BILL'S HOME TECH
Home & Small Business Tech Solutions

BILL'S COMPLETE MANUALS

RV & Camping Tech

Campground Wi-Fi, boosters, Starlink, RV power and safe navigation — explained in plain English, one step at a time

A plain-English guide for RVers, campers and their families

Take your time — you can't break it

Written for you by Bill — Bill's Home Tech

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For motorhomes, campers & travel trailers · facts current November 2026

What's Inside

This is your guide to the technology that comes along on an RV or camping trip: getting online at the campground, boosting a weak cell signal, Starlink on the road, shore power and batteries, RV-safe navigation, booking a site, and staying reachable when you're far from home. Read it in any order and at your own pace. Products and prices change often, so this guide teaches you what to look for rather than telling you which one to buy.

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PART 1

Getting Started

What this guide covers, the handful of gadgets that matter most on the road, and a simple checklist for before you pull out of the driveway. Start here.

CHAPTER 1

A Note from Bill

Hello, and welcome. Whether you've just bought your first camper, you've been RVing for years and the gadgets keep multiplying, or you're a son or daughter trying to help Mom and Dad stay connected on their big trip — this guide is for **you**.

I'm Bill. I've spent more than 30 years working with technology, and these days I help folks here in Portage County, Ohio feel at home with theirs. Plenty of them pack up every spring and head for a state park or a campground across the country. I wrote this guide the way I'd explain it sitting at the dinette: slowly, in plain English, and without trying to sell you anything. When I use a word like "captive portal" or "inverter," I'll stop and explain it right then.

What this guide will do for you

- Get you online at the campground — safely — and show you what to do when the campground Wi-Fi is slow or won't let you in.
- Explain your phone's hotspot, travel routers, cell signal boosters and Starlink, so you know which one solves which problem.
- Make sense of RV power: 30-amp and 50-amp plugs, surge protectors, batteries, inverters, solar and generators — including the carbon monoxide safety that really matters.
- Help you choose navigation that knows how tall and heavy your rig is, because ordinary phone maps don't.
- Cover booking a campsite, backup cameras, tire monitors and the RV's own phone app.
- Keep you reachable in an emergency, alert you to bad weather, and help you spot fake rentals and booking scams.

The big promise: you can't break it by learning

Almost everything in this guide is a setting you can change back, a gadget you can unplug, or an app you can delete. Take your time and try things in the driveway before you need them on the road. The few jobs that are truly risky — anything inside your RV's electrical panel, propane lines, or wiring a generator or solar system — I'll mark clearly as jobs for an **RV service technician** or a licensed electrician. I'm a technology helper, and I'll always tell you honestly which is which.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Why this matters

A little tech set up ahead of time means you can call the grandkids from the campground, find a route with no low bridges, know your tires are holding air, and reach help if something goes wrong — so you can relax and enjoy the trip.

I'm only a phone call away

If anything in this guide leaves you unsure, call me at **(330) 200-8042**. I can help remotely while you're on the road, too. There's no such thing as a silly question.

Let's start with a quick look at the gadgets you'll meet.

— Bill

CHAPTER 2

Your RV Tech at a Glance

RV and camping technology can look like a tangle of boxes, cords and apps. It's simpler once you sort it into five jobs. Most people need only a few of these, and you can add the rest one at a time.

The job	What does it	Where in this guide
Getting online	Campground Wi-Fi, your phone's hotspot, a travel router, Starlink	Chapters 4 to 8, 12 to 14
A better cell signal	A cell signal booster with an outside antenna	Chapters 9 to 11
Power	Shore power, surge protector, batteries, inverter, solar, generator	Chapters 15 to 18
Getting there safely	RV GPS or RV app, backup camera, tire-pressure monitor	Chapters 19 to 22
Staying safe and reachable	Satellite SOS, weather alerts, CO and propane alarms	Chapters 18, 24 and 25

A few words you'll see often

Word	What it means
Shore power	Plugging your RV into the campground's electrical post, called the **pedestal**.
Boondocking	Camping with no hookups at all — no shore power, water or sewer. Also called "dry camping."
Hotspot	A phone or small box that shares its cellular data as a Wi-Fi network.
Booster	A device with an outside antenna that strengthens a weak cell signal inside the RV.
Rig	RVers' word for the RV, or the RV plus whatever is towing it or being towed.
Toad	A car towed behind a motorhome.

TIP

Start with your phone

You probably already own the most useful piece of camping tech: your smartphone. Before buying anything, read Chapters 4 to 6. For many weekend trips to Ohio state parks, the phone plus the campground Wi-Fi is plenty.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Sorting gadgets by job keeps you from buying an expensive box to fix the wrong problem — like a booster at a campground where there's no cell signal to boost.

CHAPTER 3

Before You Leave Home: A Tech Checklist

The best time to sort out technology is in your own driveway, with your home Wi-Fi and a full night's sleep — not at a dark campsite after six hours of driving. Here's a calm routine for a week or so before a trip.

The week before

1. **Update your phone and apps** at home on Wi-Fi: the phone itself, your maps or RV GPS app, your weather app and your RV's control app. Updates can be large, and campground Wi-Fi is often slow.
2. **Download offline maps** for the areas you'll drive through and camp in (the "Ways ... Can Make Life Easier" topic shows how).
3. **Update your RV GPS** if you have one. Garmin units update maps over Wi-Fi or with a computer.
4. **Check your phone plan**: how much hotspot data it includes, and whether it slows down after a certain amount (Chapter 7).
5. **Test the gadgets**: plug in the surge protector, turn on the booster, set up Starlink in the yard, and check that the backup camera and tire monitors show up.
6. **Test your alarms**: press the test button on the RV's carbon monoxide alarm and propane (LP) detector, and the smoke alarm (Chapter 18).
7. **Write down your reservations** and confirmation numbers on paper as well as in your email (Chapter 23).

Pack the cords

- Phone chargers for the wall and for the vehicle's 12-volt or USB sockets — one per person.
- A small power bank for each phone, for hikes and power outages.
- Your surge protector, plus any 30-to-50 or 50-to-30 amp adapter you may need (Chapter 15).
- Spare batteries for flashlights, the weather radio and the tire-monitor display if it uses them.
- This guide's Cheat-Sheet (Chapter 28), filled in.

GOOD TO KNOW

Tell someone your plan

Leave your route, campgrounds and dates with a family member or neighbor. Chapter 24 shows how to share your location from your phone so they can see you're safe without calling.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

An hour of preparation at home means the first evening at camp is spent relaxing — not hunting for a charger or waiting for an app to update over a slow connection.

PART 2

Getting Online at the Campground

Campground Wi-Fi and its sign-in page, staying safe on public networks, your phone's hotspot, travel data plans, and travel routers.

