

Outdoorsy

Host handbook.

Make adventure your business.



Helpful tips



Spring 2023

01

Welcome to Outdoorsy

About Outdoorsy
Communicating with us

02

How Outdoorsy Works

Our process
How you make money
Setting up your taxes

03

Outdoorsy Insurance

Overview of protection packages
Roamly personal insurance
What is/isn't covered?
Our claims process

04

Attracting Guests

Listing best practices
Outdoorsy's algorithm
Marketing your RV

05

Your First Guest

Vetting your guests
Getting your RV guest-ready
Key exchange

06

Trouble on the Road

Handling upset guests
Who to contact should issues arise
De-escalation tips

07

When Your Guest Returns

Guest arrival checklist
Follow-up with guests on their experience

08

Host Best Practices

How to deliver a great experience
RV maintenance

09

Host Resources

Links to important docs
Link to Outdoorsy Host Community
Link to FAQs/Blog
Build your rig manual

01

Welcome to Outdoorsy.



About Outdoorsy

Lots of folks own RVs. Lots of folks want to rent RVs. Outdoorsy is how they meet in a way that creates trust and assurance while also providing a community support structure for hosts as they become entrepreneurs.

We believe everyone should have the access, choice, and opportunity to get outdoors. We know that 17 million RVs in North America sit unused for 350 days each year. And that's why we do what we do — because we know we can turn these unused RV days into magical memories for folks wanting to rent campers while creating financial benefits for hosts.

We don't own a fleet of identical, anonymous RVs that have seen millions of miles. We are a peer-to-peer marketplace because we want the RVs on our platform to reflect the uniqueness of their hosts.

Read on to learn more about the joy, income, and memories that can be made with your RV.

Communicating with us

One of your best tools to get ongoing help and expert advice for your RV rental business is the [Outdoorsy RV host community on facebook](#). This is a friendly place where hosts of all experience levels meet to share advice, ask questions, and get support. We also offer a [free live webinar series](#) to help you make the most of your hosting tools, improve the guest experience, market your listing, and more.

Our [help page](#) is loaded with all the FAQs, important forms, and other particulars you'll need as you build your RV rental business. This resource page is your best point of reference for answers to commonly asked questions and to find important documents.

Once you sign up as an host on Outdoorsy, you'll also start receiving periodic emails from us to keep you up to date on important information for hosts.

These emails can include spotlights on other hosts, tips for success when renting out your RV, and important news from our company.

Lastly, our [customer support team](#) is here to serve you when you need them. You can call 1 (877) 723-7232, email support@outdoorsy.com, or connect via our live chat feature located on the bottom right of outdoorsy.com.

Quick tip

Generally speaking, calling us or using the chat feature is best for immediate needs like when you have an issue with an active rental. Emailing us is best used for less urgent matters such as a feature request or if you need to make a change to a future booking.



02

How Outdoorsy works.



Lots of folks own RVs. Lots of folks want to rent RVs. Outdoorsy is how they meet.

When you put your RV up for rent with us, you'll have our trusted team behind you. We carefully screen guests on our platform, offer up to \$1 million in liability insurance coverage for your RV during the rental period, and give your guests peace of mind with our free roadside assistance.

We like to think of ourselves as the best matchmakers on the planet for outdoor-loving people.

As an Outdoorsy host, you'll be a vital part of our mission to share the love of RVing with the world. Whether you plan to rent out one camper or one-hundred, you will essentially be starting your very own small business.

Don't let that scare you though — being an entrepreneur can give you a great deal of freedom, flexibility, and joy. To achieve that level of joy, you will want to ask yourself a few questions on the front end to decide the sort of business you want:

What type of business experience do you have?

It's perfectly okay to list your RV on Outdoorsy if you don't have prior business experience, but — if you haven't tried your hand at business before — it's probably best to start by renting out just one camper and grow from there.

What level of profit are you expecting? Do you just want to help pay for your family RV? Or maybe you want to build the next RV rental empire? These questions will help you determine the budget you need for your business and skills you need to learn. Ultimately, how you respond will help keep you pointed in the direction you want your business to go.

What kind of experience do you want to create for guests?

Hosts on the Outdoorsy platform offer an array of rigs — from ultra-lux RVs to pop-up campers perfect for a family getaway. The beauty of Outdoorsy's platform is that we have a diverse community of guests looking for all sorts of RVs.

Many of our hosts also go above and beyond to create experiences for their guests. These include things like: sharing info about local attractions, offering advice on the best campgrounds in your area, providing great coffee, or stocking your camper with s'more making supplies.

Whether you're offering a pop-up camper or a luxury motorhome, the tips above are simple ways to level up the camping experience for your guests no matter your budget. When you create these magical moments for your customers, you'll reap the benefits in more positive reviews and possibly even more bookings.



As you grow your business, it will pay dividends to learn from other RV rental entrepreneurs. One of the best ways to do this is by joining [Outdoorsy's RV host community](#).



Our rental process

The first thing you should know is that it's totally free to list your RV on the Outdoorsy platform. We only get paid when you do.

Here's how that shakes down:

1

You create a [free listing](#) on Outdoorsy to share your wonderful rig with the world.

2

Our crew then takes on the legwork of promoting the RV you're offering for rent. We have world-class teammates who know how to rock things like SEO, content marketing, and paid search to help the right guests find your listing.

3

You get your first booking. We keep a percentage to help cover the cost of a variety of trust and safety measures, including guest identity verification, as well as reservation processing, marketing, and more. You keep the rest.

What is Outdoorsy's fee structure?

- You'll pay a host fee on each rental. This fee allows us to maintain and operate a safe, high-quality platform that protects you, your vehicle, and your guests. That includes costs related to guest identity verification, reservation screening, other trust and safety measures, and marketing your listing to drive bookings.
- You have the freedom to charge extra fees for things like campsite delivery, airport pickup, black tank dumping, and generator usage. You can also offer add-ons for guests to purchase. These are things that might enhance their trip, such as camping chairs, bikes, or kayaks.
- Your guest will pay a security deposit to protect you in case your RV gets damaged. If you need to make an interior damage claim, we subtract a 2.95% payment processing fee from the total claimed amount. However, you can easily pass this processing fee on to the guest by increasing your security deposit or adding a processing fee to your listing.
- Guests pay a service fee between 5% and 20% of the booking subtotal. Service fees will vary with a number of factors, including but not limited to the length of trip, time of year, availability, and the insurance offering. Outdoorsy at times will adjust the rates and offer discounts to this fee to drive bookings.

How and when do I get paid?

We'll automatically deposit your money into your bank account 48 hours after your guest picks up the RV. Don't worry, we use banking-level secure online payments to keep everyone's info safe. Just a heads up that it usually takes 3-5 business days for banks to post payments to your account.

Important

Promo codes and discounts given out by Outdoorsy always come out of Outdoorsy's fees and do not impact your payouts.

How to set up your taxes

Navigating state, local, and federal taxes with your RV rental might seem like a complicated web, but it doesn't have to be.

Note

We strongly encourage our hosts to consult a tax professional to properly track taxes. Because your camper rental is a small business, you will likely be able to write off expenses to increase profits — a tax professional will help you comply with the law and get tax benefits you might not otherwise know about.

