



AIRSTREAM®

QUALITY *Guide*

A Behind-the-Scenes Look at How the Airstream Basecamp®
is Designed and Built to Last



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 why so many vintage Airstream travel trailers 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 – roughly 190 hours, compared to roughly 50 hours for average "box-type" trailer – but it's worth the wait when the end result is passed down from generation to generation.

Basecamp is unlike any of our other travel trailers, but it's made with the same care and attention to detail. It's a nimble and rugged travel trailer that shares the same aluminum design DNA as our iconic travel trailer line, but with an adventurous twist and some aerodynamic advantages. But while Basecamp may diverge in its exterior aesthetic, it's manufactured with the same level of craftsmanship, design, and innovation we put into every Airstream product.

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

Behind the *Design*

Basecamp is by far our most rugged, ready-for-anything travel trailer, designed for people who want to go even farther off the beaten path. That go-anywhere appeal is part of what's made Basecamp our most popular travel trailer model line for several years running. It's small, yet uses every square inch of space inside to keep you comfortable. It's lightweight, 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.

Basecamp's Adventurous Features

- Rear door for easy gear loading/unloading
- Benches convert to multiple bed configurations
- Smart, efficient wet bath onboard
- Full kitchen with storage
- Solar charging and lithium battery options
- Aggressive departure angle
- 3-inch Lift Kit with Off-Road Tires

Basecamp DNA

Did you know that today's Basecamp was inspired by founder Wally Byam's first travel trailer design, the Torpedo? Reimagined in partnership with Nissan Design America in 2007, Basecamp's DNA is rooted in overlanding for the adventurous at heart. Today's modern design has evolved into an even more aerodynamic travel trailer, with an aggressive departure angle that lets owners tackle tough terrain beyond the pavement. And with all the comforts of home and ample off-grid functionality, Basecamp owners can chase adventure and get closer to the natural world than ever before.



Departure Angle

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



Basecamp 16X

GVWR: 3,500

Exterior Length: 16' 2"

Sleeps up to 2

Go Further with Confidence

Basecamp features a 3" lift kit, off-road tires, sleek black wheels, and protective stainless steel rock guards and solar window guards, ready to handle rough terrain and shield your trailer from debris kicked up by your tow vehicle.



Basecamp 20X

GVWR: 4,300

Exterior Length: 20' 2"

Sleeps up to 4

Made for Adventure *Basecamp Xe*

Powered by a fully inverted 30A electrical system, Basecamp Xe features a 3,000W inverter, a 10.3kWh lithium battery pack, and 600W of roof-mounted solar panels. Whether you're parked in a traditional campground, at the foot of the mountains, or in a friend's driveway, enjoy all the comforts of home. Even on battery power, Basecamp Xe's powerful electrical system lets you run the optional air conditioner, optional microwave oven, and more while camping off-grid.

Special Features

- Truma Combi eco plus System
- Shower Water Recirculation System
- Portable Induction Cooktop
- JBL® Audio Sound System
- Coated Aluminum Stone Guard Protection
- Solar Front Window Protection
- 3-inch Lift Kit with Off-Road Tires



Sandstone Floorplan 20Xe



Basecamp 20Xe

airstream.com/configurator-basecampxe



Basecamp 20Xe - Granite Ridge Interior



Basecamp 20Xe - Sandstone Interior

The Key Steps of Making the *Basecamp*

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04 Section

Building the Foundation

An Airstream Basecamp begins its life in the chassis build area where the ladder frame chassis first arrives in the plant. Providing a solid foundation for the Basecamp living space, the chassis are brought in upside down so our associates can install the rubber torsion axles, independent wheel suspension, and tires. The steel step and aluminum underbelly are then installed before the chassis is flipped back over. Once it's right side up, initial wiring and plumbing are laid out before we move on to the flooring.



02 Section

Built for Safe and Easy Towing

Airstream engineers the holding tanks (fresh water, grey water, and waste water) inside the frame, giving Basecamp a lower center of gravity, better weight distribution, and better aerodynamics. Put it all together and you get a more stable, smoother – and most importantly safer – 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 powder coated 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 then secure a single piece of composite flooring to the chassis. This high-quality recyclable material provides better screw retention, water resistance, and support. After the solid floor is installed, precut seamless vinyl flooring is laid out and installed. Once this phase is complete, the Basecamp is married to its shell, which is built nearby.