CHAPTER 4

Campground Wi-Fi and the Sign-In Page

Many campgrounds, state parks and RV resorts offer Wi-Fi. It can be handy for email, the weather and a video call with family. It's also shared by everyone in the park, so it is often slow in the evening when everyone is online at once, and it may not reach the far end of the campground.

Joining the campground network

1. Ask at the office or check-in window for the **network name** and any **password** or access code. Write them on your Cheat-Sheet.
2. On your phone, open **Settings** and tap **Wi-Fi**. Choose the campground's network name from the list.
3. If it asks for a password, type it carefully. Capital letters matter.
4. A sign-in page may pop up by itself. That's the **captive portal**, explained below.
5. When you're connected, open a website you trust to check that it works.

What is a "captive portal"?

A captive portal is the web page some networks show before they let you online — the same kind you see at hotels, airports and coffee shops. It may ask you to accept the rules, type your site number or last name, or enter a code from the office. Until you finish that page, the Wi-Fi bars may show full but nothing will load.

If the sign-in page doesn't appear

1. Turn Wi-Fi off and back on, then choose the network again.
2. Open your web browser and try to visit any ordinary website. The sign-in page often appears then.
3. If you use a VPN app (Chapter 5), turn it off for a moment, sign in, then turn it back on.
4. Still stuck? Ask the office. Some campgrounds limit how many devices each site can connect.

HEADS UP

Look-alike networks

Only join the network name the office gives you. A network called "Free Campground WiFi" that the office didn't mention could be someone else's. If two names look nearly the same, ask which is real.

Making a call over campground Wi-Fi

If the campground has Wi-Fi but your phone has little or no cell signal, **Wi-Fi Calling** lets your phone make ordinary calls and texts over the Wi-Fi instead. On an iPhone it's in **Settings** > **Cellular** > **Wi-Fi Calling** (on some versions, **Settings** > **Apps** > **Phone**); on Android phones, search Settings for "Wi-Fi calling." Your phone company has to support it, and most large ones do.

STAY SAFE

Calling 911 over Wi-Fi

When you turn on Wi-Fi Calling, your phone asks for an emergency address — usually your home. If you ever call 911 over campground Wi-Fi, tell the dispatcher exactly where you are: the campground name, your site number and the nearest town. Your phone uses the cell network for 911 whenever it can.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Knowing how the sign-in page works saves you the frustration of "full bars, nothing loads," and Wi-Fi Calling can turn a no-signal campsite into one where the phone rings.

CHAPTER 5

Staying Safe on Public Wi-Fi

Campground Wi-Fi is a **public network**: you share it with strangers and you don't know how it's set up. That doesn't make it dangerous to use, but it's worth a few simple habits — the same ones the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) recommends for any public Wi-Fi.

The habits that matter

- **Assume it isn't private.** The FTC advises not to assume a public network is encrypted — most aren't. A network that needs a password is better than one that doesn't, but still shared.
- **Look for the lock or "https"** at the start of the web address, on every page — not just the sign-in page. The FTC notes that a secure (https) site scrambles your information even when the network itself doesn't.
- **Use the bank's own app or website** you already know, and save big money tasks for a trusted connection such as your phone's own cellular data when you can.
- **Never email** card numbers, Social Security numbers or account numbers.
- **Log out** of accounts when you're done, and use a different password for each important account.
- **Turn off automatic joining** for networks you don't plan to use again, and keep your phone and apps updated.

VPN basics, in plain words

A **VPN** (virtual private network) is an app that wraps everything your phone or laptop sends in a protective, scrambled tunnel before it crosses the campground network. Other people on the same Wi-Fi can't read it. Some travelers use one every time they're on public Wi-Fi.

- Most VPNs worth using are paid subscriptions. Choose a well-known company from the official App Store or Google Play, and read its privacy policy.
- Be wary of free VPN apps you've never heard of. A VPN can see your traffic, so you want one you trust.
- A VPN can block the campground sign-in page. Turn it off, sign in, then turn it on again (Chapter 4).
- A VPN doesn't stop scam emails or fake websites. Your own good judgment still does that.

TIP

The simplest safe choice

If you only need to check your bank balance once, switch Wi-Fi off and use your phone's cellular data for that minute. It's your own connection, not a shared one.

SCAM ALERT

"Your device is infected" pop-ups

If a pop-up appears while you're on any Wi-Fi saying your phone has a virus and to call a number, it's a scam. Close the browser tab. Never call the number, and never let a stranger take control of your device.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

A few simple habits let you use campground Wi-Fi for news, weather and family calls without worrying about who else is on the network.

CHAPTER 6

Your Phone as a Hotspot

Your smartphone can share its cellular data with a tablet or laptop by creating its own small Wi-Fi network. That's called a **personal hotspot** or **mobile hotspot**. When the campground Wi-Fi is slow but your phone shows good bars, your own hotspot is often faster — and it's private.

Turning it on

1. **iPhone:** open **Settings**, tap **Personal Hotspot**, and turn on **Allow Others to Join**. Note the Wi-Fi password shown on that screen.
2. **Android:** open **Settings** and type "hotspot" in the search box at the top. Tap the hotspot setting and turn it on. Note the network name and password it shows.
3. On the tablet or laptop, open its Wi-Fi settings and choose your phone's name from the list. Type the password.
4. When you're finished, turn the hotspot off. It uses battery and data while it's on.

Things to know

- A hotspot uses the **data in your phone plan**. Many plans include a set amount of hotspot data, and some slow it down after that. Chapter 7 explains.
- Streaming movies uses far more data than email, maps or web pages. A long video call uses a lot too.
- Keep the phone plugged in while it's sharing. Hotspots drain batteries quickly.
- If the hotspot option is missing or grayed out, your plan may not include it. Call your phone company.

TIP

Find the best spot

Cell signal is often better near a window or higher up. Set the phone on a shelf near a window, plugged in, rather than in a cupboard or a pocket.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Your phone becomes the Wi-Fi for your tablet or laptop, wherever there's cell service — no extra box and often no extra bill.

CHAPTER 7

Hotspot Plans and Travel Data

Before a long trip, it's worth ten minutes to understand what your phone plan allows. Phone companies change their plans and names often, so this chapter teaches you the questions to ask rather than listing plans that may change next month.

Questions to ask your phone company

1. "How much **hotspot data** does my plan include each month, and what happens after I use it — does it stop or just slow down?"
2. "Is my regular phone data **unlimited**, and does it get slower after a certain amount?"
3. "Do you have a **travel** or **RV** plan, a separate hotspot device, or a data-only line I could add for a few months?"
4. "Can I add or remove that each month, without a contract or a fee?"
5. "Where is your coverage map, and what is coverage like where I'm going?"
6. "Will I be charged if I cross into Canada or Mexico?"

