



## GUIDE TO

# BUYING AT A SHOW

Whatever your budget, a motorhome is a major purchase. Here's how to find your ideal 'van and get the most for your money at an industry show

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see [www.practicalmotorhome.com/know-how](http://www.practicalmotorhome.com/know-how) to download yours!

# 10 ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

... not for you to ask at a show, but to ask yourself before your visit – that way, you can determine exactly which motorhome you need, and shop even more savvily at the event itself

## 1 Who is travelling?

The days when passengers in the rear could swan about doing whatever they liked came to an end way back in 1991, when wearing seatbelts in the back seats (if they were fitted) became compulsory in the UK.

If there are going to be more than two of you travelling, ensure that you have enough belted forward-facing travel seats in the rear.

This means that you'll likely need to look at motorhomes with a rear dinette or full rear lounge (although some have fold-away belted seats).

In addition, don't assume that just because a motorhome is, for example, a four-berth, it will necessarily have four travel seats. Some manufacturers offer models that have more than two berths, but only have the two cab seats for travelling in. The assumption is that the extra passengers will be making the journey in a separate vehicle.



## 2 Will you be using your 'van for anything else?

If you want to use your motorhome occasionally as a means of transporting heavy items, you are going to want a model with large, contained storage areas. With a low-profile or A-class, this could mean a sizeable garage.

If you plan to use your vehicle every day, then you should opt for something a great deal smaller. Tracking down a parking place for a 7m-plus vehicle can be tricky; having to do it every day soon becomes extremely tiring.



## 3 Where will you be travelling?

If you think you will be doing most of your touring on the Continent and you live close to a Channel port, it might make sense to opt for a left-hand-drive model. There are dealers in the Home Counties who specialise in these.



## 4 When will you be touring?

If you plan to use your motorhome all year round, you should check the level of insulation it will offer.

Most new motorhomes now come fitted with Grade 3 insulation, which is designed to show they are suitable for this purpose.

The best insulation comes from your motorhome having a double floor. This necessarily means that it will be more expensive, but the double floor often also provides useful storage areas.



## 5 How do you like to sleep?

These days, more and more people are opting to have at least one fixed bed in their motorhome. This is great, but it's important to ensure that in making space for such a bed, the designer has not left you and your family too little room for anything else.

Generally, a transverse bed takes up the least length, followed by a French (corner) bed, although you only really avoid the problems of having to climb over your partner to get out of bed with either fixed singles or an island bed.

Fixed single, island and transverse beds can often be in a higher position to make more room for a garage below – in particular so that it can be high enough to take a conventional bicycle. ➔





This can sometimes make the beds more difficult to get into, and might feel claustrophobic (and hot, unless there is good ventilation).

Drop-down beds (usually transverse, sometimes longitudinal) are becoming increasingly popular, either over the cab in A-class models, or over the front lounge. In the latter position, they can blot out an otherwise useful rooflight

(common where they are fitted as a cost option, rather than standard), so you need to check that the lighting underneath them is adequate for the lounge. You should also make sure they do not obstruct the door too much.

Non-fixed beds are usually put together by using a combination of pull-out platforms, a lowered table, and occasionally extra pieces of wood.

### 6 Will you be cooking much?

Most British motorhomes that you'll see at a show will have an oven already fitted, and even if you're not interested in using one yourself, specifying an oven if you order a new 'van could help the resale value when it's time to sell.

You'll also want at least one mains socket for the kettle or the toaster in the morning. In our experience, motorhome cooking often involves

reheating already cooked food, which means that a spacious fridge and a microwave are two other items that you might well want.



### 7 Do you need a fancy washroom?

Washrooms in general are rarely going to match the den of pampering you might have at home. Still, toilet blocks on UK campsites can be rather variable, and you might find that your motorhome washroom is preferable to what is on offer outside.

Even if you don't use the washroom very often, it can still serve as a useful place to hang wet coats to dry, or to leave an awning if it hasn't dried off by the time you are leaving for home.



