

Laundry time in an RV

RV laundry, yep, clothes get dirty when you are on the road or when you bug out with an RV. What do you do? Use a Laundromat or hand-wash your clothes? Perhaps you have thought of putting a washing machine and clothes dryer in your RV.

Dirty clothes tend to accumulate while you are bugging out in your RV just as they do any other time. Here are several laundry options for your consideration while using your RV.

You can take your dirty clothes to the Laundromat as this option generally works best for most preppers who utilize an RV as their Bug out vehicle. It requires no special equipment to be installed in your RV. You don't have to find room for a washing machine or clothes dryer. There's no big up front cost. It's pretty simple and straightforward. You let your laundry accumulate for a while, then gather it all up, and take it out to wash and dry it.

You use as many machines as you need to wash it all at one time. Likewise, you can dry it all at once. You fold, haul it back to the RV, and put it away. You spend a couple hours, about \$10, and you are done for another week or so. While you are waiting at the Laundromat, you read or evaluate your progress in your bug out plans so you really don't waste much time just waiting.

Laundry facilities at truck stops, travel plazas, and campgrounds are similar to public Laundromats. The biggest difference is that they have fewer machines. You may need to do your loads consecutively, instead of all at once. If you are spending the night at one of these places anyway as you are traveling to your bug out location it can be convenient. You are there – the facility is there.

These are most useful for doing only a load or two of clothes. They are particularly helpful if you want to stretch the time between your Laundromat trips. They are also good if you have a washer and dryer in your RV and need to do a load of bigger or heavier items.

Yes, some RVs do have washers and dryer. However, the clothes washer and dryer you find in an RV is seldom the same as what you have in a traditional home. These RV appliances use 110-volt electricity. They may be stackable units. Or, it may be a single RV appliance that does both. They have a small load capacity. It takes a long time for clothes to dry in an RV clothes dryer. The biggest disadvantage, I think, is that they take up a great deal of room – the equivalent of an entire closet.

If you spend much of your time in a campground type environment with water, sewer, and electrical hookups, you may love these appliances. You do a load or two of clothes every day. You don't need to wash your things in a machine someone else uses.

There is another type of machine or device marketed for doing laundry. The apparatus is a small keg type container. It has a crank handle you turn to agitate the

clothes. I've heard trying to wash something in them is a sure way to make a mess. I've also heard these hand machines don't get clothes any cleaner than simply soaking the clothes.

If you want to do your laundry by hand, there are several methods. All of these hand methods wash only. You need to twist the clothes by hand to get out some of the water.

Some preppers put water, detergent, and clothes into a five-gallon bucket, put the lid on the bucket, and drive. The motion is supposed to be akin to an agitating machine. Most likely, the long soaking does the most cleaning.

Others use their bathtub as a large laundry sink. I've also heard of preppers carrying along a child's inflatable wading pool to use for doing laundry.

Some soak, swish, and rinse. Some agitate the clothes with a toilet plunger. Others, I'm told, use old-fashioned washboards. We had a class one time where we taught the principles of making your own manual washing machine with a plunger. It works in an emergency and may even be useful when bugging out for extended periods of time.

If you go the hand washing route, you have to figure out how to dry them. You can haul them to a laundry facility to dry, hang them outside, or hang them around in your RV. Some campgrounds allow clothes lines, but many do not. Depending on the temperature and humidity, towels or jeans that have not gone through a fast spin cycle may have to hang in the RV for literally days for to dry. One useful modification to your RV might be to install a collapsible clothes line in your shower or bath.

If you are going to be somewhere for an entire season, consider a regular clothes washer and clothes dryer. Sometimes, you may just want a washer and hung the clothes to dry on outdoor clotheslines. You can purchase some inexpensive machines. The money saved from the weekly Laundromat trips quickly paid for them.