Your options, in plain words

Option	What it is
Phone hotspot	Uses your phone's plan. Cheapest and simplest. Limited by your plan's hotspot data.
Dedicated hotspot box	A separate small device with its own data plan from a phone company. Keeps your phone free and its battery fresh. A monthly cost.
RV or travel router with a SIM	A router that takes its own phone-company SIM card and shares it to the whole RV (Chapter 8).
Starlink	Satellite internet that works where there's no cell signal at all, with a clear view of the sky. A monthly plan (Chapters 12 to 14).

TIP

Check coverage before you book

Look up each campground on your phone company's coverage map before you reserve. Camping reviews often mention which carriers get a signal at which sites, too.

GOOD TO KNOW

Seasonal plans

Many RVers add a data plan only for the months they travel and pause or cancel it at home. Ask whether your company allows that and how much notice it needs.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Asking the right questions before you go keeps you from a surprise bill — or from running out of data halfway through a trip.

CHAPTER 8

Travel Routers

A **travel router** is a small Wi-Fi box, often about the size of a deck of cards, that you keep in the RV. It connects to the campground Wi-Fi (or a phone hotspot, or Starlink) once, and then shares that connection as **your own private network**. All your devices join your router, and you set them up only once.

Why RVers like them

- Your tablet, laptop, streaming stick and phones always connect to the same familiar network name, at every campground. You change only the router's connection.
- The campground sees one device, which helps where parks limit how many devices you can connect.
- Your devices sit behind the router instead of directly on the shared campground network.
- Some models take a phone-company SIM card or can turn on a VPN for everything at once.

Connecting it at a new campground

Each brand differs; this is the general idea, based on GL.iNet's instructions for its travel routers.

1. Plug in the router and join its Wi-Fi with your phone.
2. Open the router's settings page or app. For GL.iNet routers, the page is at **192.168.8.1** in your browser.
3. Find the **Repeater** setting and choose the campground network. Type its password.
4. If the campground has a sign-in page, open a browser on your phone while connected to the router. If the page doesn't appear, GL.iNet suggests refreshing the sign-in page, waiting a minute, or turning your phone's Wi-Fi off and on.
5. If you use a VPN or the ad-blocker on the router, GL.iNet advises turning them off until the sign-in is done.
6. Still stuck? As a last resort, the office may be able to add your router to its approved list. They'll ask for the router's **MAC address**, a code printed on its label.

HEADS UP

Set your own password

Change the router's admin password and Wi-Fi password from the defaults when you first set it up, and write them on your Cheat-Sheet.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Set it up once, and every device you own connects automatically at every campground. One login per park instead of five.

PART 3

A Better Cell Signal

How cell signal boosters work, when they can and can't help, choosing one for an RV, and the simple FCC registration every booster owner should do.

CHAPTER 9

How Cell Signal Boosters Work

An RV is a metal box on wheels, and metal is very good at blocking cell signals. You may have two bars standing outside the door and none at the dinette. A **cell signal booster** is built for exactly that problem: it catches the weak signal outside and repeats a stronger one inside.

The three parts

Part	What it does
Outside antenna	Mounted on the roof, a ladder or a pole. It listens for the nearest cell tower.
Booster (amplifier)	A box inside the RV, wired to both antennas and to power. It strengthens the signal in both directions — to your phone and back to the tower.
Inside antenna	A small antenna near where you sit. Your phone talks to it as if it were a closer tower.

The one thing a booster can't do

A booster can only make a weak signal stronger. It **cannot create a signal where there is none**. If your phone shows "No Service" even when you walk to the highest, most open spot in the campground, a booster won't help. That's when Starlink (Chapter 12) or campground Wi-Fi is the answer.

A quick test before you buy

1. Walk outside your RV with your phone and hold it up in an open spot.
2. If you see at least one bar, or calls barely connect, a booster can probably help.
3. If there's truly nothing, even at the campground entrance or on a hill, save your money for another option.

GOOD TO KNOW

Boosters help every phone at once

Most consumer boosters work with all the big phone companies at the same time, so a husband on one carrier and a wife on another both benefit. Some boosters are made for one carrier only; the box will say so.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

At a campground with a weak signal, a booster can be the difference between dropped calls and a steady conversation with the family — and it helps your phone's hotspot too (Chapter 6).

CHAPTER 10

Choosing and Installing an RV Booster

RV boosters come in two main styles. The big difference is whether they work **while you drive** or **only when you're parked**. Neither is better — it depends on how you travel.

Style	How it works	Good for
Works while driving	A small, all-direction antenna fixed on the roof. Nothing to aim or raise.	People who move often, or want a signal on the road
Parked only	A directional antenna on a telescoping pole that you raise and point toward a tower.	People who stay put for days or weeks; the weakest signals

For example, weBoost, one well-known maker, sells a parked-only RV model with a pole-mounted antenna that takes about ten minutes to set up and take down, and a separate RV model that works parked or driving with no aiming. The parked-only kind reaches weaker signals; the driving kind is less fuss. Other makers sell their own versions. Prices are in the hundreds of dollars as of November 2026, so read reviews and the return policy before you buy.

Installing it, in general

1. Read the booster's own instructions first. Each kit is different.
2. Mount the **outside antenna** as high as practical, often on the roof or ladder. Roof work is a job for a steady helper or an RV service technician, not for anyone with balance concerns.
3. Run the cable inside through an existing roof or refrigerator vent, or have a technician do it, so the roof stays watertight.
4. Put the **booster box** somewhere cool and dry, and connect it to power as the kit describes.
5. Place the **inside antenna** near where you sit and use your phone most — and as far from the outside antenna as the kit says. Antennas too close together make the booster turn itself down.
6. Turn it on and check the lights. Many show green when all is well and red or amber when the antennas need more distance.

STAY SAFE

Stay off the roof if it's not for you

RV roofs are slippery and high. If climbing a ladder isn't easy, ask an RV dealer or mobile RV technician to mount the antenna. There's no shame in it, and a fall is far more costly than an installation fee.

TIP

Raise it, point it, test it

With a parked-only booster, raise the pole, turn the antenna slowly, and watch your phone's bars or the booster's lights. Write the best direction down for that campground.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Choosing the style that fits how you travel means you aren't cranking up a pole every night when you only stop for one — or settling for a weak signal at a site where you spend a month.

CHAPTER 11

Registering Your Booster (FCC Rules)

This surprises many people: the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) requires you to **register** a consumer signal booster with your phone company before you use it. It's free, it takes a few minutes online, and it's the law. The rule exists because a badly installed or faulty booster can interfere with the cell network for everyone nearby.

