized.



### Brakes

Finally check the handbrake releases the brakes from the caravan and the van will move freely.

### A final thought

If the 'van has been stationary for some time, it might be worthwhile taking the caravan for a service. To ensure the running gear of the caravan is all in good order.



## The Tyres

When parked up for the winter you have the option to remove the road wheels to store them and keep them out of sunlight. You can fit Winter Wheels for added security, or covers to reduce UV damage. Before refitting check the tyre tread and condition.



### Check Tyre age.

Using the date code on each tyre, ensure the tyres are under 5 years of age. If they are older than 5 years old, replace without question. On the sidewall look for **DOT** and 4 numbers. The numbers represent the week and year of manufacture. So 1214 will be Week 12 of 2014



### Check Tread Depth

Check the tread depth is at least 1.6mm across the central 75% of the section all round the tyre.



### Splits and Cracks

Check side walls and treads for splits and cracks. Remember to check between the treads.



### Wheel nuts

Using a Torque wrench, Check each nut for correct torque, remember to tighten the nuts in a cross pattern. Consult your caravan handbook for correct Torque settings or contact a local dealer for advice.



### Check Tyre Pressures

Check the pressures when the tyres are cold, use a small digital pressure gauge and inflate if needed.