Here are the tax basics you'll want to know:

How do I handle the income I earn through my camper rental?

Uncle Sam will want his slice of your rental income just like he does with any other money you make.

We always recommend that you consult with a tax adviser. Doing so, you may determine you are able to file using tax software. Your earnings are visible in the Host Dashboard, so you can track your rental income on a regular basis.

Will Outdoorsy send me a tax form?

You'll get a 1099-K for the 2022 tax year if you received more than \$20,000 in reportable payments and had 200+ bookings. You'll also get a 1099-K if Outdoorsy withheld taxes from your payouts at any point in the tax year.

To be sure you don't experience tax withholding, log in to Outdoorsy and complete your W-9 in your account section. Tax withholding is actually a risk. You may not get credit for the tax payments since they go to the IRS without your tax information.

We're watching for any changes in IRS policy for the 2023 tax year, which could lower the above thresholds for receiving a 1099-K to \$600 in reportable payments.

Do I need to collect sales tax from my guests?

Transactional taxes vary widely by state and locality. As a service to hosts, Outdoorsy will collect and remit these taxes for you in most states. To see whether Outdoorsy is collecting and remitting a specific tax, check our [updated list](#). If that is the case, you will see that there is no option to add sales tax rates to your listing. In other jurisdictions, Outdoorsy is unable to collect and remit on your behalf and you will see the option to add a transaction tax rate to your rental.

In any case, even if Outdoorsy is collecting some taxes in a state, there may be additional transactional taxes for which you are liable. You should consult with a tax adviser to understand these tax liabilities.

03

Outdoorsy insurance.



Peace of mind with coverage you can count on

We get that renting out your RV can be both an exciting and scary decision — that's why we go above and beyond to give you the maximum peace of mind when you share your RV with the world.

From our \$1 million liability policy to our comprehensive collision coverage, we've revolutionized insurance options to keep you covered when you rent out your RV with Outdoorsy.

But first, let's chat security deposits...

As with your personal insurance, the insurance we offer has deductibles — amounts that need to be paid before insurance will kick in. Your guest will always be responsible for the deductible.

It's also important to provide additional protection for your business by charging a security deposit to folks who rent from you. You'll set this up when you first list your RV, and you can change the amount at any time in your Host Dashboard. Two days before a trip starts, we'll place a hold on the guest's payment method equal to your security deposit amount. We'll release the hold within 7 days of the trip's completion, unless you file a claim. If you file a claim, we'll hold the security deposit for up to 30 days.

The security deposit will cover you in smaller instances such as times when your guest goes over in mileage, causes minimal damage, or leaves your RV especially messy. Don't worry, this rarely happens with our guests, but it always pays to be prepared!

If you do need to draw on the security deposit, you'll want to jump into your Host Dashboard, click into the reservation you're making the claim on, and

then click "Collect Fees". Once there, be sure to check that box that says "Will you be filing a claim as well?" This will hold \$\$\$\$." Checking the box to indicate you'll be filing a claim will hold the security deposit for up to 30 days while the claim is being investigated.

If you don't do anything, the security deposit money will automatically be returned to your guest in 7 days.

Please note

If you have a claim for damage to your RV, Outdoorsy's claims team will manage the deposit on your behalf as part of their concierge claims service. Simply click "File a claim" on the booking details and we'll take it from there!

We recommend you charge a security deposit between \$500-1,500. While a higher security deposit offers you more protection, remember that it can also drive customers away. That's why it's important to balance the cost of your security deposit with the value of your rig while still staying competitive.

Overview of packages

We offer three levels of insurance protection so that folks renting from you can pick the best level of protection for their needs. No matter which level of insurance your guest chooses, we work hard to make sure the guest is the one paying for any deductibles or expenses due to damage they caused. You won't be responsible for any deductible in the event of covered loss.

This doesn't happen often, but we've got to be prepared! **Here are the packages your guests can choose from:**

→ Essential

The Essential package helps your guests hit the road with core protection at our best price. This package includes the following coverages:

- Liability covered to the minimum required by your state
- Up to \$300,000 in physical damage protection
- 24/7 customer support for your guest
- Roadside Assistance
- [Windshield Coverage](#)
- Deductibles: \$1,500 per loss
- Concierge services

→ Preferred

Our most popular package offers the best mix of value and protection. This package includes all of the coverage in our Essential package, plus what's listed below:

- Mobile Mechanic
- Deductibles: \$1,000 per loss

→ Peace of Mind

This is our most comprehensive coverage with the lowest deductibles. This package includes all of the coverage in our Preferred package, plus what's listed below:

- Liability up to \$500,000
- Accident Interruption
- Deductibles: \$500 per loss
- RV Technical Assistance Hotline

→ Stationary Delivery

Many of our hosts opt to deliver their RV to guests within a certain radius from home. If you offer to deliver your RV to our guests, this affordable insurance option may make the most sense for them. This package includes the following coverages:

- Liability covered to the minimum required by the state where the accident occurs
- Up to \$300,000 in physical damage protection
- 24/7 customer support for your guest
- RV Technical Assistance Hotline
- [Windshield Coverage](#)
- Deductibles: \$500 per loss



Important

Moving a stationary-only rental voids the insurance

Liability insurance coverage

All the insurance packages above include liability protection. In fact, all qualifying vehicles you list on Outdoorsy are eligible for [this industry-leading coverage](#) of up to \$1 million. This is offered to you at no cost and there is no monthly fee.

Please note that to remain eligible for this coverage you'll need to have records proving [you've completed safety inspections of your RV every 90 days](#).

Our liability policy is designed to give you maximum peace of mind in the unlikely event that your guest damages another vehicle. That said, it is **critical** to note that this policy in no way replaces your personal insurance policy. In fact, all insurance offered through Outdoorsy will cover you and your guests **only** for the rental period. That's why you must also have personal insurance in place for all your RVs on Outdoorsy.

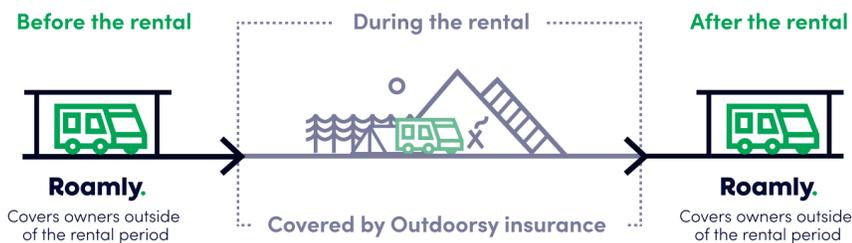
Roamly personal insurance

Outdoorsy's included insurance will cover you only during a rental period booked through our platform. For all other times, you will need personal RV coverage for your camper.

Unfortunately, many standard RV insurance policies have fine print that voids coverage if you ever rent out your camper. This means that even if your RV were damaged during your personal vacation, your insurance company may deny that claim if they discover that your RV is listed for rent.

To solve this problem, you should check out [Roamly](#). Roamly is our preferred insurance company offering personal RV insurance policies that do not prohibit you from renting out your RV. Roamly has competitively priced policies in most states.

No matter which personal RV policy you choose, please read the fine print to make sure you can rent out your RV without voiding the policy for personal use of your RV.