Before you buy: check the label

- A legal consumer booster carries an FCC consumer label on the box and in the instructions. Buy from a known store or maker.
- Boosters marked for **industrial** use are not for consumers. Don't buy one for your RV.
- Some boosters are certified only for **fixed** use inside a building, and they're labeled that way. For an RV, choose one sold for vehicle or RV use.

How to register

1. Have ready your name, your phone company account details, the booster's make and model, and where you use it (for an RV, the vehicle).
2. Go to your phone company's booster registration page. Verizon, AT&T and T-Mobile each have one — search their websites for "register signal booster."
3. Fill in the form. There's no fee.
4. If you and your spouse use different carriers, register with **each** carrier. The FCC says regular passengers in a vehicle with a booster should register too.
5. Keep the confirmation email, and note on your Cheat-Sheet that you've registered.

HEADS UP

If the phone company calls

Under FCC rules, if a booster causes interference, you must turn it off when your phone company or the FCC asks, even if you followed every other rule. Usually that means the booster needs adjusting or the antennas need more distance between them.

GOOD TO KNOW

New RV with a booster already built in?

Some RVs now come with a booster from the factory. The FCC's booster FAQ covers this case: you still need to register it with your phone company. Look for the booster's make and model in the RV's owner papers.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Five minutes of paperwork keeps you on the right side of the rules and makes any problem with your phone company easy to sort out.

PART 4

Starlink on the Road

Satellite internet for campsites with no cell signal: which Starlink kit suits an RV, the Roam plans, pausing between trips, using it while driving, and setting it up at camp.

CHAPTER 12

Starlink for RVers: Which Kit?

Starlink is satellite internet from SpaceX. A small dish talks to satellites overhead, so it works far from any cell tower — in a forest campground, out West, or at a quiet lake. It needs one thing above all: a **clear view of the sky**, without trees or buildings in the way.

The two kits RVers use

	Starlink Mini	Starlink Standard
Size	About the size of a laptop; fits in a backpack	Larger dish on a kickstand
Wi-Fi	Built in — no separate router	Separate Starlink router
Power	Low; runs on 12 to 48 volts DC, or a strong USB-C charger	More; plugs into a household outlet
Best for	Small campers, travel, boondocking, battery power	Bigger rigs at a site for longer stays

Things to know before ordering

- Starlink shows the price of the kit and plans for your address when you order. Prices change, so check starlink.com or the Starlink app rather than an old article or video.
- Starlink offers a **30-day return window** on hardware bought directly from it. That's a hardware return, not a free trial of the service; follow Starlink's return steps exactly.
- Before ordering, use the Starlink app's **Find an Install Location** tool at home to learn how the obstruction check works (Chapter 14).
- Order only from starlink.com, the Starlink app or a well-known store. See Chapter 26 about fake Starlink deals.

TIP

Already have Starlink at home?

A home (Residential) plan is tied to your home address. To use it at a campground you need a plan that allows travel, such as Roam (Chapter 13). Many RVers keep a separate Mini on a Roam plan for trips.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Starlink turns campsites with "No Service" into places where you can video-call the grandkids, check the weather radar and stream the evening news.

CHAPTER 13

Starlink Roam Plans, Pausing and Driving

Starlink's travel plans are called **Roam**. As of November 2026, Starlink's U.S. plans page lists three: a smaller-data plan, a middle plan, and an unlimited plan. The app always shows your exact price before you pay.

Plan	What it includes (U.S., as of November 2026)
Roam 100GB	About $55 a month. After 100 GB of fast data in a month, it keeps working at a slower speed until the next billing period. (This plan used to be Roam 50GB.)
Roam 300GB	About $80 a month, with more fast data each month.
Roam Unlimited	About $175 a month. Unlimited data, and the plan Starlink allows for use while driving (below).

GOOD TO KNOW

How much is 100 GB?

Email, web pages, weather and maps use little data, so 100 GB goes a long way for those. Video calls use more, and streaming movies every evening uses far more. The Starlink app shows how much you've used.

Pausing between trips

On a Roam plan you don't have to pay full price all winter. Starlink offers a low-cost **Standby Mode** for a small monthly fee: a very slow connection (up to 500 Kbps), enough for messages but not video, that keeps your account ready. It isn't meant for use while driving. You can also pause service entirely.

1. Open the Starlink app and sign in.
2. Go to your subscription or service plan settings and choose to change your plan or pause service.
3. Read the screen: Starlink says your current plan keeps working until the end of the billing period.
4. When you're ready to travel again, change back to a Roam plan in the app.

Using Starlink while driving

Starlink allows **in-motion** use only with the right equipment and plan. Its help center says the Starlink Mini is approved for in-motion use, that Roam Unlimited may be used while moving (where local rules allow), and that home Residential plans may not. For an RV, Starlink points to its Mini mounting options designed for vehicles.

- Never use a dish on a kickstand or a homemade mount while driving. Starlink's terms forbid using a kit on a moving vehicle unless the kit and mount are designated for it, and doing so can void the warranty.
- Larger dishes with motors that tilt themselves are not designed for use in motion.
- The person in the passenger seat can browse. The driver shouldn't — Ohio's hands-free law applies (Chapter 19).

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Picking the right Roam plan, and pausing when you're home, keeps you from paying for unlimited data in January when the camper is in storage.

CHAPTER 14

Setting Up Starlink at the Campsite

A little planning when you choose a site makes Starlink far more reliable. The dish needs a wide patch of open sky, and it doesn't like trees.

Choosing the spot

1. Open the Starlink app and choose **Find an Install Location** (or the obstruction check). Select your kit.
2. Hold your phone where the dish will sit, at the same height, and follow the on-screen steps to scan the sky.
3. The app shows **No Obstructions** or **Obstructions**. Try a few spots if needed — the far side of the RV, or a picnic table.
4. Set the dish down or attach it to its mount. Keep the cable away from where people walk and where the slide-outs move.
5. Plug in the power. The dish finds the satellites by itself; give it several minutes.
6. Join the Starlink Wi-Fi network on your phone, or connect it to your travel router (Chapter 8).

Powering it

- On shore power, plug the power supply into an RV outlet.
- The Mini can run on 12 to 48 volts DC, or on a USB-C charger or power bank rated **100 watts** (USB-C PD). Starlink says lower-rated chargers, including common 65-watt laptop chargers, won't run it.
- Off-grid, the Mini typically draws roughly 20 to 40 watts on average. Larger kits use more. Plan your battery use accordingly (Chapter 17).

Packing up

Some Starlink models can **stow** themselves for travel: in the app, go to **Settings** > **Starlink** and slide **Stow Starlink**. Then unplug, coil the cable loosely, and pack the dish face-down on something soft.

TIP

Trees move with the seasons

A site that's clear in March can be full of leaves in July. After a day, the app's obstruction map fills in from real use and shows where the sky is blocked.

