

Colonial Service Newsletter



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Winter storage for your Airstream

Here are some quick tips that you may want to consider.

- Wash and wax your Airstream (this will give you an opportunity to inspect for any items in need of attention).
- Make a list of any items that you may find during your inspection that need repaired but that you feel can wait until spring. Place inside unit where you will find the list next spring.
- Inspect the roof of your Airstream, check all vents, skylights and covers for any cracks or to make sure the covers are not missing; this can prevent damage from leaks over the winter.
- Correct any areas that the sealer looks to be degrading or fill any visible voids.
- Store your Airstream inside a building whenever possible (an environmentally controlled building would be best). Don't store under trees or where there are weeds or tall grass. Airstream does not recommend using a cover for trailers because it can leave marks in the finish due to the cover moving when windy.
- Park your Airstream on a concrete pad or a level area. If you are parking on bare ground put something between the tires and the ground.
- Check the tire pressure; fill the tires to the maximum cold pressure rating while being stored.
- If your Airstream is being stored outside cover your tires to prevent damage caused by UV rays.
- Charge lead acid batteries to full charge. A weak battery can freeze and damage the case or reduce battery life.
- You may want to disconnect the batteries and remove them from your Airstream; you can keep them charged up by using a trickle charger. If you leave the batteries in the RV you should activate the converter at least once a month to keep batteries charged.
- Drain all water lines and water systems including any holding tanks and the water heater. Also drain any water filters you may have in system; don't forget your exterior faucets or outside shower.
- Winterize your Airstream by blowing out system with compressed air and putting anti-freeze in all traps and stool or pumping anti-freeze through the complete plumbing system.
- Lubricate hinges, awning brackets, step hinge points (this should help prevent rust and corrosion during storage period).
- Clean and apply a lubricant to all gaskets to keep them pliable over the winter.
- The vent for the range hood should be latched using the travel lock clips.
- Clean the interior of your Airstream, as well as range/oven, microwave. Also clean out refrigerator and leave doors open several inches to prevent mildew.
- Remove all food from the RV so we are not encouraging any winter guests.
- You may also want to install some moisture control in your Airstream, such as Damp Rid or No Damp dehumidifiers.
- If you have a motorized product check all fluid levels, change the oil, check anti-freeze (cooling system and windshield washer) and filters prior to storage.
- Make a point to start your motorhome and generator each month. It is suggested running both at least 15 to 30 minutes at a time monthly. This will allow for circulation of the engine fluids as well as testing of the battery if you do not remove them for the winter.
- You may also want to add a fuel stabilizer to keep your gasoline or diesel fuel from becoming stale or to remove moisture. These are just some basic suggestions, I am sure that everyone has their own versions. But no matter what type of RV you may have, they will need special care and tucked in for the winter months!

Dave Schumann, General Manager
Airstream Customer Relations Group



PREPARING RV FOR STORAGE

Properly preparing your vehicle for storage will lessen the possibility of damage to your vehicle. Prepare the motor home for vacancy just as you would if you were leaving your house for an extended period of time.

Clean and Prep Coach for Storage

1. Turn off the LP gas tank.
2. Turn the furnace thermostat switch on the bottom of the thermostat to OFF.
3. Remove all foods and items that may cause odors from cabinets and refrigerator.
4. Clean and defrost the refrigerator. Prop the door open slightly to allow any odors to dissipate. Place an open box of baking soda inside the refrigerator to help absorb odors.
5. Fully charge the batteries. Batteries must have at least 80 percent charge to survive freezing temperatures and long periods of non-use. We recommend that you connect a battery charger or plug in the shoreline once a month during long-term storage periods to maintain battery charge and to avoid sulfating. If connecting a charger directly to batteries, turn the Battery Switch off to avoid electrical arcing when attaching and detaching charger clamps.

NOTE: We do not recommend leaving the shoreline plugged in continuously during storage periods because the batteries can lose electrolytic fluids and become damaged from continuous charging without periodic use. We recommend following regular battery inspection and maintenance especially in cold weather.

6. After charging batteries, turn the Battery Switch off to disconnect the batteries and avoid parasitic* drain. The inverter/charger must be shut off at the control panel to avoid draining the house batteries when the Battery Switch is turned off. The inverter/charger is directly powered and is not affected by the Switch.

*Parasitic battery drain is the gradual drain by items connected directly to battery power switch such as clocks, radio memory and the engine computer.

7. Have the vehicle chassis completely serviced and lubricated. Thoroughly clean the undercarriage of accumulated dirt and dust. Apply paint or undercoating as needed to prevent rust and corrosion. Do not paint or undercoat any part of the brake system, exhaust including heat shields, and generator.
8. Wash and wax the coach.
9. Inspect all seams and seals around doors, windows, vents and any other joints. Replace or repair any that are damaged. Sealing materials and compounds can be purchased from your dealer. Badly damaged weather seals may need to be replaced by your dealer.
10. Close all windows and roof vents. Protect all appliance vent openings from contamination by animals or insects (e.g. bird nests, wasp nests, etc.)
11. Lubricate all door hinges and locks.
12. Clean the interior of the coach. Dirt and stains are more easily removed when fresh.

NOTE: When storing your vehicle through the winter or in cold climates, extra preparations need to be made to protect plumbing, appliances and systems that can be damaged by freezing temperatures.

See "Winterizing" in your Owner's Manual.

Inside Colonial...

That time has come again to get your RV ready for winter. Take advantage of our “**Winterize Special**”. While our technicians winterize your RV we can also address any of your other concerns or services needed. Should the need arise for you to arrive before we open or after we close we can accommodate a spot and landline for your convenience.

