



# Quality Guide

A behind-the-scenes look  
at how the Airstream  
Basecamp is designed  
and built to last.



**AIRSTREAM**



# BUILDING THE RIGHT WAY



## EVEN IF IT'S NOT THE EASY WAY

We build each and every travel trailer to last a lifetime. It's the standard we started with way back in the 1930s, and it's the reason why 75% of the Airstreams we've made since then are still on the road today.

Our travel trailers are made by hand, by a passionate family of true craftspeople with an obsessive attention to detail. It takes a little longer – sometimes up to 7 times as long as typical “box-type” trailers – but it's worth the wait when the end result is passed down from generation to generation.

The Basecamp is unlike any of our other travel trailers, yet made with the same level of care. We've taken our time researching the very best materials, floor plans, and furniture to include, as well as coming up with innovative ways to make the towing experience seamless – and, most importantly, fun.

In this guide, we'll go behind the scenes to the factory floor and explore all the thoughtful choices that go into the Basecamp's design and construction.

# FOR THE EVEN MORE ADVENTUROUS AT HEART



Basecamp is by far our most rugged, ready-for-anything travel trailer, designed for the people who want to go even farther off the beaten path. It's small, yet uses every square inch of space inside to keep you comfortable. It's light, yet tough enough to take you high up the mountain or deep into the forest. And it's full of thoughtful new choices that let you pack up and go anywhere, with nothing slowing you down.

- Rear hatch for easy gear loading/unloading
- Benches convert to rear-spanning bed
- Smart, efficient wet bath onboard
- Full kitchen with storage
- Charging ports and solar power options

## BASECAMP 2.0

Did you know today's Basecamp is a redesign of the original Basecamp from 2007? Made in partnership with Nissan Design America, the original Basecamp was a toy hauler of sorts, with flip-up benches and room to bring along four-wheeled gear. We've reinvented it with an even more aerodynamic body design, a greater departure angle, a bathroom, and a completely reworked kitchen and sleeping space. Today's Basecamp is a perfect balance of comfort and utility, giving you all the essentials you need to get out there and immerse yourself in the world around you.

# THE KEY STEPS OF MAKING THE BASECAMP

**01**

The self-supporting outer shell

**02**

Environmentally friendly insulation

**03**

Tanks built into the frame

**04**

Joining the shell to the floor

**05**

Installing the handcrafted furniture

**06**

Smart cabin and tank heating

**07**

Innovative, patented LP storage

**08**

Heavy-duty material choices

**09**

Maximizing every inch in the bathroom

**10**

Spaces that pull double duty

**11**

The all-important departure angle

**12**

Testing and quality control

**13**

Destruction-tested towing

# 01 THE SELF-SUPPORTING OUTER SHELL

Basecamp's outer shell is made from Airstream's trademark aluminum panels, which are bent around a framing structure and secured to aluminum ribs using thousands of individual rivets. Together, the panels and ribs create a lightweight but strong superstructure that's unlike any other RV on the market.

Unlike most "box-type" RVs that use the furniture to support the walls, we build everything the other way around, making sure the structure can fully support itself – and last a lifetime. We call it "semi-monocoque" because it's very similar to an airplane structure, with curved panels riveted together, distributing weight all the way around.



## ALCOA ALUMINUM IS PRETREATED TO LAST

All of our aluminum comes from our partner Alcoa, and by the time it reaches us, it's been pretreated to resist:

- Ultraviolet rays
- Mold
- Discoloration
- Cracking
- Flaking
- Oxidation



# 02 ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY INSULATION



Once the outer structure is assembled, we install EcoBatt® insulation between the aluminum ribs, just like we do in our standard travel trailers. Not only does EcoBatt meet the tightest indoor air quality certification and performance standards in the industry, it's also made primarily from sand and recycled glass.

Once the inner shell is insulated, we wire and plumb for the appliances and rivet another aluminum shell to the inside. This makes up the interior walls of the Basecamp. We also hand-assemble the windows in our custom curved shape, then rivet and seal them to the shell.