What is and isn't covered by Outdoorsy's insurance

We get that your RV is an expensive asset — that's why we've gone to great lengths to help revolutionize the RV insurance industry with the coverages we offer.

Generally speaking, as long as you have a verified listing on the Outdoorsy platform, book your rental through Outdoorsy, inspect your RV for safety every 90 days, hand your RV keys to the verified driver on the reservation, and take pre and post trip photos, our coverage will extend to you.

This coverage is included with our rentals and gives you peace of mind with up to \$1 million in liability protection and up to \$300,000 in physical damage protection. In addition to this, interior damage coverage can also be purchased by the guest at checkout.

That said, there are some particulars you should know:

Vehicles that are covered

The easiest way to make sure your RV will be covered is to simply list it on Outdoorsy and apply for vehicle protection as part of the process. If your camper is approved, it qualifies to be covered by our insurance.

Excitingly, Outdoorsy is the only major RV rental platform that covers vehicles older than 15 years for both Physical Damage and Liability.

Vehicles that are NOT covered

Vehicles in NY are covered for stationary rentals on motorized rigs. Trailers now qualify for standard insurance packages.

Vehicles that do not consistently meet safety verification standards will not qualify for continued coverage by Outdoorsy.

Your camper's tow vehicle is not covered by Outdoorsy's insurance unless it has been listed on Outdoorsy and is rented at the same time with your camper.





Claims Requirements

Outdoorsy's insurance coverage is episodic – meaning that it will only cover you for losses that occur during the rental period. The rental period extends from the time you hand the keys to your guest on the start date of the booking to the time your guest gives you the keys back on the final date of the booking.

It is therefore vital that you take pre and post-trip photos of your rig within 24 hours of departure and within 48 hours of return because you need to be able to prove that damage occurred during the rental period to make a valid insurance claim. We also require claims to be filed within 48 hours of the booking ending.

Photos required to be captured pre and post-trip include:

Exterior photos: Front / Back / 2 side views

Interior photos: Dashboard / Tank levels / Odometer / Beds / Baths / Seating

Note

We've done our best in the paragraphs above to shake out the most important info about our insurance coverage. We also strongly encourage you to read [this article](#) to get the full skinny on our Physical Damage Coverage.

Windshield Coverage

Small flying rocks are a part of road-life, making these pesky pebbles the bane of RV windshields everywhere. That's why we include [Windshield Coverage](#) with all insurance packages.

This zero-deductible coverage will fix minor chips on your windshield that don't require replacement. For example, should a renegade rock chip your windshield during the rental period, this coverage will repair it with zero out of pocket costs.

But remember, Windshield Coverage only extends over the rental period. It won't cover things like cracks that have been neglected over several trips, dry or cracked window seals due to age, or peeling tint on the windshield. Also, if the damage is severe enough to require windshield replacement, that damage would be reviewed for coverage and subject to a deductible.

Accident Interruption Protection

Few things are worse than an RV vacation that gets cut short by an accident. That's why we include Accident Interruption Protection when your guest selects our Peace of Mind insurance coverage.

With Accident Interruption Protection, Outdoorsy will directly refund your guest for any days in the rental period they are unable to use due to the accident. This allows your guest to get back to enjoying their vacation without you having to bear the cost of a refund.

Note

This coverage applies only to covered accidents – it does not extend to mechanical breakdowns.



How to make an insurance claim with Outdoorsy

In the unlikely event that your RV is damaged during the rental period, we're going to be right there with you to get your camper fixed up ASAP.

Our dedicated claims team is here to help you get back on the road as fast as possible. [This guide](#) will walk you through the claims filing process. Once you file your claim, our team will leap into action to get you rolling again.

What is a supplement and how is it filed?

Once you've made your initial insurance claim, our folks will make a preliminary appraisal of the repair cost. Sometimes the actual costs exceed this preliminary estimate due to things like freight charges for a part or other damages found during the repair.

If this happens, you'll just want to be sure to file a supplement to seek approval for the increased cost. Supplements are reviewed by our licensed appraisal team and you or your repair shop can file a supplement [right here](#).

04

Attracting guests.



Now that you've got all your ducks in a row with your RV listing on Outdoorsy, it's time to start attracting guests who want to enjoy your rig.

There are lots of ingredients that go into attracting guests — things like time of year, the region your camper lives in, and the type of camper you're renting out are some factors that can impact the number of booking requests you'll receive.

And there are other aspects impacting guest attraction that you have more control over — these are things like the quality of your listing photos, the story you tell about the experience you offer, and the strategies you employ to deliver great customer service.

Listing Best Practices

1. Take great photos — When a prospective guest is looking at RVs in their area, the first thing their eyes will likely be drawn to are photos. No matter the style of RV you have, there are strategies you can use to get the best pictures possible. Including 15-20 photos is ideal to help sell guests on your rig.

For example, photos of you and the family enjoying your RV and photos highlighting amenities you offer (e.g. coffee, bikes, comfy chairs, etc.) are the types of pictures that'll help your guest build an emotional attachment to your RV.

2. Craft a killer headline — When guests are searching for an RV, you'll have just a few seconds to capture their attention. That's why a compelling headline is as critical as your cover photo. Rather than simply writing the type of rig as your headline, think of ways you can make yourself stand out:

Many of our hosts tie popular events into their headline — e.g. "Luxury RV Ready to Camp at Bonnaroo".

Other hosts highlight unique features of their rigs — e.g. "Solar-Powered Off-Road Adventure Van". And some hosts even name their RVs to add an extra bit of character to their headline — e.g. "Jonathan Trailer Thomas".