The Self-Supporting Outer Shell

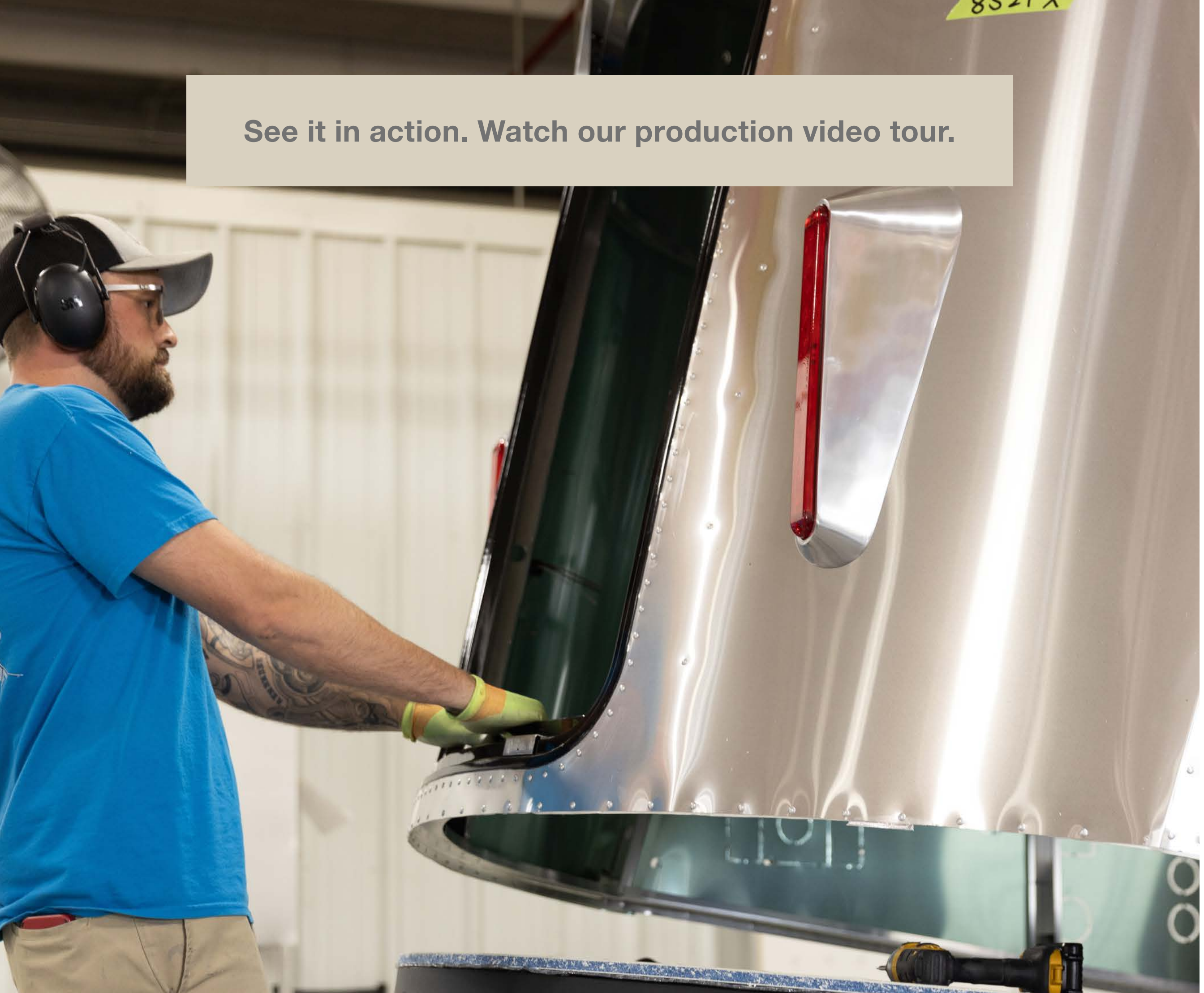
Basecamp's outer shell is made from Airstream's trademark aluminum panels, which are formed around a framing structure and secured to aluminum ribs using thousands of individual rivets. Before completing this step, each rib is fitted with thermal barrier bonding tape to reduce heat loss and condensation. 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 for generations. 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.

OUR ALUMINUM IS PRETREATED TO LAST

All of our aluminum comes from our trusted suppliers, and it's pretreated to resist:

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



See it in action. Watch our production video tour.

ECO CONSCIOUS THROUGH AND THROUGH

We only order the materials we need, recycle anything we don't use. Even the water used in our water-testing bays is recycled. And on the road, Basecamp's aerodynamic design will help reduce your carbon footprint by increasing your tow vehicle's fuel efficiency.