HEADS UP

Wind and storms

Bring the dish in, or take it down, before high winds or a thunderstorm. A kickstand dish can blow over, and a long cable is a tripping hazard in the dark.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

A two-minute sky check when you pull in saves an evening of a connection that keeps dropping.

PART 5

RV Power and Safety

Plugging in at the pedestal, 30-amp and 50-amp service, surge protectors, batteries, inverters and solar, and the generator and carbon monoxide safety that matters most.

CHAPTER 15

Shore Power: 30-Amp and 50-Amp

When you plug your RV into the campground's power post — the **pedestal** — you're using "shore power." Most RVs are built for one of two sizes of plug, and campground sites list which they offer. Knowing yours avoids tripped breakers and confusion when you book.

	30-amp	50-amp
The plug	Three prongs (called TT-30)	Four prongs (called 14-50)
Power available	One 120-volt line — about 3,600 watts in all	Two 120-volt lines — about 12,000 watts in all
Typical RVs	Travel trailers, smaller motorhomes and campers	Larger fifth wheels and motorhomes, often with two air conditioners

Adapters, or "dogbones"

A short adapter cord lets a 50-amp RV plug into a 30-amp post, or the other way around. Adapters are handy, but they **don't add power**. A 50-amp RV on a 30-amp post is limited to about 3,600 watts — so you may need to run one air conditioner, not two, and skip the microwave while the water heater is on electric.

Plugging in safely

1. Before plugging in, turn the pedestal's breaker **off**.
2. Look at the pedestal: no burn marks, melted plastic, loose outlets or water pooling. If it looks wrong, ask the office for help or another site.
3. Plug your surge protector into the pedestal first (Chapter 16), then your RV cord into the surge protector.
4. Turn the pedestal breaker **on**. Wait for the surge protector to check the power.
5. To unplug, reverse it: breaker off first, then unplug.

STAY SAFE

Warm plugs are a warning

If a plug, adapter or cord end feels hot, smells of burning plastic or looks discolored, turn the pedestal breaker off and don't use it again until an RV technician has looked. Never cut off a ground prong or use household extension cords for shore power.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Knowing whether you're a 30-amp or 50-amp rig lets you book the right site and understand why a breaker trips — so you can fix it by turning something off instead of calling for help.

CHAPTER 16

Surge Protectors and Bad Pedestals

Campground power isn't always perfect. On a hot afternoon with every air conditioner running, the voltage can sag, and an old pedestal may be wired wrong. An RV **surge protector** sits between the pedestal and your RV to catch these problems before they damage your appliances and electronics.

Two levels of protection

Type	What it does
Basic surge protector	Absorbs power surges, such as from nearby lightning, and checks the pedestal wiring — lights show problems such as an open ground, open neutral or reversed polarity. It warns you, but it may not cut the power.
Full protection (often called an EMS)	Does all of that and also **cuts the power automatically** when the voltage is too low or too high (for example, below about 102 or above about 132 volts on one maker's units), or the pedestal is miswired, then reconnects when it's safe.

Choosing one

- Match the plug to your RV: 30-amp or 50-amp.
- Decide between a portable unit that plugs into the pedestal, and a unit that an RV technician wires in permanently.
- Some models have a phone app over Bluetooth or Wi-Fi that shows voltage and any fault. That's handy, but not necessary.
- Portable units can be stolen. Some come with a lock bracket; a simple padlock helps.

If it shows a fault

1. Don't override it. Turn the pedestal breaker off.
2. Read the fault code on the screen or lights, and look it up in the surge protector's manual.
3. Report a wiring fault to the campground office. Ask for another site if they can't fix it.
4. If it's low voltage on a busy afternoon, turn off big users like a second air conditioner and try again.

TIP

Keep the manual handy

Take a phone photo of the fault-code chart from the surge protector's manual, and add it to a "Camper" album. You'll have it even with no signal.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

A surge protector costs far less than a new air conditioner, refrigerator board or TV — and it tells you whether the pedestal is safe before you plug in.

CHAPTER 17

Batteries, Inverters and Solar

When you aren't plugged in, your RV runs on its own **house batteries** — separate from the battery that starts the engine. Lights, the water pump, the furnace fan and USB outlets run on 12-volt power from these batteries. Household outlets need an **inverter**.

Part	What it does
House battery	Stores 12-volt power for the RV. Older RVs use lead-acid batteries; many newer ones use lithium (LiFePO4), which is lighter and lasts longer but costs more.
Converter	Built into most RVs. Charges the house batteries from shore power or a generator.
Inverter	Turns battery power into household-style 120-volt power for regular outlets. Not every RV has one, and some power only certain outlets.
Solar charge controller	Sits between solar panels and the batteries and charges them safely.
Battery monitor	A screen or phone app showing how full the batteries are.

Everyday habits

- Learn where your RV's battery disconnect switch is, and what it turns off.
- Check the battery level each evening when off-grid, and before bed in cold weather when the furnace fan runs.
- Turn the inverter off when you don't need household outlets; it uses power just by being on.
- Don't run high-wattage items — hair dryers, coffee makers, space heaters, microwaves — on the inverter unless you know your batteries and inverter can handle them.
- Store the RV with batteries charged, or as the battery maker advises, and keep lithium batteries from charging below freezing unless they're built for it.

GOOD TO KNOW

Portable power stations

A portable power station — a big rechargeable battery with outlets — can run a Starlink Mini, a CPAP or phone chargers at a site with no hookups. Bill's Portable Power Stations guide covers choosing and using one.

STAY SAFE

Leave the wiring to a pro

Adding lithium batteries, an inverter or roof solar means heavy cables, fuses and connections that can start fires if done wrong. Have an RV service technician or qualified installer do it. Your job is reading the monitor and the app.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Knowing your batteries means no surprise dark, silent camper at 2 a.m. — and you'll get far more years out of expensive batteries.

CHAPTER 18

Generators, Carbon Monoxide and Propane Alarms

This is the most important safety chapter in this guide. Generators make **carbon monoxide** (CO), a gas you can't see or smell that can kill within minutes. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) has reported that powering temporary places such as cabins, campers and trailers is one of the common reasons people were using generators in fatal CO incidents.

The generator rules

- Run a portable generator **outdoors only**, never inside the RV, a tent, a garage, an awning room or a basement compartment.
- The CPSC says to keep generators at least **20 feet** from doors, windows and vents of homes and buildings, with the exhaust pointed away. Use the same caution with your RV and your neighbors' RVs.
- Opening a window or door does **not** make it safe to run a generator in an enclosed space.
- When buying a portable generator, look for one with automatic **CO shut-off**. The CPSC notes newer models certified to the PGMA G300-2023 or UL 2201-2023 standards have this.
- For a built-in RV generator, keep the exhaust clear — not blocked by snow, tall grass, a wall or a parked car — and have it serviced as the RV maker says.
- Follow the generator's own manual and labels, and the campground's generator hours.