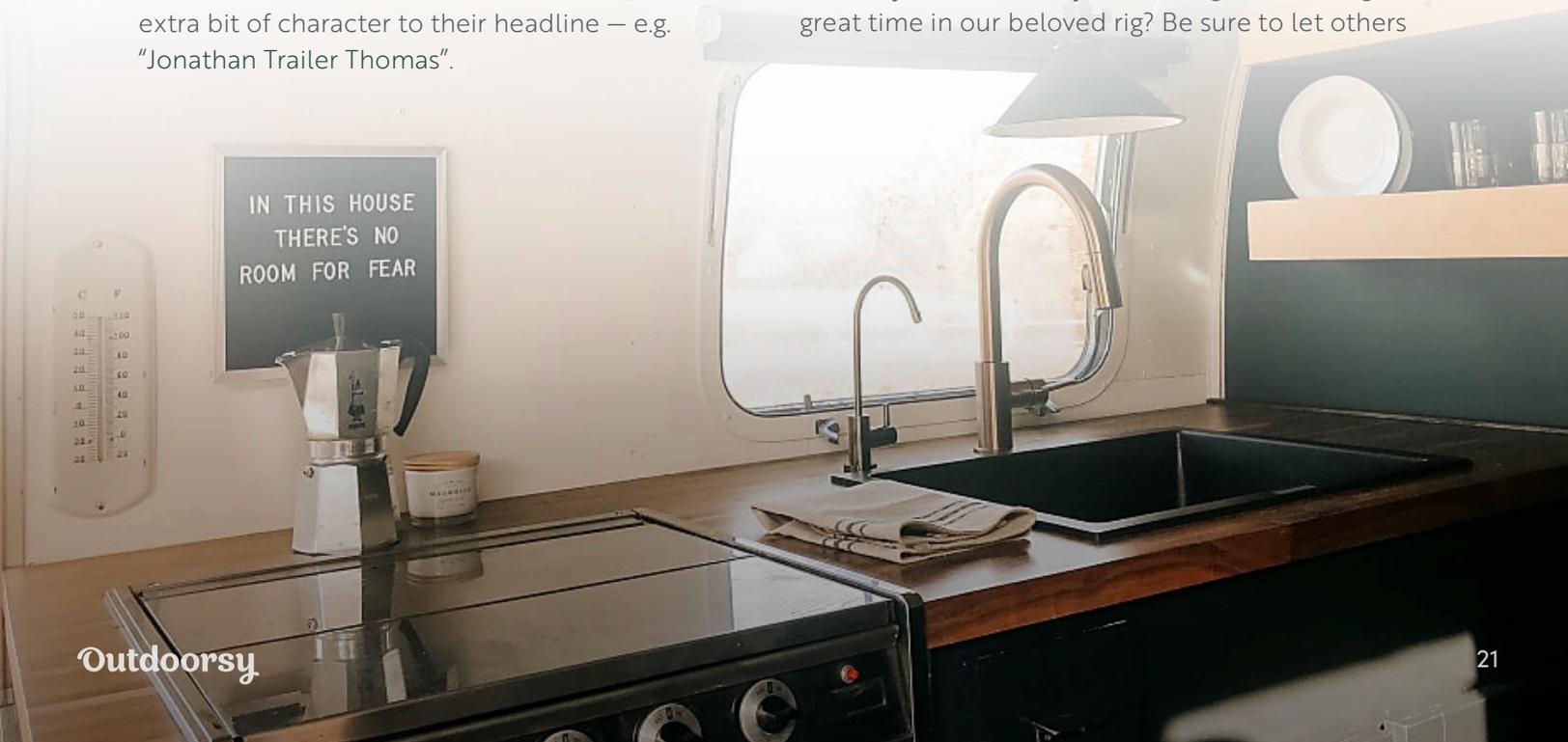
3. Write an awesome listing description — Put yourself in the shoes of a potential guest to answer all the questions you think they might have: How many people can your rig sleep? Do you include linens? Is there a bathroom inside your RV? How easy is it for a newbie to drive or tow your camper? How long will water and power generally last when dry camping?

4. Respond quickly and kindly — You have 24 hours to accept, decline, or respond to a booking request before it expires.

You also won't ever get penalized for declining a reservation request — but be sure to send feedback promptly to the guest if you can't accommodate them.

5. Ask for reviews — Few things will make your listing stand out more than a bunch of stellar reviews from real-life people who have enjoyed your camper. We work hard to make sure everyone that rents from you leaves a review, and you can fuel that fire too.

For example, you can put physical reminders around your RV that say something like: "Having a great time in our beloved rig? Be sure to let others



know by leaving us a review!" You also should make sure that your guests feel welcome to reach out to you if they need anything. You could even offer a friends and family discount to folks who know you in exchange for leaving an honest review. And on the topic of reviews, it's a great idea to be respond to ALL guest reviews — the good, the bad, and the ugly. In doing so, you exhibit a sense of professionalism and trust that future guests will value.

6. Favorites and social sharing — Every time a prospective guest "favorites" your rig, your listing gets boosted. This means that even if that guest doesn't ultimately book your rig, they'll help attract more guests just by "favoriting" your RV. By making

sure that your listing is always top-notch, you'll put yourself in the position for getting "favorited".

Social sharing will also help boost your listing, so be sure to share the link to your listing with all your personal networks. Additionally, you could connect with Facebook pages for events in your area to share your camper listing as an option for attendees

Note

For even more tips and tricks, sign up for our [free live webinars](#).

The nitty-gritty of listing photos

Great photos are such an important part of your listing that we wanted to take some extra time here to shake out all the particulars of great RV photo taking:

What size should your photos be?

An image 900px wide x 600px high is the largest image we'll allow to be uploaded to your listing. Images larger than this will be automatically cropped to fit. We've also built a photo editor into your Host Dashboard that'll allow you to manually adjust your photos for the perfect fit.

What props should I include in my photos?

If your listing photos make your RV look empty, guests will have a hard time visualizing themselves in your camper.

That's why there are certain props you should include in your listing photos:

- **Set the table** — If you stage your dining table for your photoshoot, it'll help folks imagine sitting down to a nice dinner. Be sure to include wine glasses and coffee mugs because people love using both while camping!
- **Food** — We all love food, especially food that can be enjoyed around a campfire. You could stage a s'more buffet for one of your photos, take a shot of one of the kids enjoying popcorn in front of the TV, or show off some fresh baked bread in your RV oven.
- **Blankets** — Along with giving your RV a warm and cozy feel, blankets can double as throws over couches and chairs to give your RV listing photos that extra sizzle
- **Plants** — Fake plants have come a long way over the years. It's now possible to pretty up your RV with man-made plants that will make your guests feel nice and cozy. Snag a few that fit your rig and stage them for your photoshoot — just be sure to secure them before your camper hits the road!
- **Books** — Who doesn't want to soak up a great book during a vacation? By craftily staging a few books in your RV photos, you'll help your guest feel relaxed long before you hand off the keys.
- **Campfire set up** — No RV photo shoot is complete without staging a shot around a campfire. Bust out any camping chairs, tables, and outdoor utensils you include with your RV rental and use them to create the ideal shot around the campfire.

Note

Make sure to indicate what items are and are not included in the rental in the listing description when you stage your listing photos.

What types of photos make your rig irresistibly rentable?

There are certain shots that no listing should be without:

- 1. The "environment shot"** — This is a photo you take outside showcasing your whole rig from end to end. The idea here is to show off your RV in a beautiful outdoor setting near you.
- 2. The John and the galley** — You need to snap photos of utilitarian areas of your RV, so be sure that the bathroom and kitchen make the cut.
- 3. Personalized amenities** — Be sure to include photos of special touches you provide such as fresh coffee or s'more making supplies.
- 4. The driver's seat** — If you're offering a motorized camper, highlight a pic of the throne where your guest will be spending a good chunk of their time.
- 5. The glamping shot** — Show your camper in action with a real-life pic from a campspot where you and the family are enjoying stories around the fire ring.
- 6. The bedroom** — Be sure any included bedding is neatly made and take a shot that shows guests how cozy they'll be in the great outdoors.
- 7. Interior from the corner** — By taking an interior shot from one corner of your rig, you'll be able to capture almost the whole length of the RV and its amenities.
- 8. Dining room table** — Mealtime is where many a camping memory will be created. Be sure you take the time to get a great shot of this gathering place.

How do I take amazing RV photos with my smartphone?

Smartphone cameras have evolved so much that in most cases, your phone is all you'll need to take great RV photos. Check out [this recorded Zoom webinar](#) to learn more — it starts around the 3-minute mark.

Listing video tours

Creating a video tour of your RV might seem like a scary proposition, but even a short walkthrough of your camper can work wonders to make your listing pop. Remember that your goal is to cause a prospective guest to imagine themselves in your RV — what better way than [bringing them with you on a virtual tour](#)?

Note

Make sure to upload your video tour to Vimeo or YouTube and put a link to the video in your listing description so that prospective guests can see it.