04
Section

Joining the Shell
to the Floor

Because our aluminum structures are riveted together and strong enough to support themselves, we can lift them by the roof and set them on the chassis – something not many RV manufacturers can do. Once the body of the Basecamp is built, we lift it, align it with the chassis, and attach the structure together. Then we complete the interior electric, gas, and plumbing installation, as well as exterior components like air conditioners, solar panels, skylights, and rooftop venting.

A 30 MINUTE WATER CHECK

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 high pressure for 30 minutes. Inside, a quality specialist examines the interior for any leaks, and in the rare case we find any, we repair them before the furniture and appliances go in. Other brands let the customer be the first to test for water leaks. We couldn't stand behind our superstructures unless we did everything in our power to make sure that the trailer is 100% ready for its first journey. Only once we're confident the unit is properly constructed and sealed do we begin work on the internal buildout.



05 Section

Environmentally Friendly Insulation

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

Once the inner shell is insulated, we wire and plumb for the appliances that will be installed farther down the line. Aluminum sheets are pre-cut on a CNC router and riveted to the interior ribs, creating an aluminum skin that brings that iconic Airstream look inside while adding a bright, reflective luster to the interior. Nearby, we hand-assemble the windows in our custom curved shape before they're delivered to the production line where we rivet them into the shell and seal them water tight.



Installing the Handcrafted Furniture

Because we build our iconic aluminum shells first, all interior components must fit through either Basecamp's main entry or rear door. That's one reason that we build all our furniture, cabinetry, storage compartments, and wardrobes in our on-site woodshop. These components easily fit through the Basecamp doors – but they can also be removed quickly for maintenance or replacement. This handcrafted furniture and cabinetry is built to fit the unique curves of the Basecamp shell, using marine-grade lite-plywood that's laminated or stained and assembled with residential-quality pocket screws, dowels, and wood glue. Unlike the rest of the industry, Airstream doesn't use staples in the manufacturing of our cabinetry or furniture.

Alongside our furniture we also install mirrors, curtains, cushions, trim pieces, and appliances like the stovetop and microwave. Everything is set, scored, and adjusted for the perfect fit.



07 Section

Climate Control for Comfort and Safety

Basecamp is designed with seasonal comfort in mind. Dependent upon floorplan, it's equipped with either a 12K or 19K BTU ducted LP furnace to keep you comfortable while adventuring in colder weather. Basecamps equipped with optional rooftop A/C units can also utilize a heat strip while on shore power for propane-free heating when outside temperatures are above freezing. On-demand hot water is delivered by a tankless water heater, helping to conserve interior space for increased storage capacity.

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 is available with an optional rooftop-mounted air conditioner, and our design allows for the A/C's condensation drip lines to run through the interior walls of the trailer. Many RV designs simply let the A/C drain right off the rooftop and down the outside of the exterior walls, creating the potential for corrosion, discoloration, and an unsightly appearance. We take the extra step to incorporate these drip lines so your Basecamp will always look great.

Basecamp's only major appliances that require shore or generator power are the optional microwave and air conditioner. If your travel plans involve frequently camping off-grid, you will need an alternative power source, such as a generator, to use these appliances.



08 Section

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 designed so that if there is a leak it will vent out the bottom 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.



09 Section

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 antibacterial, 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.

Basecamp's heavy-duty blackout curtains are hand-sewn by our Jackson Center craftspeople and provide a 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.



10 Section

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.

The convenience of an outdoor shower – equipped with a residential-style shower head and hot and cold water – allows you to wash up after the day's adventure before going inside. Basecamp 20's floorplan offers a dedicated exterior shower unit, while Basecamp 16 features an efficient pass-through compartment built into shower wall, allowing you to extend the interior showerhead for outdoor use.



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 interior features 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 lumbar 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 might use the kitchen. Sink and stove covers provide a clean, flat surface for food prep, with charging ports and ample storage for kitchen accessories and gear within arm's reach. Plus, there's nothing like making dinner while gazing through those panoramic windows and dreaming of your next adventure.



10 Section

Testing and Quality Assurance

We track each Basecamp model as it moves down the line, keeping a verified record of each quality and safety check we make during the production process. We also note anything that needs adjusted or isn't up to our quality standards. Once the trailer arrives at the end of the line, our Quality Team undertakes a 1,500-point system test and visual inspection. We turn on the appliances, pressure test the LP system, and fill the drain system to test for leaks. If anything is found lacking, the trailer is sent back for repair. Finally, we sweep, vacuum, and mop the interior and put a fresh coat of wax on the exterior before sending it on to a waiting customer.