We have recently expanded our staff of technicians to include Phil LeCompte, a “*Full Time*” certified Chevrolet/Workhorse mechanic. This will allow us to even further attempt to meet your total service needs, weather it be on your motorhome or tow vehicle. We have also added another service consultant Dan Donovan, Dan brings over 28 years of RV experience to our organization.

We have convenient hours to accommodate your needs and would be happy to schedule your reservation, Monday thru Friday 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM and Saturday 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM. When an emergency should arise we will do our best to fit your RV into our schedule. For those who do not live locally, we can accommodate you by having a spot with electric open, so you can come in the night prior to your service reservation.

Thank you,

Anthony A. Cursi
Service Director

Main Phone: 1-800-265-9019

Service Staff

Anthony A. Cursi, Service & Parts Director – ext 110
Airstream Certified Technician

Robert Johnston, Service and Warranty Consultant – ext 109

Dan Donovan, Service Consultant – ext 114

Parts Staff

Brian Hawtin, Parts Manager – ext 111

John (JT) Thatcher, Parts Specialist – ext 108

Technicians

William Hofer Airstream Certified Technician-RVDA/RVIA Certified

Kevin Amaro Airstream Certified Technician-RVDA/RVIA Certified

Joe Giaccio Airstream Certified Technician-RVDA/RVIA Certified

Phil LeCompte Jr Certified Chevrolet/Workhorse Technician

James Lenzo Jr. Airstream Certified Technician

Service Tips WIT Club New

BATTERY CARE

This is an article about battery maintenance. The information is taken from Interstate Battery Company's website at www.interstatebatteries.com. This installment will cover frequently asked questions. Remember to follow all proper safety precautions when working around any battery and when in doubt, contact a qualified professional for help.

Maintaining Batteries

How do I maintain my battery? Follow these guidelines every three to six months to extend the life of your low-maintenance Interstate Battery:

- **Maintain Water Level.** If your battery has removable vent caps, you should regularly check the water level and add water when it is low.
- **Keep Terminals Clean.** Visually inspect the terminals and cables at least once a year for signs of corrosion. If dirty or corroded, clean the connections with a scraper and wire brush. This will ensure a good connection and proper starting.
- **Keep Case Clean.** Keep the top of the battery clean of heavy dirt and oil with a cloth dampened by ammonia or a 50/50 solution of baking soda and water. Then rinse with clear water and thoroughly dry.
- **Keep Battery Charged.** If your vehicle is not driven weekly, it may be necessary to charge your battery before use. Lack of use is hard on a battery, especially an automotive battery, which is designed to be charged regularly by an alternator. Any unused battery, regardless of its chemistry, will self-discharge over time and, if allowed to remain discharged, will undergo severe corrosion and battery failure. The rate of discharge depends on the type of battery and the storage temperature. So, it's important to keep your battery charged.

If you prefer that your mechanic take care of your battery, be sure to ask him to maintain the water levels and to keep the connections and case clean of corrosion and dirt.

As batteries age, do their maintenance requirements change? Yes. Typically the specific gravity gets higher and gassing increases due to some battery deterioration and/or loss of reserve capacity. An older battery normally requires more charging.

Watering Batteries

Do I need to add acid to my battery? No! Add distilled water only. When electrolyte is lost under normal use, the water evaporates while the acid remains in the battery. Adding acid will, therefore, alter the chemical composition of the electrolyte and cause the battery to fail more quickly. The only time electrolyte should be added is after accidental spillage.

How often should I water my batteries? How often you use your batteries will determine the frequency of watering. For example, the weekend fisherman may find he only needs to water the batteries in his boat once a month. While a maintenance supervisor for a golf course might need to service the batteries in their golf cars every week. Also, using batteries in a hot climate may require more frequent watering. It is best to check your new batteries regularly as this will give you a good feel for how often your application will require battery watering.

NOTE: A brand new battery may have a low electrolyte level. Charge the battery first and then add water if needed. Adding water to a battery before charging may result in overflow of the electrolyte. If the lead plates of the battery are exposed, you need to add water. To be safe, you can add water any time it falls below the proper level. Ideally, the water level should be no higher than 1/8 inch below the bottom of the vent well. To avoid irreparable damage, make sure the electrolyte level never drops below the top of the plates. Also, avoid over watering, which may result in electrolyte overflow.

Isn't a sealed no-maintenance battery better? Actually, a low-maintenance battery with removable vent caps has advantages over a sealed no-maintenance battery. Access to the cells allows you or your mechanic to:

- Extend the life of your battery when water evaporation has occurred and delay the purchase of a new one. If a sealed no-maintenance battery has water evaporation or if it is affected by a charging system problem, nothing can be done to extend the life of the battery; it must be replaced.
- Perform a specific gravity test on each cell with a hydrometer, which may reveal important information about the state of the battery, including if one or more of the cells is defective. This test may not be performed on a sealed battery.

Electrolyte Freezing Point

As a battery approaches the discharged state, the easier it becomes for the electrolyte to freeze. However, a fully charged battery can be stored at subfreezing temperatures without freezing the electrolyte.

The accompanying chart shows the approximate freezing points of electrolyte at various specific gravities:

Freezing Point Temperature			
Percentage of charge	Freezing Point Temp (approx)	Specific Gravity Corrected to 80F	Battery Voltage
100	-92F	1.277	12.73
90	-65F	1.258	12.62
80	-45F	1.238	12.50
70	-25F	1.217	12.37
60	-13F	1.195	12.24
50	-3F	1.172	12.10
40	+5F	1.148	11.96
30	+15F	1.124	11.81
20	+25F	1.098	11.66
10	+32F	1.073	11.51



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