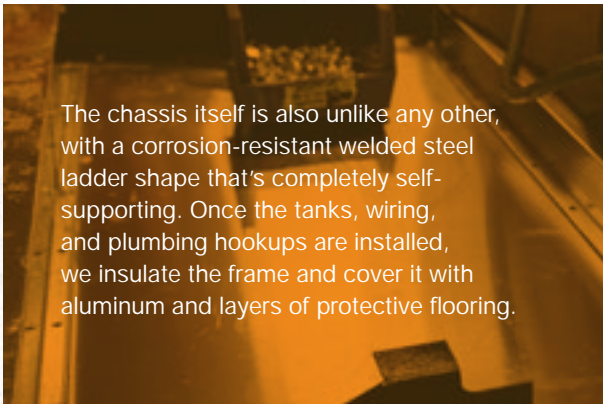
## CONSCIENTIOUS PROCESSES ALL THE WAY THROUGH

The Airstream factory is Certified Green by TRA and has earned the highest possible rating – the Emerald Award – for resource, energy, and water efficiency and indoor air quality. We only order the materials we need, recycling anything we don't use. Even the water used in our leak-testing bays is recycled. And on the road, Basecamp will help you achieve incredible fuel efficiency.

# 03 TANKS BUILT INTO THE FRAME



Airstream engineers the holding tanks (fresh water, grey water, and black water) inside the frame, giving Basecamp a lower center of gravity, a lower overall weight, better weight distribution, and better aerodynamics. Put it all together, and you get a more stable, smoother towing experience. Plus, you don't have to sacrifice any interior space for the tanks.



The chassis itself is also unlike any other, with a corrosion-resistant welded steel ladder shape that's completely self-supporting. Once the tanks, wiring, and plumbing hookups are installed, we insulate the frame and cover it with aluminum and layers of protective flooring.



# 04 JOINING THE SHELL TO THE FLOOR

Because our aluminum structures are riveted together and strong enough to support themselves, we're the only RV manufacturer that can lift them by the roof. Once the body of the Basecamp is built, we lift it up, align it with the chassis, and attach the structure together.



## HURRICANE TESTING

Before we install anything else inside, we roll each Basecamp through our special water testing bay, where we spray it with more than 10,000 gallons of (recycled) water at hurricane-force pressure for 30 minutes. A quality specialist rides along inside, looking for leaks. In the rare case we find any, we repair them before the furniture and appliances go in.





# 05 INSTALLING THE HANDCRAFTED FURNITURE



Once Basecamp's floor and walls are attached, everything has to fit through the front door or the rear hatch so as not to interrupt the integrity of the superstructure. That's why all of our furniture and cabinetry is handcrafted to fit the curves of the Basecamp perfectly. It's all residential quality, with solid wood assemblies instead of particle board and paneling.



Along with the furniture, appliances such as the air conditioning, microwave, porcelain toilets, and USB charging ports are installed and checked for operation and quality.



# 06 SMART CABIN AND TANK HEATING

The Basecamp is our only travel trailer to include the Truma Combi system, which pulls double duty to heat the interior of the trailer and the water you use in the shower and the sink. We chose the system because it's incredibly efficient at quickly heating the entire Basecamp – and keeping it warm, even in freezing temperatures. Plus, it's super compact and fits perfectly inside one of the benches.

Another choice we made is to include 12V tank heating pads to help prevent the holding tanks from freezing. This is an efficient way of heating the tanks without having to heat the entire cabin, so you conserve more energy to stay off the grid for longer.



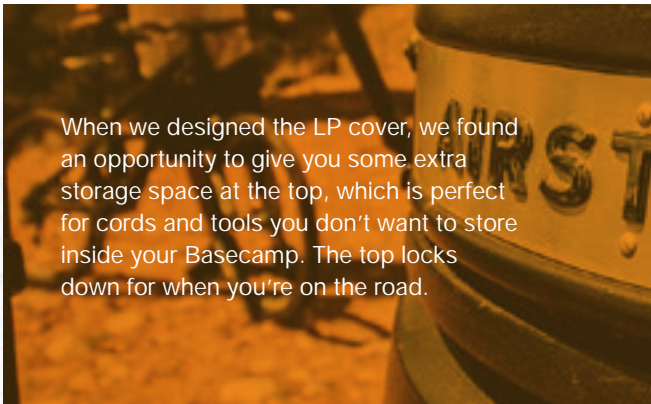
Basecamp comes with an air conditioning system, and we build the drip lines into the walls. Why? Usually, RV manufacturers build air conditioning to drip down the exterior walls of the trailer, but this causes corrosion and discoloration. So we take the extra step to keep your Basecamp looking great.