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, with a test that's 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 would endure extended rough driving conditions.

Every test helped us perfect the Basecamp, and the end result is one of our easiest and most popular 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 might even be able to tow Basecamp with the vehicle you already have in your garage.

Ready to hit the road on your own Basecamp adventure? Our nation-wide dealer network is ready to give you an up-close tour so you can see it for yourself. [Find your nearest Airstream dealer and schedule a visit today.](#)

The Airstream *Warranty*

They've always been made to last. That's why so many vintage Airstream travel trailers are still on the road today.

Wally's dream was to connect ordinary people to the excitement of travel, to take them to new and faraway places without sacrificing the comforts of home. While we strive for perfection, we caution new owners to treat their Airstream just like they'd treat a new home – albeit a home that's towed down the highway.

Your new travel trailer contains complex systems that work together to provide you with all the comforts of home - and if anything needs maintenance, you can rest easy knowing that Airstream provides you with the following transferable warranty:

2 Year Bumper-to-Bumper Limited Warranty

Covering defects in materials or workmanship.

5 Year Structural Limited Warranty

Covering key structural components, including chassis, laminated subfloor, skeletal framing, aluminum sidewalls, front and rear caps and roof.

We also provide peace of mind, with three years of 24/7 CoachNet roadside assistance for your new Airstream travel trailer and tow vehicle, plus technical assistance should you have any questions.





Silver is *Green*

Each year, Airstream uses over 4 million pounds of flat aluminum to construct our iconic line of products. Countless amounts of rivets, wood, wire, glass, and steel are used too. So what happens to the materials we don't use?

At our production facilities in Jackson Center, bins are used to collect scrap materials. Everything is sorted and anything recyclable is processed locally in order to reduce waste and decrease our carbon footprint. And through a unique partnership with the National Forest Foundation, Airstream offsets the carbon footprint of your first year's travel through our Caravan to Carbon Neutral program.

After an evaluation of our facilities in Jackson Center, Airstream was Certified Green by TRA, an internationally accredited organization that specializes in green building and energy efficiency. **Airstream was awarded with the highest possible rating, the Emerald Award, for resource, energy, and water efficiency and indoor air quality.**



Our Trusted *Partners*

While we strive to build as much in-house as we possibly can, we also source materials, appliances, and components from some of the very best suppliers in the world. Our Five Rivet Supplier program encourages our suppliers to go the extra mile and provide quality products that will provide owner enjoyment for years to come.

In this way, Airstream builds quality in the DNA of each travel trailer we manufacture. It's that quality that will keep your Airstream out adventuring on the road for years to come.



Tried and *True*

Our process has stood the test of time, with small improvements made incrementally over decades and decades of fine craftsmanship. The end result is a premium travel trailer that's built for a lifetime of adventure – and meant to be passed from generation to generation.

We've always built every Airstream the right way, even when it isn't the easiest or the fastest way. And we always will. It's our passion and our legacy, and it's how we know we're still living out Wally Byam's vision for this company more than 90 years after the first Airstream rolled off the line.



Don't Stop, Keep Right On *Going*

"Hitch up your trailer and go to Canada or down to old Mexico. Head for Europe, if you can afford it, or go to Mardi Gras.