Your three RV alarms

Alarm	What it does
Carbon monoxide (CO) alarm	Warns of CO from a generator, furnace, stove or a neighbor's exhaust. The CPSC recommends battery-operated or battery-backup alarms meeting the UL 2034 standard.
Propane (LP) leak detector	Usually near the floor, since propane is heavier than air. Warns of a gas leak from the stove, furnace or refrigerator.
Smoke alarm	Usually near the ceiling. Warns of fire.

Test them every trip

1. Press and hold each alarm's **Test** button until it sounds.
2. Check the date printed on each alarm. CO and propane detectors wear out; replace them by the date the maker gives.
3. Replace batteries in battery-powered alarms at the start of each season.
4. Never disconnect an alarm because it chirps. A chirp often means low battery or end of life.

STAY SAFE

If the CO or propane alarm sounds

Get everyone out into fresh air right away, including pets. If anyone feels dizzy, has a headache, nausea or confusion, call 911. For propane, don't touch light switches or start the engine; turn off the propane at the tank if you can do it safely. Don't go back in until the cause is found and fixed.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

These few habits protect the people you love while they sleep. They're the one part of RV tech that's truly a matter of life and death.

PART 6

Getting There Safely

Navigation that knows how big your rig is, offline maps, your RV's own phone app, backup cameras and tire-pressure monitors.

CHAPTER 19

RV-Safe Navigation

Ordinary phone maps plan routes for cars. They don't know your RV is 12 feet tall, 35 feet long or towing a trailer, so they can send you under a low bridge, onto a road with a weight limit, or down a tight lane with no room to turn around. **RV navigation** asks for your rig's size and weight and plans around those limits.

Your choices

Option	What it is
A dedicated RV GPS	A dashboard unit made for RVs, such as Garmin's RV series. You enter your vehicle's size and weight, and it plans routes and warns of low bridges, weight limits, sharp curves and steep grades.
An RV navigation app	Phone and tablet apps made for RVers that ask for your rig's height, length and weight. Most are paid subscriptions; compare features and read the cancellation terms.
Ordinary phone maps	Google Maps, Apple Maps or Waze. Great for finding a grocery store from the campground in the car, but they don't plan around your RV's height or weight.

Setting up a vehicle profile

1. Measure your rig: height from the ground to the top of the highest thing on the roof (air conditioner, antenna or Starlink mount), total length including anything towed, width, and weight.
2. Write those numbers on your Cheat-Sheet and on a note on the dashboard.
3. On a Garmin RV unit, create a **vehicle profile** with those numbers and make sure it's the active profile before you drive. Garmin notes the car profile doesn't give large-vehicle routing.
4. In an RV app, enter the same numbers in its vehicle or rig settings.
5. If your setup changes — a new roof mount, or towing a car — update the profile.

HEADS UP

Your eyes still come first

Garmin says entering your vehicle's details doesn't guarantee every route will account for them or that you'll get every warning. Read road signs for low clearances and weight limits, and trust a posted sign over the screen.

Before you drive: offline maps and the law

- Download offline maps for the area in Google Maps before you leave home (see the "Ways ... Can Make Life Easier" topic). Many campgrounds are in places with no signal.
- Ohio's hands-free driving law has been in effect since April 2023. You may use navigation if you set the route before driving and the phone is mounted. Let a passenger handle the phone otherwise.
- Set the route while parked. Check it on a big screen at the campsite the night before.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Routing that knows your rig's height and weight can steer you around low bridges and tight roads you'd never know were there — the kind of mistake that's expensive and frightening.

CHAPTER 20

Your RV's Phone App and Smart Controls

Many newer RVs come with a control panel on the wall and a matching **phone app**. Over Bluetooth (when you're close) or the internet, you can turn lights on, check the water and holding tanks, see battery levels, run the slide-outs or awning, or set the thermostat. Each RV maker uses its own system, so look in your owner papers for the app name.

Getting connected

1. Find the app name in your RV's owner papers or on the wall panel. Download it only from the App Store or Google Play.
2. Turn on Bluetooth on your phone, stand inside the RV, and follow the app's steps to pair with the panel. Some ask you to press a button on the panel.
3. Check what works away from the RV. Many functions only work over Bluetooth, nearby.
4. Update the app at home on Wi-Fi before a trip (Chapter 3).

STAY SAFE

Look before you move anything

Before extending or retracting slide-outs, levelers or the awning from your phone, walk around and make sure nobody — and nothing — is in the way, including grandkids and pets.

TIP

The wall panel still works

If the app won't connect, use the switches and panel in the RV. The app is a convenience, not the only way.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Seeing tank and battery levels from your chair, or turning on the porch light as you walk back from the bathhouse, makes camp life a little easier.

CHAPTER 21

Backup Cameras

Backing a motorhome or trailer into a campsite is one of the most stressful parts of RVing. A **backup camera** shows what's behind you on a screen up front. Many newer RVs come pre-wired for one, and add-on cameras are available for older rigs.

Type	What it means
Wired camera	A cable runs the length of the RV. Steady picture; installation takes more work.
Wireless camera	Sends the picture by radio to a monitor or phone app. Easier to add; the picture can freeze or drop on long rigs or near other radio signals.
Factory pre-wire	Many RVs have a mounting spot and wiring ready at the back. Check your owner papers for which cameras fit.

Using it well

- Wipe the lens before each drive; dirt and rain make the picture blurry.
- Learn the guide lines on the screen in an empty parking lot before your first campsite.
- Use a spotter, too. Agree on hand signals or use your phones on speaker, and if you can't see your spotter, stop.
- Some cameras also work while driving as a rear-view or side view for lane changes; check yours.

HEADS UP

Screens don't show everything

Cameras can miss low posts, tree branches above the roof, and children who dart behind you. Get out and look before backing into a tight site.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

A clear picture behind you takes much of the tension out of backing in — and fewer arguments at the campsite.

CHAPTER 22

Tire-Pressure Monitors (TPMS)

RV tires carry heavy loads, and a slow leak or a tire that overheats can lead to a blowout. A **tire pressure monitoring system** (TPMS) puts a small sensor on each tire and shows each tire's pressure — and often its temperature — on a display or phone app while you drive.

How they work

- Most RV add-on systems use sensors that screw onto each tire's valve stem in place of the cap.
- A display on the dash, or an app on your phone, shows each tire and sounds an alarm if pressure drops or temperature climbs.
- Long rigs sometimes need a signal repeater so the rear tires reach the display.
- Many newer tow vehicles have their own TPMS for their own tires, but that doesn't watch the trailer's tires.