Outdoorsy's algorithm

What is an algorithm and how does it work?

Our algorithm is like a friendly little robot working behind the scenes at Outdoorsy to help our guests find the exact RV they're searching for.

By understanding how to play nice with our algorithm, you'll help get your RV listing to the top of our search results. Here are a few things that can help you pop to the top of the search:

1. Respond to guest requests within 24 hours.
2. Provide guests with a stellar experience and ask them to leave a rating AND review.
3. Include plenty of high quality photos of your RV in your listing. Both quality and quantity matter here!
4. Personalize your profile with a picture of yourself and a description of you and your business.



Marketing your RV

Whether you plan to only rent out your personal rig or build an RV rental empire, you'll want to take steps to help your camper get noticed over the noise. The good news is, we do a bunch of the heavy lifting for you by helping with things like SEO, paid search, and content marketing.

You can take things a step further by adopting a marketing mindset when it comes to your rig. For example, you can offer discounts at certain times of the year, promote your RV to family and friends, and tag social media posts about your RV with #Outdoorsy and @Outdoorsy. We love to share your stuff on social!

We also find that our most successful hosts are the ones that look for fun ways to boost interest in their listing. Take Outdoorsy host Marc Ferguson as an example — frustrated by the slow start of his rental business, he found that offering amenities like generator rental, bikes, and a delivery option helped him increase bookings.

Marketing your RV: Reviews

The last time you booked a room or grabbed a bite in a new town, you likely depended on reviews from other people sharing their experience at that restaurant. In the same way that you depended on those reviews, guests will depend on the reviews they see for your rig.

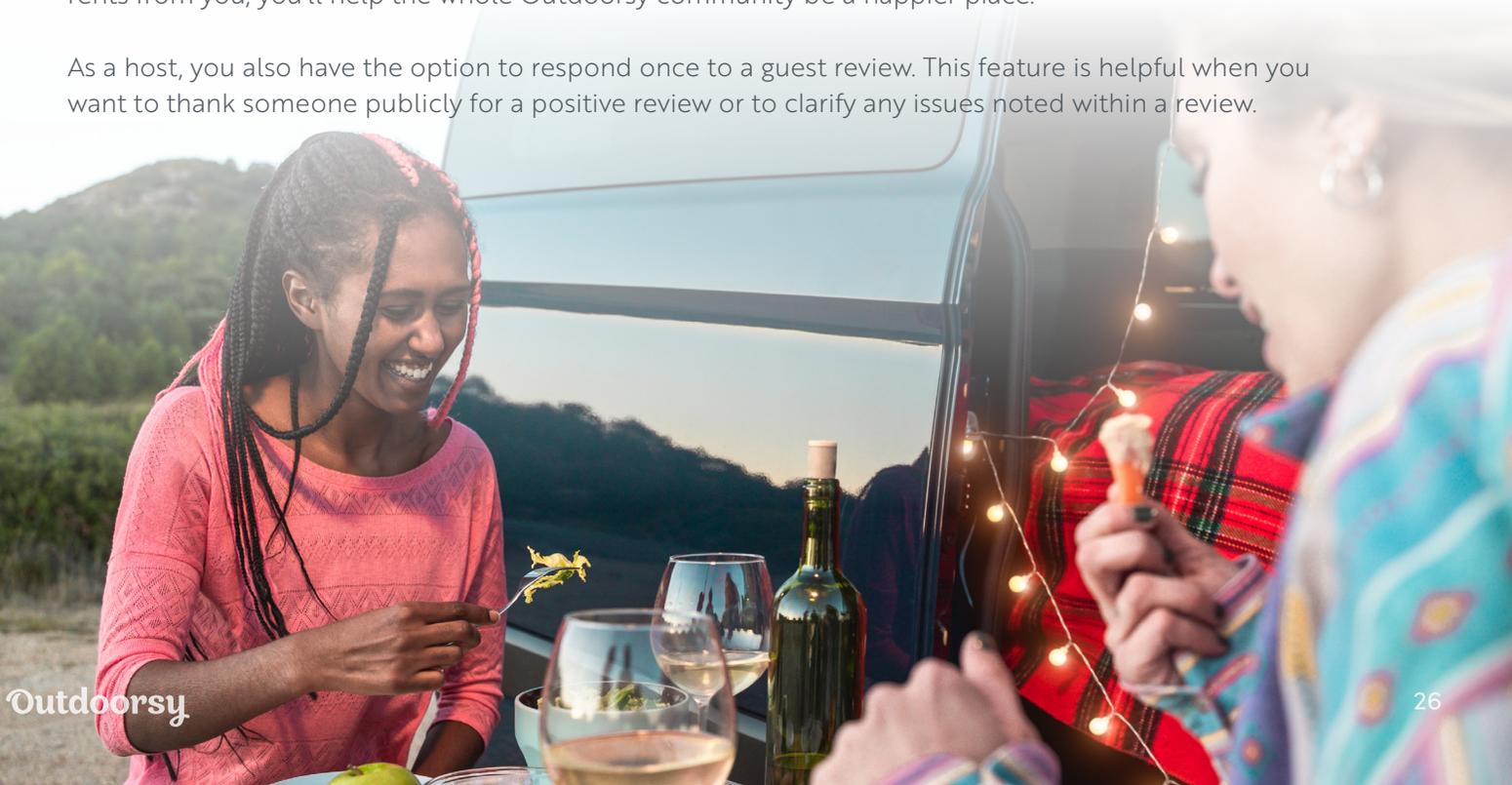
That's why it's so important for you to have a proactive strategy to get positive reviews. [Here are the top tips from hosts we've chatted with:](#)

- Start strong — a popular way to get reviews rolling early is to offer a big discount for friends and family in exchange for a positive review.
- Always let your guests know you're available to them and that you want to ensure they have an exceptional experience.
- Be transparent about restrictions, penalties and fees your guest might incur.
- Offer RVing tips, sweet secret spots, and campsite or experience recommendations for your area.
- Provide the essentials like towels, utensils, and coffee.
- Offer extra amenities such as kayaks, delivery or airport pick up/drop off.
- Follow the [pre-arrival checklist](#) between each rental so your RV is consistently sparkling when people rent it.
- Ask! Don't be so shy that you won't ask for a 5-star review after your guest has an awesome rental. If you're nervous about asking, [this handy dandy guide](#) will show you how to smoothly inspire your guests to help spread love for your rig.
- [Create an RV guidebook](#) — they allow guests to access all the information they need about operating your rig.

What if I want to review a guest or respond to a guest's review?

You and your guest have 14 days after the rental ends to review each other. By reviewing everyone who rents from you, you'll help the whole Outdoorsy community be a happier place.

As a host, you also have the option to respond once to a guest review. This feature is helpful when you want to thank someone publicly for a positive review or to clarify any issues noted within a review.



05 Your first guest.

Confirming your first guest always brings a mix of excitement and anxiety. On the one hand, you're excited to start sharing your RV with the world and to start making extra cash.

But you're also anxious. You wonder things like:

Will your guest feel comfortable in your RV?

Will they drive it safely?

What if your guest has challenges with camper setup?

These are very normal questions to ask yourself when you get your first guest. It's understandable to be nervous, but with the right processes in place, you can create a great experience during your first rental and beyond.