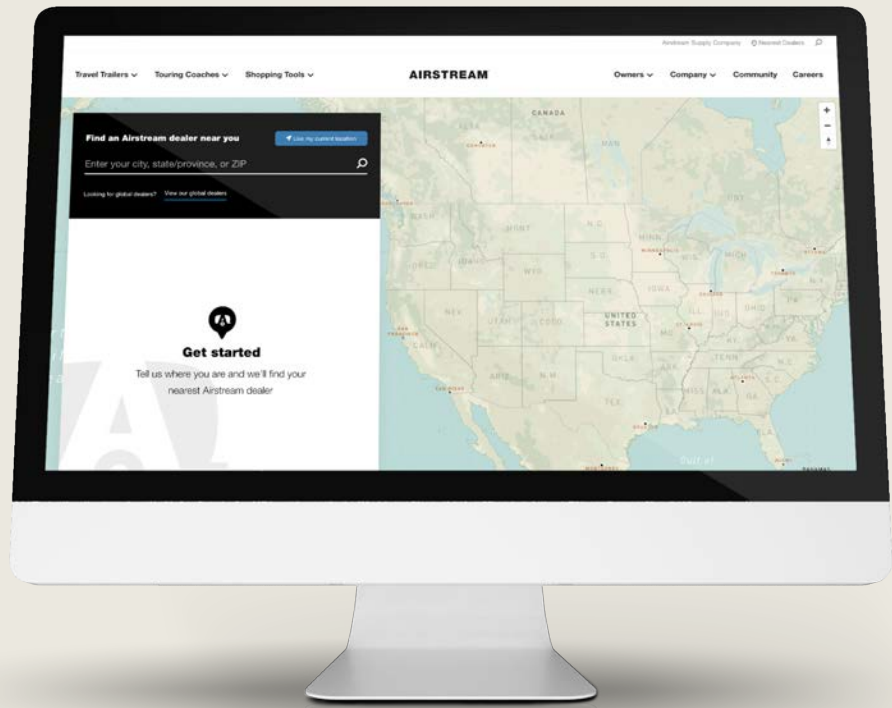
Go someplace you've heard about, where you can fish or hunt or collect rocks or just look up at the sky. Go see what's over the next hill, and the one after that, and the one after that."

-Wally Byam

[Visit Your Local Dealer to Tour a Travel Trailer in Person](#)



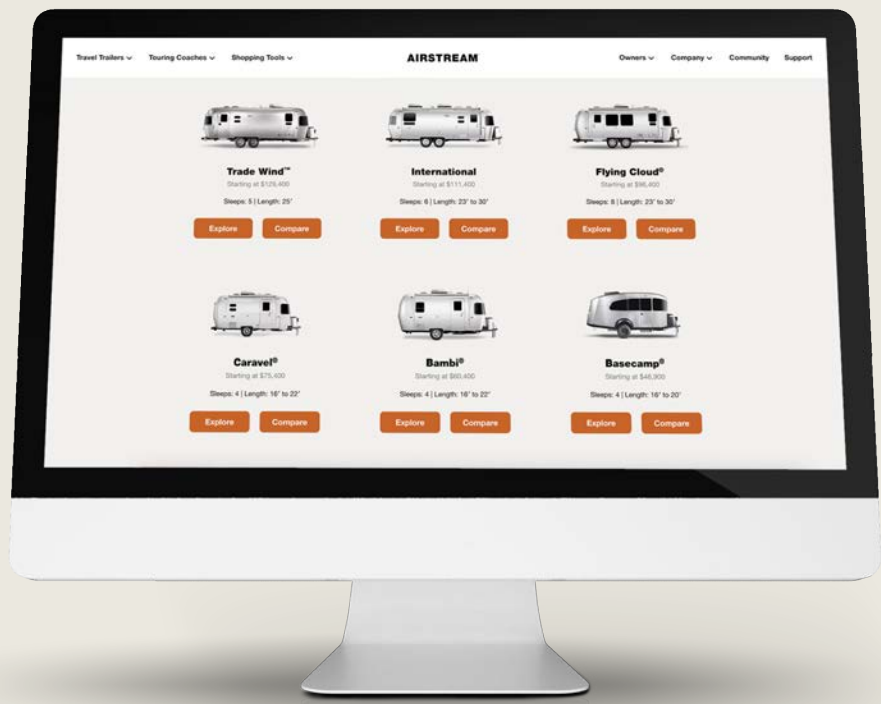
More Questions? We Have *Answers*



National Dealer Network

While you're shopping, you're bound to have specific questions about certain models, features, and more. Whether you're still researching or ready to buy tomorrow, your Airstream dealer is here to help you get the answers you need. [Find your dealer](#) and take a zero-pressure walkthrough in person.