We also give you the option to buy your Basecamp without air conditioning and a microwave – the only two appliances that require shore or generator power. If you think you'll be off the grid and need as much power as you can get for the essentials, go without those two appliances. You can always add both in later.

# 07 INNOVATIVE, PATENTED LP STORAGE



In order to keep the inside of the Basecamp safe, LP gas has to be stored in specific locations where it can't vent into the trailer. That's why we designed our own patented LP storage compartment and cover on the front of the Basecamp. It's made of a special thermal plastic that surrounds the entire LP system, and it's hollow, so if there is a gas leak, it will vent out the bottom and into the fresh air.



When we designed the LP cover, we found an opportunity to give you some extra storage space at the top, which is perfect for cords and tools you don't want to store inside your Basecamp. The top locks down for when you're on the road.



# 08 HEAVY-DUTY MATERIAL CHOICES

Basecamp is designed for your most rugged adventures, so the fabric that goes inside has to be just as ready-for-anything. That's why we choose Simtex™ Marine fabric for Basecamp's bench cushions/bed. It's anti-bacterial, mildew- and stain-resistant, and flame-retardant. Take the cushions out, throw them on the ground, get them dirty, and hose them off when you're ready to bring them back inside. They can handle it.

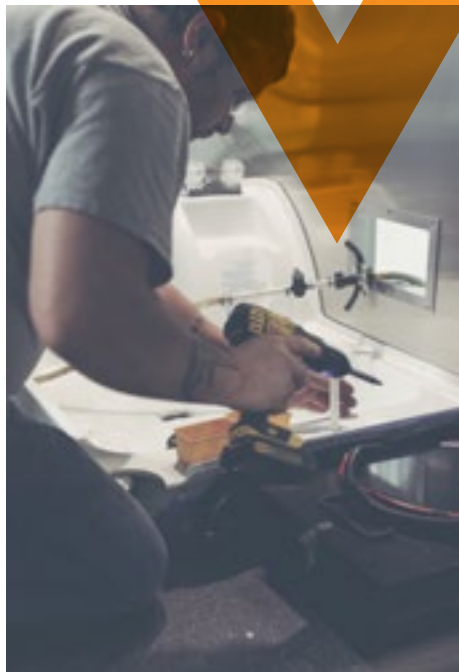


The heavy-duty blackout curtains are hand-sewn by our Jackson Center craftspeople and provide a super low-maintenance solution. Each curtain rolls up and attaches at the top when you want some light, and rolls closed and attaches at the bottom to stay in place when you want complete privacy.



# MAXIMIZING EVERY INCH IN THE BATHROOM

We made the decision to create a European-style wet bath inside the Basecamp because it allows us to maximize every single inch of space, giving you the most room, flexibility, and convenience while you're out camping. The entire space is designed to get wet and stay clean, so you don't have to worry about divided spaces for different functions.



Instead of including a separate outdoor showerhead, which takes up valuable space in your trailer, we created a pass-through in the wall of the bathroom that lets you take the interior showerhead and use it as an outdoor shower. Clean off your gear or yourself after a long day, and do it all with a residential-style showerhead that makes it actually enjoyable.

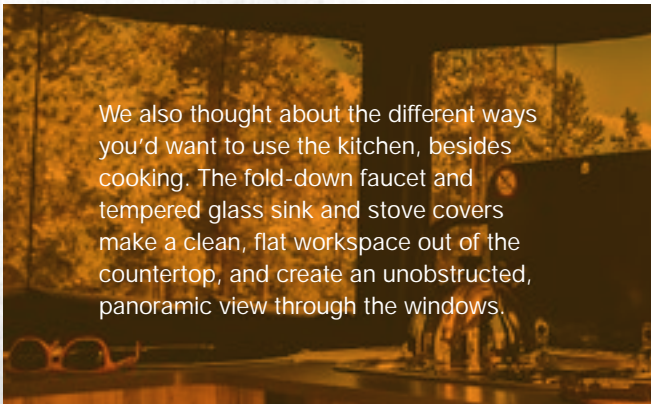


# 10 SPACES DESIGNED TO PULL DOUBLE DUTY



Basecamp is small and nimble for a reason, and we spent years in research and development to design the most space-maximizing floor plan possible. That's why many of the spaces inside can easily change and convert to serve a different function.