Before your guest arrives

When someone rents your RV, they are likely feeling the same sort of excitement and anxiety as you. That's why it helps to build a relationship and offer support in advance. For example, you could [share instructional videos and photos of your RV](#), help your guests prepare their [packing list](#), post instructions inside your RV, and follow up with your guest one week ahead of their trip to answer any questions.

By building a relationship with your guest before you hand off the keys, you'll create a connection that'll keep things rolling smoothly during the rental period.

Pre-arrival checks

Think back to the last time you rented a hotel – you expected certain things like a clean bathroom, fluffed pillow, and fresh towels, right?

Hotels can offer this level of consistency because they have checklists that their crew follows to provide a consistent experience for guests. In much the same way, working through a [pre-arrival checklist](#) will help you feel confident before handing over the keys to your RV:

- Interior + Exterior Cleaning** – Your RV should sparkle inside and out so that it **wows** your guest as soon as they see it. Please also review [Outdoorsy's guidelines to sanitize your RV](#).
- Tires** – The #1 cause of accidents is tire failure. You should inspect tires before every rental. Check tire pressure, tire wear, and tread depth.

Be especially alert for signs of tire rot. Tires rot from the inside out, so any tire cracking you see on the outside is worse on the inside of the tire. Even if your tread depth looks good, your tires will still be due for replacement when they get old. Be mindful of the date listed on your tires and replace as indicated – no matter your tread depth.
- Routine Maintenance** – They say that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. That's why you must adhere to a [regular maintenance schedule](#) to rent your RV with Outdoorsy.
- Fluid check** – Double check all fluid levels in your RV before handing the keys to your guest.
- Signals check** – Check all lights and signals on your RV.
- Systems check** – Fire up the generator, test out the water pump, operate your slide-out, test all appliances, etc.
- Test drive** – You should regularly take your camper on the road in both city and highway conditions to listen and feel for anything amiss.
- Paperwork ready** – You'll find the Rental Agreement (which populates at booking), [Return Form](#), and [Departure Form](#) in your Host Dashboard. Be sure to print all these out before your guest arrives.

Make adequate time for key handoff – A rushed departure is a risky proposition when you hand your camper to a new guest. Be sure to avoid this by arranging ample time for a walkthrough, for questions, and for the paperwork.
- Consider a driving lesson** – It's never a bad plan to set aside some time to take your guest out for a short driving lesson if they need it. Even if your guest is an experienced RV driver, this time will give you the chance to show them the particulars of driving your rig.

Vetting guest requests

While you may be tempted to accept every rental request that comes through your Dashboard, it pays to do your homework before confirming a request. You will also never be penalized by Outdoorsy for declining a request.

Many of our guests are new to the world of RV travel so you'll want to have a process to prepare them to drive your rig. **Start by asking these questions of your guest:**

1. What are their plans? Where do they plan to tow/drive your RV?
2. What is their experience in an RV? Have they ever towed/driven a large vehicle before?
3. How many adults/children will be staying/traveling in the RV?
4. For trailers, what kind of tow vehicle and hitch do they have?
5. Do they have campsites already organized or do they need suggestions?
6. Are there full hookups at the campgrounds where they plan to camp?
7. Do they need any additional amenities or add-ons?
8. Once their booking is confirmed, have all drivers passed their Driver Verification check?

It is also important to get to know your guest before handing off the keys. For example, you can ask your guest about what sort of fun stuff they plan to do on their RV vacation. A question like this will help break the ice and will also help you decide how you need to educate your guest before the send-off.

Note

Knowing where your guest is going is important, as certain trips or events carry added risk. This is especially true for the Burning Man festival. Taking an Outdoorsy rental to Burning Man is actually a violation of our terms and conditions.



How to prep your RV for the key exchange

It bears repeating that your RV should be spotless inside and out before you make the key exchange. Scrub all surfaces, inspect for specks of dust, make the bathroom and kitchen shine, etc.

It is also very important to double-check that your RV is stocked with amenities you offer. For example, if you provide paper plates, napkins, and linens as part of your rental, confirm those are topped up. You should additionally make sure your RV has enough propane and freshwater for the rental period and that your black and grey tanks are empty.

Lastly, be sure that your [Outdoorsy quarterly maintenance](#) is up to date before each key handoff and take pre-trip photos within 24 hours of departure. This will keep your guests safe and is also required for you to be covered by [Outdoorsy's episodic insurance policy](#).

Create a manual for your RV

Our most successful hosts create a great handoff by offering a manual that is specific to operating their RV. Generally speaking, you'll want to create a digital version of your RV manual so that you can send it to your guest ahead of the key handoff. [Touchstay](#) is an easy to use tool for creating beautiful e-guides that can be sent to your guest.

Here are some simple steps to create a manual for your RV:

- 1. Include a personal introduction** – Guests love getting to know you and hearing your story. That's why it's a great idea to start your RV manual by sharing a bit about yourself.
- 2. Do a walkthrough yourself** – Carry a pen and paper with you while you walk around your RV to capture insights that are important for your guest to know.
- 3. Create a table of contents** – Think of this as an outline that'll help you write your guide.
- 4. Take photos** – You can likely reuse your listing photos to give your guests visual references to the instructions in your RV manual.



Prepping your guest for their trip

The day you've been waiting for has arrived — the rental period has begun and your guest has just shown up to enjoy your RV for a few days.

How can you make sure they have everything they need for a safe and enjoyable trip?

As with cleaning, the key for a stellar hand off of your RV is to have a [checklist](#) that you follow to cover all your bases before your guest rolls:

1. Do a damage walkthrough with your guest to agree on RV condition
2. Show your guest the basic operations of your RV
3. Teach your guest how to set up the RV when they make camp
4. Take a brief driving lesson around your area
5. Do a final condition check on things like tires to make sure your RV is ready
6. Explain to your guest their responsibilities and any fees that would be incurred if your guest fails to do things like return with a full tank of gas
7. Take readings of fuel level, mileage, and generator hours
8. Take pre-trip photos of your rig
9. [Use this form](#) to sign off and send off your RV

Apart from a checklist, there are some [personal touches](#) you should add to make sure your guest is feeling warm and fuzzy before getting on the road. For example, plan ample time for the key exchange so that no one feels rushed. You can also provide some water and snacks for your guest to enjoy as you show them your rig. Lastly, remember to have FUN! Your guests are about to embark on a very exciting adventure and you'll help them start off right with your positive vibes.





Your guest is on the road, now what?

Now that your guest has your rig on a road trip, you'll probably be asking yourself a couple of questions:

How often should I check in with my guests?

Generally speaking, you should say howdy to your guests within a day of their leaving and make sure everything is in tip-top shape. After that, it's important to give them their space.

During your key exchange, you assured your guests that you'd be available whenever they needed you, so trust that they'll reach out with any questions. It's important for your guests to feel they have their space while knowing you'll be there to help if they need you.

When should I worry about my guests?

It will be tempting to worry if you don't hear from your guests — especially during your first booking. Try to resist this temptation and trust your process. You followed your checklist, offered a thorough key exchange before the handoff, and made your guests feel comfortable reaching out.

