

Used Caravan Hunting

- Make sure you look at plenty of different vans and take a notebook to note down things about each one you that you are interested in.
- Take a torch for checking out some of the darker recesses and underneath.
- If the caravan you are looking at is closed and the windows shut, have a sniff when you open the door, if you smell mustiness it might be damp, not always caused by water ingress but also caused by condensation. If there is air freshener in the van what is it hiding? Get a Damp Meter, available from most DIY Stores, to be totally sure.
- Look for signs of external damage, fresh paint jobs can hide a multitude of sins, and possible future damp areas. Damp is like cancer in a van so check out the back corners of roof lockers and under the bed areas both front and back discoloured wood and wall coverings.
- Check the chassis dirt suggests a careless owner corrosion on the chassis is almost impossible to get rid of and check especially were the A-frame connects to the chassis for damage, if all looks OK it probably will be, Galvanised Chassis are best as they require minimum maintenance.
- Inspect the Tow hitch does the handle lift easily, is the breakaway cable intact Does the handbrake hold the van when fully engaged. Check the electrical pins in the lighting and connection sockets, rusty ones can cause poor contacts and may even require replacement. Pull on the D-handles if they are loose this could be a sign of damp.
- Check the Tyres for even wear and good tread depth across the tyre, Perished or cracked tyres are a sign of a bad owner, is there a spare tyre and jack, very expensive to buy.
- Check the water pipes in the cupboards under sink, shower etc, for signs of leakage, is the fridge clean and free from rust, are the hob burners rusty, check that there is a service history for the van and that all internal electrics and gas systems have been serviced and checked.
- Check out the Layout, if you have kids would you be able to put them to bed and still have sufficient room to move!
- Special Edition Caravans are almost the same price as standard vans and quite often have more comfort features built in.
- DO NOT be afraid to try putting up beds, checking out wardrobes, battery and gas lockers, look and check everything, you do not want to fix problems before you get away on your first trip!

Copyright © 1998 - 2011 Thomson T-Line History & Information

Disclaimer

The advice and tips on [Thomson T-Line History & Information](#) are free to copy for personal use, if you are a webmaster or company who wishes to use these sheets for your business or website please ask for permission. Thomson T-Line History & Information shall not be liable for any damage or difficulty, direct or indirect, arising from utilisation of the information contained within these pages.

1908 Thomson T-LINE 1982

Thomson T-Line Caravans History & Information

- Two books which I own and recommend are by Haynes: The complete caravan book and The caravan manual, they cost around £15 each but will pay for themselves when it comes to minor repairs and setting up a caravan.
- If you have any doubts about the caravan you are looking at then walk away, there are plenty of second hand caravan out there to choose from!
- The most important thing is to make sure you can tow the caravan legally.
 - ◆ From 1st January 1997 you will need to have a passed a trailer test, more details on the DVLA website.
 - ◆ The recommended weight for towing is 85% of the cars max gross weight
Example - cars max gross weight = 1000kg caravan max gross weight = 850kg.
 - ◆ Hitch weight – make sure these match or the caravan hitch weight is not over the recommended limit for your vehicle.
- What extras come with the caravan?
 - ⇒ Step
 - ⇒ Waste and Fresh Water tanks
 - ⇒ Cassette toilet (if one not fitted)
 - ⇒ Leisure battery
 - ⇒ Spare wheel
 - ⇒ Jack
 - ⇒ Stabiliser (I use a bulldog one)
 - ⇒ Leg brace
 - ⇒ Mains cable
 - ⇒ Gas bottle(s)
 - ⇒ Fire extinguisher
 - ⇒ Smoke alarm
 - ⇒ Hitch Lock
 - ⇒ Wheel clamp
 - ⇒ Burglar alarm
 - ⇒ Full size Awning
 - ⇒ Porch Awning
 - ⇒ You probably will not get many of the above but remember that they are extras and will save you a considerable amount if you need to buy them.
- Don't forget to haggle about the price and try to get the extras thrown in. They want to sell their van so you are one up already!

Copyright © 1998 - 2011 Thomson T-Line History & Information

Disclaimer

The advice and tips on [Thomson T-Line History & Information](#) are free to copy for personal use, if you are a webmaster or company who wishes to use these sheets for your business or website please ask for permission. Thomson T-Line History & Information shall not be liable for any damage or difficulty, direct or indirect, arising from utilisation of the information contained within these pages.