Setting it up

1. Find the right cold tire pressure on the RV's tire placard (often near the entry door) or in the owner papers.
2. Follow the TPMS instructions to pair each sensor to its position on the display.
3. Set the low- and high-pressure alarms as the system's instructions suggest for your tires.
4. Check that every tire shows up before you leave. Change sensor batteries as the maker advises.

STAY SAFE

If a tire alarm sounds

Slow down gently, don't brake hard, and pull off somewhere safe and well away from traffic. Call your roadside assistance service rather than changing a heavy RV tire on a highway shoulder.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

A tire monitor warns you of trouble while there's still time to pull over safely — long before you'd feel it in the steering.

PART 7

Booking, Weather and Staying Safe

Reserving a campsite — including Ohio State Parks — staying reachable with satellite SOS and location sharing, weather alerts at camp, and spotting RV rental and booking scams.

CHAPTER 23

Booking a Campsite (Including Ohio State Parks)

Most campgrounds now take reservations online. Popular parks fill up months ahead, especially on summer and fall weekends, so it helps to know where to book and how far ahead you can.

Where to book

Where	How to book (as of November 2026)
Ohio State Parks	Book campsites at **reserveohio.com** or by phone at **(866) 644-6727**. Campsites and camper cabins can be reserved up to **six months** ahead. State park lodges and their cabins have their own site, **greatohiolodges.com**.
National parks and federal land	**Recreation.gov** handles national parks, national forests and Army Corps of Engineers lakes. Many campsites open six months before arrival, but each campground sets its own window — some release in stages or the same day.
Private campgrounds	Book on the campground's own website or by calling it. Some use booking sites; check the details match the campground's own website.

Booking step by step

1. Type the address — reserveohio.com or recreation.gov — yourself, or use a bookmark. Don't click an ad at the top of search results (Chapter 26).
2. Create an account with your email and a strong password well before the day you want to book.
3. Search for the park and dates. Filter for your **RV length** and **electric hookup** (30-amp or 50-amp, Chapter 15).
4. Look at the site photos and map: is it level, shady (bad for Starlink), and near the bathhouse?
5. Pay with a credit card, which gives you more protection than a debit card.
6. Save the confirmation email, and write the confirmation number on paper too.
7. Read the cancellation rules before you pay, and note any deadlines on your calendar.

TIP

Book the moment dates open

For a popular park, find out exactly when your dates become available, be signed in a few minutes early, and have your site choices ready. Good holiday weekends can go quickly.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Knowing the right websites and windows means you get the site you want — and avoid paying a look-alike website extra for something you could book directly.

CHAPTER 24

Staying Reachable: Satellite SOS and Sharing Your Location

Many beautiful campgrounds have no cell signal at all. Newer phones, and a few small gadgets, can now reach help through satellites. And sharing your location lets family see you've arrived safely.

Satellite help on your phone

- **iPhone 14 and later:** Emergency SOS via satellite lets you text 911 when there's no cell or Wi-Fi signal. Messages via satellite (iOS 18 and later in the U.S.) lets you text family. Roadside Assistance via satellite can reach AAA.
- **Google Pixel 9 and later (except the 9a):** Satellite SOS reaches emergency services with no signal.
- **Your phone company:** T-Mobile's T-Satellite and Verizon's satellite texting work with some newer phones. Ask your carrier what your phone and plan include.
- You'll need a clear view of the sky, and it's slower than a regular text. Always try calling 911 first.

Practice in the driveway

1. **iPhone:** open **Settings** > **Emergency SOS** and tap **Try Demo** under Emergency SOS via satellite. The demo doesn't contact anyone.
2. **Pixel:** open **Settings** > **Safety & emergency** > **Satellite SOS** and try the demo.
3. Learn how to point the phone toward the sky. You'll be calmer if you ever need it.

A satellite messenger

A **satellite messenger** is a small device, such as a Garmin inReach, that sends texts and an SOS by satellite from almost anywhere. It needs its own monthly plan. As of November 2026 Garmin offers several plan levels, from an SOS-only plan with pay-as-you-go messages up to unlimited texting. Check Garmin's website for current prices.

Sharing your location with family

1. **Google Maps:** tap your profile picture, then **Location sharing** > **New share**. Choose how long and who.
2. **iPhone:** in the **Find My** app, tap **People**, then the **+** button and **Share My Location**, and choose the person.
3. Tell the family you're sharing, and ask them not to worry if it doesn't update in a no-signal area.
4. Stop sharing when the trip is over, if you prefer.

STAY SAFE

Tell 911 where you are

Wherever you are, if you call 911, start with your location: the campground name, site number, road and nearest town. Campsite numbers mean nothing to a dispatcher in another county unless you say the campground's name.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Even at a campsite with no bars, you have a way to call for help — and your family can see you've arrived without waiting by the phone.

CHAPTER 25

Weather Alerts at Camp

An RV or tent is not a safe place in a tornado or a severe thunderstorm with high winds. At home you know where the basement is; at a new campground, you may not. Good alerts give you time to act.

Make sure alerts can reach you

1. **Turn on emergency alerts.** iPhone: **Settings** > **Notifications** > **Government Alerts**. Pixel: **Settings** > **Notifications** > **Wireless emergency alerts**. Samsung: **Settings** > **Safety and emergency** > **Wireless emergency alerts**.
2. Remember that these alerts don't arrive in airplane mode or when the phone is on Wi-Fi only with no cell connection.
3. Install a weather app and allow it to use your location, so alerts follow you to the campground.
4. Pack a **NOAA Weather Radio** with battery backup. It works with no cell signal. Set its county (SAME) code for where you're camping, or use the all-alerts setting while traveling.

Watch or warning?

Alert	What to do
Watch	Conditions are right for this weather. Get ready, know where you'll go, and keep an eye on the sky and your alerts.
Warning	It's happening or about to. Act now.

At every new campground

- Ask at check-in: "Where do we go in a tornado warning?" Many campgrounds have a storm shelter or a sturdy bathhouse.
- In a tornado warning, leave the RV and go to the sturdiest building, lowest floor, interior room. If there's no building, the National Weather Service's last-resort advice is to lie flat in a low spot and cover your head.
- Bring in the awning and Starlink dish before strong winds.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Alerts that reach you, and a plan made in daylight, turn a frightening night into a calm walk to the shelter.

CHAPTER 26

RV Rental and Booking Scams

Scammers follow the money, and RV travel is a big business. They post fake rental listings, copy real campground websites, and advertise impossible deals on RVs and Starlink kits. The good news: the warning signs are the same every time.