You can keep the aisle open for gear or walking space, or set up two tables for working or eating space. Then, when it's time to go to bed, the tables double as support for the cushions when you convert the space into a bed. The setup is flexible enough to let you choose the full-bed or half-bed position, where one bench remains open for storage and seating.



We also thought about the different ways you'd want to use the kitchen, besides cooking. The fold-down faucet and tempered glass sink and stove covers make a clean, flat workspace out of the countertop, and create an unobstructed, panoramic view through the windows.



# 11 THE ALL-IMPORTANT DEPARTURE ANGLE



A departure angle is the degree at which your trailer meets the ground when you're coming down a hill. The steeper the departure angle on the trailer, the less chance the trailer has of scraping the ground. Looking at the Basecamp, you'll notice the departure angle right away. The back end slopes upward and includes skids underneath that keep the undercarriage from being damaged.



## BASECAMP X

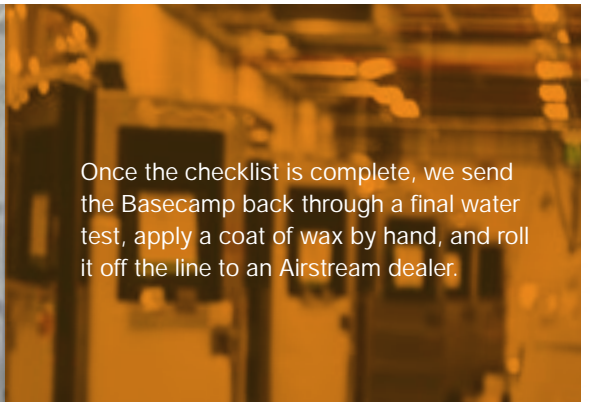
If you want to take rugged to the next level, the Basecamp X Package gives you an even greater departure angle, thanks to the overall 3" lift kit. It also comes with even tougher Goodyear® Wrangler® tires, black shadow wheels, and stainless steel rock guards and solar window guards – just in case your tow vehicle throws some rocks and debris at your Basecamp along the way.



# 12 TESTING AND QUALITY CONTROL



All the way through the process, each Basecamp travels with a verified record of what's been checked and what needs to be perfected. The trailers make their way down the line, checked by quality control specialists who test the appliances, examine the fabrics, and go way beyond kicking the tires.



Once the checklist is complete, we send the Basecamp back through a final water test, apply a coat of wax by hand, and roll it off the line to an Airstream dealer.



# 13 DESTRUCTION-TESTED TOWING



Smooth towing is a science, and we've studied and perfected it for decades – and poured that knowledge into the Basecamp. Initial prototypes were destruction tested at the Transportation Research Center in Ohio – and the test was as rigorous as it sounds. The prototypes were towed over curb-sized blocks and filled with weights to test interior destruction. They also went through a test that simulates 2,000 miles of gravel road to see how Basecamp could endure extended rough driving conditions.



Every test helped us perfect the Basecamp, and the end result is one of our easiest travel trailers to hitch up and tow. Its lightweight design and narrow body make it a perfect fit for most mid-size SUVs, which means you don't have to make any big changes before you head out for an adventure.



# EXPLORE MORE



See floor plans, features, interior décors and more,  
and find the Basecamp that's perfect for you.

## SEE BASECAMP ONLINE



Did you know Basecamp was RVBusiness™ Magazine's 2017 RV of the Year? After evaluating RVs at the industry's largest shows, RVBusiness editors chose the Basecamp for their top 2017 honor.

[READ BLOG](#)



## **ADVENTURE. INSPIRED BY AIRSTREAM.**

Our founder, Wally Byam, was driven by an unending desire to see what was over the next hill, and the next after that. And he wasn't alone. Thousands of Airstreamers know just how important the freedom to wander really is, and how enjoyable having the whole world at your doorstep can be. So what are you waiting for? Find your Airstream at [airstream.com](http://airstream.com).



**AIRSTREAM**

