

Trailer Weights

There has always been confusion when it comes to trailer weights. The data plate on the outside of the trailer gives you the Gross Vehicle Weight Rating or (GVWR). This is not the actual weight of the trailer; it is the maximum amount of weight the trailer can weigh when fully loaded. Basically it is the most weight the trailers axles, brakes, tires and other components can support. The trailer might weigh 5,000 pounds, but the GVWR might be 7,000 pounds. You never want to tow a trailer that exceeds the GVWR. The components on the trailer are not designed to exceed the GVWR and it can be extremely dangerous.

Any manufacturer that is a member of the Recreation Vehicle Industry Association (RVIA) is required to have a weight rating label inside the trailer that will give you additional weight information. Look for it on the back of a cabinet or closet door. It will provide information on the Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR), the Unloaded Vehicle Weight (UVW) or Dry Weight (DW), the weight of the fresh water tank and LP gas when full, and the Cargo Carrying Capacity (CCC) for the trailer.

The UVW is the actual weight of the trailer as manufactured at the factory. You also want to find out if this weight includes options on the trailer. When a dealer orders a trailer they list the options they want on it. These options include, but are not limited to, the roof air conditioner, awnings, stabilizer jacks, and a spare tire. You can see how quickly weight can add up on the trailer.

Be careful when you look at the weights in the manufacturers brochures. In many cases these weights are for the base model trailer without options, and depending on what they consider to be options the weight can change drastically. It is not uncommon to see a brochure weight of 5,000 pounds, but the actual weight of the trailer is 5,700 pounds or more. 700 pounds can make a big difference when your tow vehicle is on the border of its maximum tow rating.

Happy Camping,

Mark J. Polk

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