### 8 Are you taking an awning?

Awnings can provide a very useful extension to your living area. If you know you are always going to take one with you, for example, you don't need to worry so much about having too small a front lounge in the motorhome itself. Drive-away awnings, which stay

## THE TYPES OF SHOW

There are various types of motorhome show each year. Perhaps the two most popular are those held at the NEC in Birmingham; these were postponed during the coronavirus pandemic, but are now back, with the next one due to take place from 18–23 October 2022. There are also large shows held in Manchester (January 2023) and Glasgow (February 2023). All focus on new (rather than used) motorhomes and campervans, caravans and accessories.

Various other shows are held around the country, and they very often feature used motorhomes, too, as local dealerships bring along their stock to sell. Keep an eye out in the press for more information about these events.



upright when you head off for the day, are also a really useful way of retaining your pitch until you return.



### 9 What's the cab like?

You might not think that you really need to consider the cab, but bear in mind that you will often spend more time there during the day than you do in the front lounge.

So you might want to consider such things as the position of the drinks holders. Some drivers find having them located above the dashboard, as they are in the Ford Transit, less distracting than having to feel down for them, as you have to in some Fiat cabs.

In addition, check the provision of cab blinds – putting up independent blinds every night can be a chore.



### 10 What's your budget?

Perhaps the most important question of all – and one that deserves the most consideration. Be sure to do all of your sums in advance, taking into account what you'll need to pay in terms of insurance, tax and so on.

A motorhome with a more powerful engine might be tempting, but can you afford the increased fuel costs? Bear in mind you'll need somewhere to store your vehicle, too, if you can't keep it at home – and that can be expensive.



**'A motorhome with a more powerful engine might be tempting, but can you afford the increased fuel costs?'**

ADVERTISEMENT FEATURE

## MEET THE BRAND SOLBIO

Contact [www.solbio.co.uk](http://www.solbio.co.uk) Stand number 12.188 (Stall 188 in Hall 12)

**We meet John Morley (pictured right), UK distributor for Solbio organic toilet fluid, ahead of the NEC show**

#### ■ Tell us about Solbio organic toilet fluid!

It was thought of, designed and invented in Belgium by two friends – one a camper and the other a bio-engineer. The camper was upset that in some places, he was unable to empty his toilet waste because of the restrictions many campsites now have about using green toilet fluid.

Looking into the question, he realised that green toilet fluid isn't 'green' at all in environmental terms. So they came up with Solbio, which is an environmentally friendly alternative.

#### ■ How did you get involved?

In my travels around Europe for my main job at Spaceships Motorhome Rentals,

I came across Solbio. I decided I wanted it for my fleet of rentals and have since become the UK and Ireland wholesaler. We started off fairly small, but it has taken off by word of mouth – bloggers and YouTubers have bought the product, seen that it works and recognised that it's good for the environment.

#### ■ So you simply add it to the toilet cassette?

Yes. It can be used the whole way through the toilet system, so it can be used in the flush-water tank or the cassette. It can be used to clean the bowl and your grey-water tank as well.

You only need the one product and it's safe, so it can be very highly concentrated. One bag of Solbio has 40 doses.

#### ■ What can we expect at your stand?

We aim to show people there is another way that doesn't involve having to put a nasty blue chemical into your toilet, or indeed a green

coloured version of a nasty blue chemical. Solbio offers an environmentally friendly option. We'll also have discounted offers available at the show.



#### ■ How can people find out more?

Come and talk to us to learn about something new – the message is that there's now an environmentally friendly product that works, which because of its unique formula is safe for kids and pets. And the stand smells very nice – there are about 150 plant extracts in Solbio, you'll smell the stand before you see it!



how to...

# MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR VISIT

Buying a motorhome at a show can be nerve wracking, says Nigel Hutson, but keep your wits about you and you'll be ready to sign on the dotted line



1

**S**earching for that perfect new motorhome can be a headache. You can trawl through endless brochures, magazines and websites advertising leisure vehicles for sale, but there's nothing quite like getting inside the real thing and having a good look and a poke around.

For instance, if you're considering a fixed-bed layout, a bed that appears large enough on paper might actually be too narrow or too short when you use it for the first time. So the only way to check if you fit is to actually lie down on one.