You also did your homework to ensure that your guest is a trustworthy adventurer who will take good care of your camper. Trust these things. Trust that we at Outdoorsy will have your back. Trust that your guests are enjoying and resist the urge to worry.

These are the best ingredients to help everyone have a wonderful trip.

06

Trouble on the road.



We all hope it never happens, but in the rare instance that your guest runs into trouble on the road, you'll want to be prepared. These are the top tips from the most successful Outdoorsy hosts:

How to Prevent Angry Guests

The best way to handle an angry guest is to prevent them from getting angry in the first place. Here are the proactive steps our best hosts take to keep everyone cool:

- **Plan ample time for a key exchange** — Many of our hosts allot up to 90 minutes before the key handoff to show their guests around the rig. Be sure to also let your guest know in advance to plan on this length of time for pre-departure checks.

By taking the time for a thorough key exchange, you can nip problems in the bud before they blossom into an angry guest.

- **Prescreening** — If a prospective guest asks you about big discounts, lowering your security deposit, or trying to use their personal insurance for the rental, these are almost always red flags. Be on the lookout for red flags like these in initial communications with prospective guests and you can weed out the angry ones.
- **Set expectations early** — Outdoorsy offers a [detailed checklist](#) you should cover with each guest during the key exchange. Additionally, you'll want to have contracts and paperwork that are specific to your RV. Spell out all your policies, fees you might charge, FAQs about your camper, etc. Let your guests know that you'll be available to them should any problems arise and that your expectation is that they'll reach out to you first so that you can make the situation right.

- **Be organized and confident** — When guests sense you have your ducks in a row and processes in place, you'll reduce the chances for an anger storm.

- **Tailor your key exchange to their specific trip** — [Let's say your guest plans on dry camping](#) — i.e. camping without water, sewer, and electric hookups. You would then devote significant time during your key exchange to ensure that they understand power and tank limitations in these scenarios.

By tailoring your teachings to your guest's unique trip, you'll spray anger repellent over the whole rental period.

! Helpful tip

Leave helpful notes around your camper — If your RV hot water only lasts 15 minutes, why not leave a helpful note by the shower so your guest doesn't get a cold blast?

Proactive notes like this work wonders in preventing problems before they happen.

How to Handle Angry Guests

Despite your best efforts, there will be rare instances where a guest will get angry and you need to be prepared:

- **Listen with empathy and acknowledge concerns** — Sometimes a guest will have a problem that is totally their fault, but they'll still be angry with you. You shouldn't take blame, but you should listen fully to their concerns, express that you feel badly for their experience, and seek to make things right as reasonably as you can.

More often than not, once an angry guest is made to feel validated and heard, they'll be more open to hearing your proposed resolution.

- **Always be solution-focused** — Guests might try to focus on the negatives of the situation, it's your job to keep the conversation positive and focused on a solution. Say things like: "I'm sorry that you feel this way. I want to make this right. Here are the options I feel we have..."

Continue bringing the conversation back to possible solutions to help resolve guest anger quickly.

- **Don't be afraid to take time to find a resolution** — As long as your guest is not in an unsafe situation, it's okay to take a short bit of time to process how you'll handle their challenges. After fully listening to your guest's concerns, assure them you'll call them back shortly and then take a beat to process the situation. [Outdoorsy's RV host community](#) is also a helpful sounding board for advice.

Once you feel prepared, call your guest back with the resolution options you've come up with.

- **Compromise is key** — A guest will sometimes be upset about something that was out of your control. In these cases, it's important to remember that both parties might need to compromise to find a resolution.

For example, let's say your guest is upset because they didn't tell you they'd be dry camping and used all their freshwater in a day. You might compromise by helping them find a nearby freshwater fill station while asking them to pay any associated fees.

- **Emotionally detach** — We know it's tough to emotionally detach from an RV where you've built family memories, but our most successful hosts say that detaching those emotions is key to being a professional RV host.

By being emotionally detached, you'll be far less likely to match the anger of your guest and be fully equipped to handle their concerns in a calm and collected fashion.

- **Be kind and firm** — If you were proactive during your key exchange and have detailed written documents, chances are good that your guest's complaint was addressed in advance.

By kindly standing your ground and referring your guest to the key exchange and documents, you can help to diffuse their anger. You'll still need to stay solution-focused, but that doesn't mean you need to be a doormat.

Who do I contact when my guests have issues on the road?

When your guests run into a mechanical issue on the road, the first crew they should call is Outdoorsy's roadside assistance. Be sure to remind your guest that they have the number for roadside assistance in their departure paperwork and in their Outdoorsy app.

Our service team is here 24/7. They're here to help you as a host, they're here to help your guests on the road, and they're here to help when you can't seem to diffuse an angry situation.

Their number is (877) 723-7232 or you can email support@outdoorsy.com. We also have chat support on Outdoorsy.com – just look in the bottom right corner to bring up the chatbox.

If you need to make an insurance claim for damages caused to your RV, follow [these steps](#) in your Host Dashboard to get the process started.

Another indispensable resource is the [Outdoorsy's RV host community](#). This group is stacked with veteran hosts who've been in the trenches. They're a caring and knowledgeable bunch who'll help you out of any jams you find yourself in.

De-escalation tips

It's rare, but one day you may run into a guest who is inconsolable. If this happens to you, it's important to remember these tips:

- **Stay calm** – When someone raises their voice, it's natural to answer them in kind. This will only worsen the situation. Keep the conversation civil by staying calm.
- **Get Outdoorsy involved** – We encourage you to do everything you can to resolve the situation with your guest, but if you reach an impasse, give us a call and we'll help.
- **Have confidence in your process and documents** – You shouldn't feel bad for things that are definitely not your fault. If your guest is inconsolable about something that you covered in your walkthrough and documents, kindly but firmly jog their memory.
- **Mistakes can happen, learn and grow from them** – Even if you have a watertight process in place, you might still have a temper-prone guest slip through. You may even forget to do something like top off the propane tanks. These happenings are rarely the end of the world and they only become real issues if you fail to learn and grow from them.
- **Let your guest end their trip early** – If you feel that the situation can only be made right by getting your RV back, offer to end your guest's trip and refund the unused days. This is a drastic step and should only be taken as a last resort.

07

When your guest returns.



As you prepare for your guest to return with your rig, it's important to have a process in place for getting your RV back, inspecting your rig for damages, and documenting the condition of your camper.

As a first step, be sure to reach out to your guest the day before or the day of the return date to confirm the drop off time is on track with what you'd originally agreed to.

Once you meet your guest with your RV, you should proceed as follows:

Rental return form

Remember the [pre-arrival checklist](#) you walked your guest through during the key handoff? Now's the time to have that in hand along with our [RV Return Form](#).

Completing the RV Return Form with your guest is a required step to close the rental in your Host's Dashboard. Walk your guest around your rig to document new damage, overages such as generator use or mileage, and fuel tank level. By walking with your guest and assessing your camper, you'll provide clear reasoning if you wind up charging extra for damages or overages.

During the walkaround, take photos of of the four sides, front, rear, roof, and any new damage. Then have your guest sign off on the RV return form. This will help you avoid a claims dispute.

What happens if my RV is returned with damage?

