

Hello,

Thank you for downloading our Caravanning Glossary. We’ve created it to help you understand a lot of the jargon often used by caravanners.

Hopefully this will be of use, especially if you are new to caravanning! This list is certainly not exhaustive and we can pretty much guarantee that there is something missing. If you notice anything missing that you think should be added or you spot a mistake, we’d love for you to get in touch and let us know.

You can get in touch at: [www.youngtourers.co.uk](http://www.youngtourers.co.uk) or email us on: [Contact@youngtourers.co.uk](mailto:Contact@youngtourers.co.uk)

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| A |  |
| A-Class | A type of motorhome, where both the cab and living area are integrated into one. |
| Actual Laden Weight (ALW) | The total weight of the caravan and its contents when being towed. |
| A-Frame | The triangular shaped area at the front of the caravan. This is where the hitch and handbrake for the caravan are located. This area is usually covered by a plastic faring. |
| Al-KO | A manufacturer or chassis and running gear for caravans and motorhomes. |
| AL-KO ATC | An electronic stability device which can be fitted to caravans built on an AL-KO Chassis to prevent snaking by activating the brakes on the caravan. |
| Approved workshop | A caravan or motorhome service agent who has been approved under a scheme called the ‘approved workshop scheme’, a scheme run collaboratively between the Caravan club, Caravan and Camping Club and National Caravan Council. |
| Aquaroll | A brand name for a large container which is used to collect and store water for use in a caravan or motorhome. Water is fed from the Aqua roll using a water pump. |
| Awning | An awning is similar to a tent in that it usually consists of a fabric and a pole structure. An awning is attached to the side of a caravan or motorhome and allows the extension of living space. Awnings come in many different sizes, designs and layout dependent upon individual needs. They can often incorporate a sleeping annex to allow extra people to sleep. Caravan awnings are either ‘Full’, where the whole side of the caravan is covered, or ‘Porch’, where only a small portion, usually around the door is covered. Note that caravan awnings are not freestanding. |
| Awning Carpet | This is a term used to describe a floor covering added to an awning. They allow for insulation and are ideal where there are poor ground conditions. Porous carpets are usually recommended as these cause less damage to the grass underneath. |
| Awning channel/rail | This is a slot located around the periphery of the caravan side, which has a rounded profile. When erecting an awning, it will need to be located in the ‘Awning rail’. |
| Awning length | Due to the huge differences in caravan design, layout and requirements, lengths of caravans vary greatly. For this reason, awnings come in many different sizes. Dependant on brand of awning, the length may be measured differently. Usually the awning length is given in a value of CM’s and is the length from ground to ground at each end of the awning rail. Some awning manufactures group the figures i.e. 950cm-975cm, when recommending a size. Always refer to the awning manufacturer for guidance. |
| Awning Skirt | A long piece of plastic material which is fitted whilst using an awning to prevent drafts from under the caravan. |
| B |  |
| Battery Charger | These are devices fitted to modern caravans as standard which charge the 12v leisure battery when on hook up mains connection or when the caravan is connected to a towing vehicle. |
| Berth | The number of people a caravan can sleep. |
| B+E license | This is the category of license required for any driver wishing to tow a car and caravan combination with a gross train weight in excess of 3.5T. |
| Blown Air Heating | A heating system found on modern caravans where warm air is distributed around the caravan via ducting. |
| BPW Winterhoff | A manufacturer of chassis and running gear for leisure vehicles in the UK. |
| BPW iDC | An anti-snaking stability system which can be fitted to caravans using BPW Winterhoff chassis and running gear. |
| Breakaway cable | A small wire cable found on the hitch or a caravan which acts as a secondary coupling. The cable is clipped onto the back of the towing vehicle and, In the unlikely event that the caravan becomes detached from the towing vehicle during the transit, the breakaway cable will activate the handbrake on the caravan. |
| Butane | A type of LPG gas used in caravans or motorhomes. Butane is usually found in blue cylinders. |
| C |  |
| Caravan Club (CC) | A national members club providing caravan and motorhome related services to its members. |
| Caravan and Camping Club (CC&C) | A national members club providing caravan, motorhome and camping related services to its members. |
| Carver | Manufacturers of very common caravan appliances such as water heaters and fridges. Carver were taken over by Truma in 1999. The carver name is therefore sometimes used as a generic term. |
| Cassette blind | A roller blind installed in caravans and motorhomes along with a fly screen as part of the window assembly. |