Warning signs

- **Pay only by wire transfer, gift card, payment app or cryptocurrency.** The FTC says a renter who insists on these is a scammer. Money sent this way is like cash — usually gone for good.
- **A price far below everything else.** A luxury motorhome for a fraction of the going rate, or a "lifetime" Starlink deal, is bait.
- **Pressure to decide now**, or vague answers about the RV, its location or the owner.
- **Moving off the platform.** If someone on a rental site asks you to pay or chat outside it, that usually means you lose the site's protections.
- **A look-alike website** for a campground or reservation system, often found through an ad at the top of search results.

Before you pay

1. Search the listing's photos, owner name or address along with words like "scam," "complaint" or "review."
2. If the same RV or address shows up with a different owner's name, walk away.
3. Check the rental or campground company's own website to make sure the listing is there.
4. Get the contract or rental agreement in writing before sending any deposit.
5. Pay with a credit card, through the official site or app.

SCAM ALERT

"Your reservation has a problem"

A text or email saying your campsite booking will be canceled unless you pay or "verify" right away? Don't use its link or number. Sign in to the reservation site yourself, or call the campground's number from its official website.

SCAM ALERT

Fake Starlink deals

Social-media ads for a "lifetime" Starlink subscription or a kit at a huge discount are scams. Buy only from starlink.com, the Starlink app or a well-known store.

If you've already paid

1. Call the company you used to pay — your bank, card company, or the gift-card or money-transfer company — right away and tell them it was fraud.
2. Report it at **ReportFraud.ftc.gov**.
3. Change the password on any account you shared, and watch your statements.
4. Call someone you trust. Being fooled by a scam isn't a sign of foolishness; these are professional criminals.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

A five-minute check before you pay protects your vacation money — and the trip you've been looking forward to.

PART 8

When to Call Bill & Your Cheat-Sheet

An honest word about when a hand is worth it, and a one-page summary to keep in the RV.

CHAPTER 27

When to Call Bill

I've written this guide so you can handle your RV and camping tech on your own. But part of being helpful is being honest about when a hand saves time, worry or money. Here's my straight advice, with no pressure.

Times it's well worth a call

- **Before a big trip** — updating phones, tablets and apps, downloading offline maps, and turning on emergency alerts and location sharing (Chapter 3, Chapter 24 and Chapter 25).
- **Choosing how to get online** — hotspot, travel router, booster or Starlink — so you buy the one that fits how you travel (Chapter 7).
- **Setting up a travel router or Starlink** and getting every device in the RV connected to it (Chapter 8 and Chapter 14).
- **Registering a booster** with your phone company (Chapter 11).
- **Learning your RV's phone app**, your tire monitor's app or your surge protector's app (Chapter 20 and Chapter 22).
- **Checking a rental listing or deal** before you pay (Chapter 26).
- **You'd simply rather have a patient person handle it.** That's always a good enough reason.

What I don't do

I don't climb onto RV roofs, wire batteries, inverters or solar, work on propane systems or repair pedestals. Those belong to an **RV service technician** or a licensed electrician (Chapter 10, Chapter 17 and Chapter 18). I'm happy to help you prepare questions for them and set up the technology side afterward.

What working with me is like

I work at your pace — no rushing, no talking down, no jargon. I explain what I'm doing in plain words, and I'll always tell you honestly when something isn't worth the money. Home visits are here in Portage County, Ohio — a good time to set things up before you leave. Remote help reaches you wherever you are, as long as you have a connection. I've been doing this work for more than 30 years.

FROM BILL

How to reach me

Call **(330) 200-8042**, or book a time at **billshometech.com/book**. My help is **$49 remote · $99 in your home**. This guide is free to read and share with family and fellow campers.

GOOD TO KNOW

You may be greeted by Sophie

When you call or visit billshometech.com, you might first meet **Sophie**, my AI receptionist. She can answer quick questions and help you book a time. The actual help always comes from me.

CHAPTER 28

Your RV & Camping Tech Cheat-Sheet

Keep a filled-in copy of this in the RV's glove box or a kitchen drawer, and a photo on your phone.

The essentials

Topic	Remember
Campground Wi-Fi	Join only the name the office gives you. Sign-in page not showing? Open a website, or turn the VPN off (Chapter 4).
Public Wi-Fi safety	Look for https and the lock. Banking on cellular data if you can (Chapter 5).
Hotspot	iPhone: Settings > Personal Hotspot. Android: search Settings for "hotspot" (Chapter 6).
Booster	Needs some signal outside. Register it with each carrier — free (Chapter 11).
Starlink	Clear sky. Roam plan for travel; Roam Unlimited for use while driving. Pause at home (Chapter 13).
Shore power	Breaker off, surge protector first, RV cord, breaker on (Chapter 15).
Generator	Outdoors only, at least 20 feet from doors, windows and vents (Chapter 18).
Alarms	Test CO, propane and smoke alarms every trip (Chapter 18).
Navigation	RV profile with height, length and weight. Road signs beat the screen (Chapter 19).
Ohio State Parks	reserveohio.com · (866) 644-6727 · up to six months ahead (Chapter 23).
Paying for rentals	Never wire money, gift cards, payment apps or crypto (Chapter 26).
Bill	(330) 200-8042 · billshometech.com/book · $49 remote · $99 in your home

Write it down once

Item	Yours
RV height (to top of roof gear)	____ feet ____ inches
Total length (with tow)	____ feet
Weight	____ pounds
Shore power	30-amp / 50-amp (circle one)
Tire pressure (cold)	Front ____ Rear ____ Trailer ____
Travel router name / password	_____
Router admin password	_____
Starlink account email	_____
Booster registered with	_____
Roadside assistance number	_____
RV insurance and policy number	_____
RV service technician	_____
Family contact on this trip	_____

When something's wrong, in order

1. **Alarm sounding (CO, propane or smoke)?** Get everyone out first. Call 911 if anyone feels ill (Chapter 18).
2. **Severe weather warning?** Leave the RV for the sturdiest building (Chapter 25).
3. **No internet?** Check which connection you're on, restart the router or Starlink, then try the phone hotspot (Chapters 4 to 8).
4. **No cell signal?** Try the booster, Wi-Fi Calling on campground Wi-Fi, or satellite texting (Chapter 4, Chapter 9 and Chapter 24).
5. **Power out at the site?** Read the surge protector's screen, check the pedestal breaker and your RV's breakers, then ask the office (Chapter 16).
6. **Tire alarm?** Slow down gently and pull off safely (Chapter 22).
7. **Someone wants payment by gift card or wire?** Stop. It's a scam (Chapter 26).
8. **Still stuck?** Call Bill at (330) 200-8042.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Everything important in one place, so the answer is in the drawer — even with no signal at all.

Safe travels, and enjoy the campfire.

— Bill