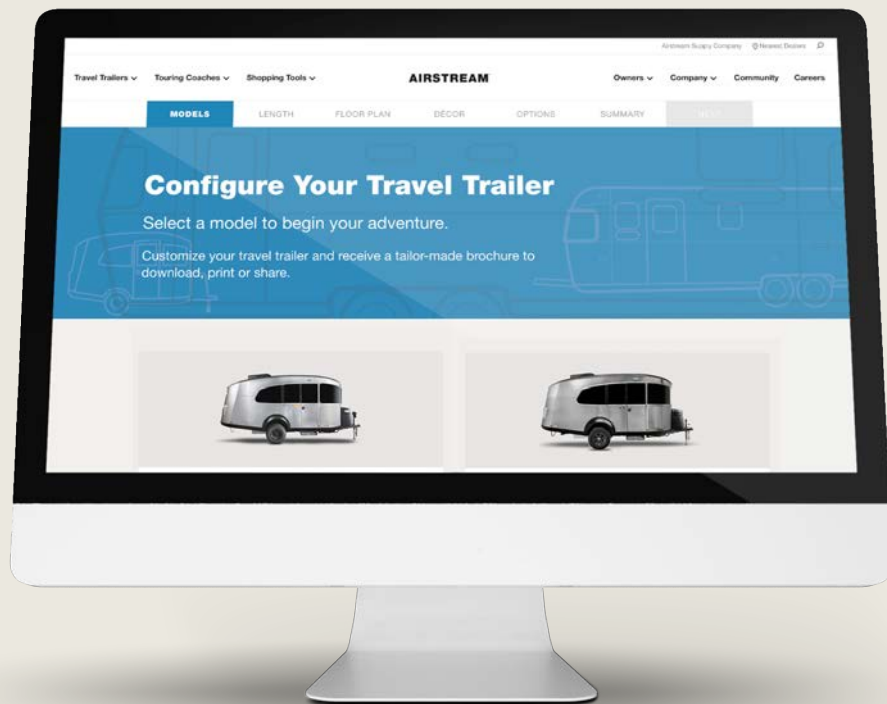
[Find Your Dealer](#)



See All Airstream Basecamps

Take a closer look at all the current Airstream Basecamp models and floor plans, and find the right one for you.

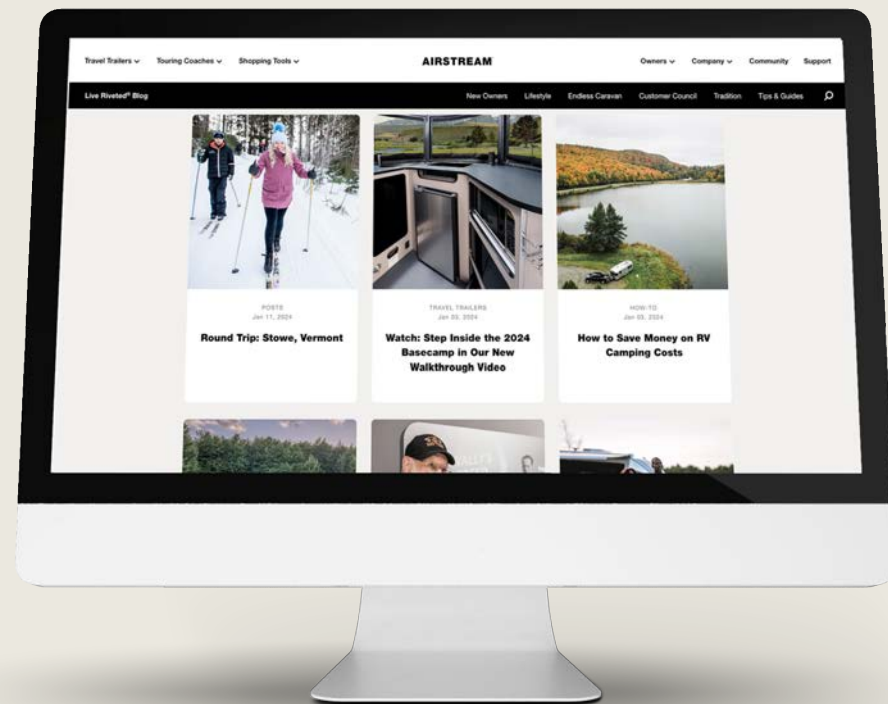
[Explore Basecamp](#)



Configure Your Perfect Basecamp

Start with any model and choose a floor plan, interior décor, and additional options that feel right for you. When you're done configuring, you'll receive a tailor-made brochure to download, print, or share.

[Configure Yours](#)



Explore Our Blogs

Connect to our community by diving in to our blog, where you'll find compelling stories and valuable perspectives.

[Read More](#)



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.

[Visit Website](https://airstream.com)



#LiveRiveted

Thousands of rivets hold an Airstream travel trailer together as it rolls down the highway. Likewise, our community of travelers, adventurers, and explorers is held together by our desire to live every moment to its fullest. So, what are you waiting for? Learn more about Airstream and discover how you can embrace the freedom and Live Riveted.

[Find your Travel Trailer at Airstream.com](https://www.airstream.com)

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