| Cassette Toilet | This is the name given to the chemical toilets found in caravans and motorhomes. These are found in almost all modern caravans. The cassette can be removed from the outside of the caravan and transported for emptying without taking the entire toilet assembly. |
| Chemical toilet disposal point | An area on site where chemical caravan toilets can be emptied. |
| Certified Location (CL) | A CL is a small site on private land available for use to Caravan club members only. These sites allow a maximum of 5 units at any one time. |
| Certified Site (CS) | A small site for the use of Caravan and camping club members. |
| Corner steadies | Sometimes referred to as ‘legs’, these are the jacks located on all four corners of a caravan and are used as a stabilisation device. They are operated using a 17mm socket or winder. |
| Control Panel | A panel of switches and controls that control many elements of the caravans use. These are usually all in the same location or are sometimes integrated into one single panel. |
| CRiS | The caravan Registration and identification scheme. A system that allows caravans and motorhomes to be uniquely identified in a similar way to a cars VIN number. |
| D |  |
| Damp Meter | A device which is used to measure the moisture content of material. It’s always a good idea to check a caravan for damp when purchasing. It ensures that no damp is present. |
| Delamination | The separation of bonded layers such as floors or windows, often made up as a sandwich panel, usually due to poor binding during manufacture or due to water ingress/damp. |
| Drop Plate | A metal plate used to allow the tow ball height of a car to be lowered to be more compatible with the caravan. |
| E |  |
| Electric hook up (EHU) | Electric hook-up is a way of powering a caravan or motorhome whilst on site. A hook up lead is required and allows a caravan or motorhome to connect to 240v mains electricity via an outlet on your pitch. |
| F |  |
| Far side | The side of the caravan opposite the entrance door (UK), Also known as the offside. |
| Fifth wheel trailer | A form of caravan which connects to the tow vehicle via a 5th wheel hitch as opposed to a traditional trailer hitch. |
| Fly screen | A mesh screen which can be placed over roof openings, doors and windows to prevent insects from getting in. |
| Folding camper | Similar to a [trailer tent](http://www.caravanclub.co.uk/advice-and-training/glossary#Trailer Tent), but with a more sophisticated folding mechanism which requires no [guy lines](http://www.caravanclub.co.uk/advice-and-training/glossary#Guy lines) to tension the fabric, and is hence easier and faster to erect. |
| Folding caravan | A caravan where the upper parts of the walls can be folded flat and the roof lowered to give a trailer which is easier to tow and to store. Also known as rigid folding caravan. See also [pop-top](http://www.caravanclub.co.uk/advice-and-training/glossary#Pop Top), [folding camper](http://www.caravanclub.co.uk/advice-and-training/glossary#Folding Camper) and [trailer tent](http://www.caravanclub.co.uk/advice-and-training/glossary#Trailer Tent) |
| Full Service Pitch | A pitch found on many sites which provides personal provision for fresh water, waste water, and electricity connections. Many sites also offer TV aerial connections. |
| G |  |
| Gas bottle/Cylinder | Caravans/Motorhomes using LPG Gas will do so via a pressurised cylinder connected to the vehicle. |
| Gas BBQ Point | An external opening on a caravan or motorhome which allows for the direct connection of a Gas powered BBQ or cooking device. Specific fittings are usually required. |
| Grey water | This is dirty water produced from sinks or showers in a caravan. |
| Grab Handles | Located on all four corners of a caravan and are used to handle and manoeuvre it. |
| Groundsheet | See above ‘ Awning Capet’ |
| GRP | Glass reinforced plastic – a material commonly used on the outer shell of caravans. |
| Guy Lines | Cords attached to outside of an awning or tent which tensions and stabilises the material. |
| H |  |
| Hardstanding. | A [pitch](http://www.caravanclub.co.uk/advice-and-training/glossary#Pitch) which has a hard surface made of gravel, asphalt, concrete etc instead of being grass. These are commonly used by many site during winter to prevent damage to grass. |
| Heki Rooflight | A common brand of caravan roof light that is fitted to many caravans. |
| Hitch | The device at the front of the caravan which connects the caravan onto the towball of the car. |
| Hitch Head stabiliser | A form of stabiliser which is built into the caravan hitch. These systems work by applying pressure and friction to the towball. |
| Hitch Lock | A form of security device which prevents the caravan being hitched up to a tow vehicle, preventing theft. |
| Hook up | See above ‘EHU’ |
| J |  |
| Jockey Wheel | This is the small wheel at the front of the caravan, located within the ’A-Frame’. It’s used to lift and lower the front of the caravan to and from the towball and during levelling. |
| K |  |
| Kerb Weight | The total weight of the towcar as it stands without luggage or passengers (Empty Weight). |
| L |  |
| Leisure battery | A 12v Battery, similar to that of a car which is used to power the 12v systems in the caravan or motorhome, e.g. water pump and lights. |
