

Easy Ways To Look After Your Camper Trailer Pt 2

We all love the feeling of adventure when we head for new destinations in the bush. Camper trailers allow us to explore and experience, the best destinations that Australia has to offer for extended periods of time, and more often than not, will get you to and from your campsite without any dramas.

However, these hard-to-get-to destinations are naturally going to cause a fair bit of wear on your gear and your offroad camper trailer. Corrugations will put strain on your suspension, water will work its way into bearings, poor quality drinking water will taint tanks, and general wear and tear will happen. General maintenance is all part of owning a camper trailer, and dragging it through tough terrain can lead to other issues – for most of us it's a worthy risk to get to that hidden hotspot of a lifetime with loved ones.

Offroad camper trailer maintenance, repairs and upgrades are all part of pre and post trip work, but knowing where to start and what to inspect can be a bit of a daunting process. To make it easier for everyone, we've put together this easy-to-follow guide on bringing your trailer back to new. Each maintenance step will tell you what to look for, how the damage occurs and how to fix the issue. This is Part Two of our three part guide to easy ways to look after your camper trailer.

TRAILER PLUGS

Quite often your camper trailer electrical trailer plug sits right at the first point of contact on your tow bar which is underneath it, so when damage is common when towing your offroad camper trailer through rugged terrain. Try remounting the plug up higher up – even on top of the tow bar is a smarter location.

Regular maintenance is the key to keeping your camper trailer electrical plugs healthy. Give them a spray with WD40 or contact cleaner after every trip, and inspect the back of the plugs each time. The grommet here comes loose, so tape up if needed.

RUST PROTECTION

Too often we see camper trailers come back from a big trip involving sand, only to sit there and rust away. Most 4x4 camper trailers are sprayed with paint that, although it is said not to, will eventually chip from the copious amount of stones being sent its way. Leaving bare metal exposed is exactly how rust infiltrates its way into your chassis. Trailers that are coated in a proper corrosion-resistant, impact resistant coating or powdercoating do a lot better here.

The fix to corrosion really does depend on the severity of the rust. If you catch it early you should be able to rub it back to bare metal with a grinder and a wire brush. Your priority once you're down to bare metal is to seal and protect it with paint – and a bare metal respray of the affected area is the best way to go. For the best results possible, used a rubber-based stone guard paint. It's a tad more expensive but it's perfect for this scenario. It's a bit of work but in the long run it will dramatically increase the service life of your camper trailer so it's definitely worth it!

STONE GUARD

With rust on camper trailers, prevention is definitely better than a cure – and the best way to prevent stone damage is proper stone guards on your camper trailer if it isn't coated in an impact-resistant coating. They really are a necessity on a trailer – they'll boost the life of your offroad trailer ten-fold. The most important thing to consider when you're installing or maintaining your stone guard is the tension and the material. Too loose and it won't do the job, and too tight it'll flick rocks back at your tow rig and potentially bust a rear window. Aim to have one to two inches of movement in it.

DRAW BAR ACCESSORIES

Wear and tear on your camper trailer coupling is as common as the cold, but fortunately there are a few simple maintenance tips to make sure they stay in tip top condition. The biggest killer of poly-block couplings is lack of lubrication – so give it a hit of WD40 down each side and on the pin after every trip, and grease any grease nipples. Check your coupling bolts for rust – if you do need to replace them, replace with stainless steel bolts.

Your safety chains on your camper trailer shouldn't need too much work, but make sure you check your D-shackles are rated for the weight of your camper trailer, and check their condition. Shackles aren't expensive to replace, and considering their importance, it's probably worth the \$20 or so for a couple of new ones. When you store shackles don't lock them up tight– they can seize over time, and you might cause damage undoing them.

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