Be sure you've taken detailed notes and photos of the damage. In most cases, the damage will be minimal and our guests will be very apologetic. If the cost of the damage is within the amount of the guest's security deposit, you can collect that amount from the deposit. To do this, hop to your Host's Dashboard, jump into the reservation in question, and click "Manage Security Deposit".

This will allow you to keep the amount of the deposit that you need to fix the damage. If the damage to your RV appears to be more than the amount of the security deposit, you'll first want to claim the full amount of the security deposit in your Host's Dashboard. After that, go ahead and [submit a claim](#) so our wonderful team can come alongside you to get you fixed up ASAP.



How to Handle Minor Damages

Even though our guests are awesome folks, accidents can happen - the kids spill on your RV seats, a latch breaks off, seals come loose, or other minor damages sometimes occur during a rental period.

Here are some top tips for handling minor damage to your rig:

1. Take a deep breath because it'll be okay!

Remember that you are running a small business. With all businesses come business expenses. By taking a deep breath and quickly fixing the minor damage to your RV, you'll be back to business in no time.

2. Discuss the damage with your guest - The time when your guest returns your RV is the best time to find and discuss any damage. Guests will usually inform you of damage, but you also want to do a thorough walkaround with your guest when they return your unit. If you find new damage, be sure to point it out to your guest and let them know that you'll inform them of any damage charges you'll take out of their security deposit.

3. Get an estimate on the repair - File a claim with Outdoorsy within 48 hours - they'll outline the fastest resolution path for you.

4. Hold back enough of the security deposit to cover the repair

- Your guest makes a security deposit to pay for minor damages they might cause. You are then allowed to make one withdrawal from the deposit to cover minor damages. Be sure to hold all of the deposit you need to pay for the repair(s) so you can get back on the road fast.

5. Don't sweat one review - Most guests will be understanding about fixing the damage they caused, but you might be concerned that taking the security deposit could impact your review for that rental. As long as you've covered your bases with lots of pictures pre and post rental, have explained the damage to your guest, and been transparent with your guest about repair costs, you are likely in the right to have your guest pay for the fix.

Following Up With Guests About Their Experience

Looking back to Section 4 of this Host's Manual, you'll see a detailed description of our built-in review system along with strategies for getting the best reviews possible. Some of our hosts even create a custom survey for their guests to gain private feedback on areas of strength and opportunities for improvement in their RV rental business.

Here's a quick snapshot of what we discussed in Section 4 about getting stellar reviews from each guest:

- Be transparent about restrictions, penalties and fees your guest might incur.
- Offer RVing tips, sweet secret spots, and campsite or experience recommendations for your area.
- Provide the essentials like towels, utensils, and coffee
- Ask! Don't be so shy that you won't ask for a 5-star review after your guest has an awesome rental. If you're nervous about asking, [this handy dandy guide](#) will show you how to smoothly inspire your guests to help spread love for your rig.

Please also recall that you'll have the opportunity to review each of your guests and to respond to the public review they leave you. **Be sure to review all of your guests because this helps other hosts vet rental requests.**

08

How to make guests love you.

One of the most rewarding parts of running an RV rental business is the joy you'll create for guests and their families. RVing will be a first for many of your guests and this offers you a great chance to help them create wonderful memories on the road.

Here are a few tips for going the extra mile:

Provide memory-making amenities

- Kayaks and stand up paddleboards turn lakes into playgrounds
- Hammocks create shady and comfy hangouts under trees
- Mountain bikes open new lands for exploration
- Grills create tasty memories for your guests
- S'more cooking supplies make the camping world go 'round
- Lawn games like life-size Jenga bring families together

Little things have a big impact in the hospitality business. By surprising your guests with carefully curated snacks in your camper, you'll find your way into their hearts

- Remember dietary needs by offering an array of healthy nuts and chips
- Provide light breakfast snacks such as cereal or granola
- Coffee, coffee, and more coffee — folks love coffee
- Stick to packaged snacks in sealed containers — people will feel safer with these
- Have a mix of sweet, salty, and savory snacks to satisfy all taste buds
- If you're renting out your RV for a holiday, offer themed snacks
- Keep the weather in mind — hot chocolate in winter, lemonade in summer
- S'more supplies are always in style

Care packages that WOW

- Furry friends need lovin' too — if your RV is pet friendly, why not offer a fun care package with treats for Rover?
- Offer special toiletries like hand-made soaps from your area or special shampoos you know guests will love
- Consider including some board games that can be played at the campsite to unplug with the whole family.



Another great way to stay at the top of your game when it comes to **WOWing** your guests is to keep up with what other successful hosts are doing. If you haven't already joined our [RV Host Community](#) during the course of reading this manual – what are you waiting for?

All the cool kids hang out in the [Outdoorsy Host RV Community](#) and it's a great way to bring your A-game to every rental you send out. Another top tip is to stay tuned into our [Hosts of the Week blogs](#). As the name implies, this blog highlights a new rockstar host every week to help you stay on the cutting edge of running an RV rental business.

RV Upkeep

When you put love into making your RV sparkle before each rental, you'll reap the rewards in positive reviews, happy campers, and good vibes.

Cleaning

No host can get consistently positive reviews without a process for shining up the RV, inside and out, before each rental. By following a [checklist](#) each time you scrub, you'll give guests a consistently clean experience.

Additionally, it pays to consider ways you can give your RV that extra sparkle. For example, something like [Bar Keeper's Friend](#) will make metal surfaces glimmer. Checking and double-checking bathrooms and showers for absolute spotlessness is also a top-tip.

Lastly, when you clean, it's required that you take steps to protect your health and the health of your guests. Follow the [CDC guidelines for cleaning and disinfecting](#), always use gloves, avoid touching your face as you clean, and don't accept bookings [if anyone in your household or your guests household has been sick](#).

Maintenance

Keeping up with your [90-day inspection checklist](#) is required to be covered by Outdoorsy's insurance and it is also vital for the safety of your guests. Tires, gas lines, electrical systems, and brakes should never go unchecked.

Apart from being dangerous, pesky mechanical issues like a finicky generator or leaky pipe will trash a guest's experience fast. Don't let this happen to you by always keeping an eye on your camper's health.

Host Resources

As we come to the end of our road together, we'd like to leave you with some resources that'll keep you covered as you build your RV rental business:



Rental Documents

- [Pre-Arrival Checklist](#)
- [Guest Departure Form](#)
- [Guest Return Form](#)
- [90 Day Inspection Checklist](#)
- [Pre and post trip photos of your rig](#)



Insurance Documents

- [Insurance Overview](#)
- [Physical Damage Coverage Particulars](#)
- [Liability Insurance Particulars](#)
- [How to File an Insurance Claim With Outdoorsy](#)
- [Roamly Personal Insurance – Allows You to Engage in Rental Use](#)



Marketing

- [How to Create a Great RV Rental Listing](#)
- [Best Practices for Marketing Your RV Rental](#)
- [Hosts of the Week Blog – Learn Best Practices from Other Hosts](#)



[Outdoorsy's RV host community](#) is the best place to chat with your fellow Outdoorsy hosts about the latest trends, best practices, and must-know hacks. Be there or be square!



Our blog, [The Never Idle Journal](#), is a bookmarkable page that's stacked with the latest tips, tricks, and stories from the road.



Jump to our [FAQ page](#) for answers to common questions about renting your rig.