| Levelling | This is the process of ensuring the caravan or motorhome is level when setting up on pitch, mainly for comfort but can affect fresh and waste water systems if not carried out. |
| Liquefied Petroleum Gas | The fuel used to power the [fridge](http://www.caravanclub.co.uk/advice-and-training/glossary#Fridge), [water heater](http://www.caravanclub.co.uk/advice-and-training/glossary#Water Heater) and [space heater](http://www.caravanclub.co.uk/advice-and-training/glossary#Space Heater) in most [caravans](http://www.caravanclub.co.uk/advice-and-training/glossary#Caravan), when mains electricity is not available, and battery power is not sufficient. Two types are commonly used - [butane](http://www.caravanclub.co.uk/advice-and-training/glossary#Butane) and [propane](http://www.caravanclub.co.uk/advice-and-training/glossary#Propane). Usually abbreviated to LPG. |
| Load index | A number on the sidewall of the trailer tyres which states it’s maximum load capacity. |
| M |  |
| Manufacturer’s braked towing limit | A statement by the manufacturer giving the maximum weight of braked [trailer](http://www.caravanclub.co.uk/advice-and-training/glossary#Trailer) the vehicle will tow, when restarting on a gradient of, usually, 1 in 8 (12%), or less commonly, 1 in 12 (8%). |
| Manufacturer’s unbraked towing limit | A statement by the manufacturer giving the maximum weight of unbraked [trailer](http://www.caravanclub.co.uk/advice-and-training/glossary#Trailer) the vehicle will tow is permitted to tow. |
| Maximum authorised mass (MAM) | This is the maximum towing weight for a caravan when fully laden, including all personal belongings. |
| Maximum Technically Permissible Laden Weight (MTPLM) | This is the heaviest weight that the caravan can operate at. This figure comes from adding the empty weight of the caravan with the user payload. The MTPLM figure is specified by the manufacturer and must not be exceeded. The MTPLM is also key in choosing a suitable tow car. |
| Mass in running order (MIRO) | Mass/Weight of caravan as equipped to manufacturer’s specification. Generally this is the empty caravan weight unless extras have been fitted, e.g. Satellite dish or air conditioning unit. |
| Motorhome service point | A facility on a caravan site where a motorhome can refill the onboard water tank, or empty its onboard waste water tank. |
| Motor Mover | A Motor Mover is a trade name commonly used to describe an electronic device which can be fitted to caravans to allow the user to manoeuvre them whilst unhitched. |
| N |  |
| Nearside | The entrance door side of the caravan (UK). |
| National caravan council (NCC) | The official trade association for dealers, suppliers and manufacturers. NCC also run and operate the CRiS scheme. |
| Noseweight | Noseweight is the vertical weight of the caravan at the hitch. This is the weight which is exerted onto the car when hitched. |
| Noseweight gauge | A device used for measuring nose weight. |
| Noseweight Limit | The weight, usually in KG which must not be exceeded. Towbars, tow vehicles and all caravan hitches have limits. The limiting factor is the lowest figure of the combination. |
| O |  |
| Outfit | A term used to describe a combination of tow car and caravan. |
| P |  |
| Payload | See below ‘User Payload’ |
| Pigtail | A fixture sometimes found on a [tow bar](http://www.caravanclub.co.uk/advice-and-training/glossary#Tow Bar) which comprises a spiral of metal, intended as an attachment point for a [breakaway cable](http://www.caravanclub.co.uk/advice-and-training/glossary#Breakaway Cable). |
| Pitch | A designated area of a caravan site allocated for the use of one [outfit](http://www.caravanclub.co.uk/advice-and-training/glossary#Outfit). Most sites will be arranged with defied pitches, while many [CLs](http://www.caravanclub.co.uk/advice-and-training/glossary#Certificated Location) (particularly those without mains [hook-ups](http://www.caravanclub.co.uk/advice-and-training/glossary#Hook-up)) are not. Also the natural tendency for a [caravan](http://www.caravanclub.co.uk/advice-and-training/glossary#Caravan) (especially a [single axle](http://www.caravanclub.co.uk/advice-and-training/glossary#Single Axle) one) to rock about its axle, particularly when towed along an undulating road. |
| Pop Top | A car or caravan with an elevating roof section. |
| Porta-Potti | A brand name for a type of chemical toilet. Used generally for similar products. |
| Propane | A type of LPG gas commonly used in caravans and motorhomes. Usually in red cylinders. Often used instead of butane for all year use as propane benefits from a lower freeze temperature and burns at a higher temperature. |
| Pup tent | A tent or awning pitched outside of a caravan or motorhome. |
| R |  |
| Regulator | Safety device fitted between the [gas cylinder](http://www.caravanclub.co.uk/advice-and-training/glossary#Gas Cylinder) and the gas system of a [caravan](http://www.caravanclub.co.uk/advice-and-training/glossary#Caravan) or [motor caravan](http://www.caravanclub.co.uk/advice-and-training/glossary#Motor Caravan), which controls the pressure of gas being released from the cylinder. |
