

by Tom Jones

Fishing, boating and RVing are activities that fit together very well. Periodically we get asked how easy or difficult it is to tow a small fishing boat behind a motorhome.

As someone who towed a 20 foot cuddy cabin boat behind a 30 foot class A motorhome for quite a few years I can say that it's definitely doable. If you haven't yet purchased the motorhome and are undecided which to buy, a class A would provide better visibility when reversing down boat ramps than a class C. But a small fishing boat could be towed behind most motorized RVs with no problem.

As with any towing situation, you need to know the respective weights of the RV and boat/trailer and the gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) & gross combined weight rating (GCWR) of the RV. Assuming that the combined weight of the RV, people, supplies, gas, water, etc is within the GVWR, your towing capacity will be GCWR-GVWR. This is explained in more detail in another article in our Towing And Towables area.

Note that being within the weight ratings above doesn't tell you how much power you'll have to spare. Our prior 30 foot class A gas powered coach had sufficient power for our use towing the boat all through California with occasional trips to Oregon and Arizona. But it would be slow going over the high elevations. We're currently towing a Suburban (7,000 lbs) with a 38 foot diesel coach, but I wouldn't attempt to tow it with our old gas motorhome.

Newcomers to the RV/boat combination ask whether they should install a front bumper hitch on their RV so they can "see" the boat/trailer when launching. You'll occasionally see those hitches, but few people use them. When you've learned to reverse the trailer down a boat ramp you won't consider that front hitch an alternative. The small amount of overhang from the front axle to the hitch would actually make it harder to control the boat/trailer than the longer overhang behind the rear axle.

For your first trip, try to find a launch ramp where you can line the RV and trailer up in a straight line with the ramp before reversing and just keep it straight. Remember that steering will be opposite what you're used to when you're moving forward; Turning the steering wheel to the right will move the boat/trailer to the left. With practice, you'll be able to reverse down more and more difficult ramps.

I've never used a rear camera to launch a boat, but I can see that it could help because you'd see the small movements of the boat/trailer sooner and can react accordingly.