| Residual current device (RCD) | Safety device which disconnects the mains electricity supply in the event of an earth leakage fault. Also known as residual current circuit breaker or earth leakage circuit breaker. |
| Roof Light | A transparent panel in the roof which can be opened to provide additional ventilation. |
| Roof Vent | A feature which provides fixed (i.e. permanent) [ventilation](http://www.caravanclub.co.uk/advice-and-training/glossary#Ventilation) at a high level in the [caravan](http://www.caravanclub.co.uk/advice-and-training/glossary#Caravan). |
| S |  |
| Seasonal Pitch | A pitch available on many sites which are used permanently for a period of time. The majority of seasonal pitches are occupied between the months of March to the end of September. |
| Shipping length | The maximum external length of the caravan, also referred to as external length. |
| Single axle | A caravan with a single pair of wheels on one axle. |
| Slide-out | Usually found on US built vehicles, a slide out is a section of the caravan which extends to create more living space. |
| Snaking | An unstable caravan motion where the caravan begins to swing side to side behind a tow vehicle like a pendulum. This is usually caused by high winds or high sided vehicles. |
| Space Heater | Either a gas or electric powered heater built into many caravans which heat the vehicle’s living area. |
| Steadies | See above ‘Corner Steadies’. |
| Storage site | A facility where caravans or motorhomes can be stored when not in use. Commonly used where space is not available as private residence or for security reasons. |
| Super pitch | Trade name for a particular type of [full service pitch](http://www.caravanclub.co.uk/advice-and-training/glossary#Full Service Pitch). Sometimes used as a generic term for such facilities. |
| T |  |
| Torque | Technically, the turning force produced by an engine. In practical terms, this equates to the engine's ability to maintain speed under the increased load of climbing a gradient, say, or its ability to manage a hill start - its 'pulling power', therefore. A high torque output will give relaxed driving characteristics (with fewer gear changes required), and better towing performance. Note, however, that the ideal is a high torque output at low engine revs, since this gives good pulling power in the higher gears (and hence relaxed cruising) plus a better ability to pull away from standstill without undue risk of wheel spin (good for hill starts). |
| Torque Wrench | A form of spanner used to set nuts and bolts to a specified degree of tightness. Recommended for adjustment of wheel fixings on [caravans](http://www.caravanclub.co.uk/advice-and-training/glossary#Caravan). |
| Tow Ball | The section of the towbar which locates into the caravans hitch. |
| Tow Bar | The term used to describe the entire assembly attached to the tow vehicle in order to support the tow ball. |
| Towing Mirrors | Additional rear vision mirrors added to a towing vehicle to provide a greater width of view to see past a [caravan](http://www.caravanclub.co.uk/advice-and-training/glossary#Caravan). |
| TV Aerial | May be permanently fixed to the [caravan](http://www.caravanclub.co.uk/advice-and-training/glossary#Caravan), or detachable for travelling. Directional types require adjustment to point towards the nearest transmitter. Omni-directional types receive signals from all directions, and are thus convenient, but tend to have more limited performance in poorer signal areas. |
| Twin-Axle | Twin-axle refers to a caravan which has two axles, or four wheels. Twin-axles are found on longer, heavier caravans. |
| U |  |
| User-Payload | This is the total weight of accessories, food, clothing etc., which can be carried in a caravan in transit. |
| Unit | A generic term often used by holiday parks to describe a caravan, motorhome, or tent. |
| Unladen weight | Similar to MIRO, where no extras have been fitted, this is the empty caravan weight. |
| W |  |
| Wastemaster | A brand name for a wheeled waste container which is used for the storage and transport of grey waste water. |
| Water Heater | Gas and/or electrical device used to heat water in caravans or motorhomes to be used for washing or for kitchen use. |
| Water Ingress | The penetration of damp from the outside into the structure and interior of a caravan or [motor caravan](http://www.caravanclub.co.uk/advice-and-training/glossary#Motor Caravan). One of the main reasons to ensure an annual service is carried out which includes a damp check, as rectifying problems can be expensive. |
| Water Filter | A device to remove impurities from the water system of the caravan or [motor caravan](http://www.caravanclub.co.uk/advice-and-training/glossary#Motor Caravan). |
| Water Pump | Used to pump water from the external storage containers to the taps in the vehicle. Water pumps are usually submersible and operate using 12v electricity. |
| Wet Locker | Storage space in a caravan, usually sealed and access from outside which can be used for the storage of wet or dirty items. |
| Wheel clamp | A security device often fitted to caravans or motorhomes to prevent rotation of the wheels. |
| Z |  |
| Zig Unit | The trade name of a popular brand of electrical control panel often fitted to caravans. Sometimes used as a generic terms for all such devices, irrespective of actual make. |