Once you have determined which layout you want, you might find that a dealership not too far away from you

has a demonstrator of one particular brand, but you can almost guarantee that if you want to compare a couple of models from different brands, they won't have both. By the time you have located that second model, chances are (if you're like me!), you will have forgotten the details of the first one.

This is where the motorhome shows come into their own. In the main, all of the UK brands have their models on display – the bigger events also attract overseas manufacturers, such as Adria, Knaus and Hymer.

In most cases, they're all under one roof, too (or several roofs in the case of the February and October shows at the NEC Birmingham) and in the dry,

so you can wander freely from one model to another – and maybe back again – to compare and contrast plenty of motorhomes back-to-back.

Next month's Motorhome and Caravan Show at the NEC is also the first time you'll be able to see the latest 2023-season models, all in the same place – it is a huge event, so make sure you're wearing comfortable shoes...

## Buying experience

Before I go any further, I should explain that the last six leisure vehicles I have bought have all been ordered as a result of going to one of the UK's specialist shows – hopefully you can learn from my experiences (and mistakes!).



So what are the advantages and the possible pitfalls of buying from a show? If you really are starting from scratch, I would suggest doing a little research before leaving home. Shows are great for seeing lots of models at the same time under the same roof (1), but in the case of the NEC Birmingham, that's not one roof, but many.

To make sure you get the most from your time at the show, it's good to have some ideas, so you can see all that you need to. Consider how many berths you want and what kind of layout will best suit you. For more about deciding exactly what you want from your new motorhome, see p101.

Once you've worked all that out and narrowed it down to some brands/ranges that suit your pocket (yes, unfortunately these things do have to be paid for!) try to weed it further to a couple of models.

If you're only going to use the 'van over the summer, there's not much point in having things like Alde-type heating (which increases weight and cost), but conversely, if you're a hardy soul who's going away whatever the season, then there might be.

If you're a growing family with young children, a fixed-bed layout might look attractive, but might not be that practical as the children get bigger.

Having a list of 'must-have' and 'would-like-to-have' features will help you to refine your search.

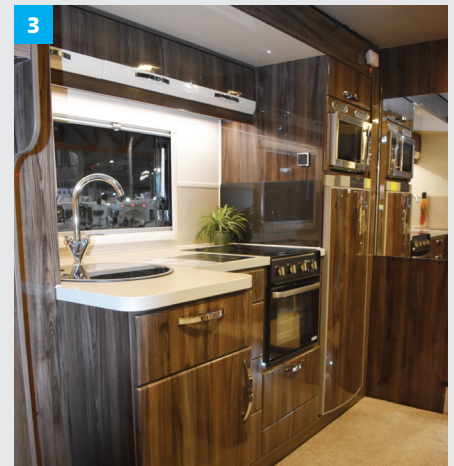
### Take a good look

You've drawn up your shortlist, so now it's time to spend some time in each of them, having a good look around (2).

Explore at your own pace and don't be rushed - buying a motorhome is a big purchase, so you want to get it right.

Go back if you want to double-check something that you've missed. Are the sofas comfortable? Are the beds long/wide/low enough? Can you reach that microwave (3) set up high? Do you fit comfortably in the shower?

Be mindful that most motorhomes on show will have some form of extra lighting (usually tucked into rooflights) to give what might be an enhanced impression of the interior light. Try not to be drawn in by the showroom glitz, but pay attention to the detail.



For instance, yours truly couldn't really care less about a fashionable sunroof, but if I open up one of the overhead lockers and it bashes into a roof-mounted radio speaker or a light fitting, to me that is a sign of poor attention to detail from the vehicle manufacturer, and I might then start wondering about other niggles.

Is the switch for the washroom lights inside or outside the washroom? Personally, I prefer a pull cord just inside the door, so you're not fumbling about in the dark for the switch. If the switch is outside, will you disturb other occupants in the 'van when you need to pay a night-time visit to the toilet? It's really important to pay attention to every small detail of the motorhome (4) - it could make or break your experience as an owner when you finally buy the vehicle.

Of course, it's highly unlikely that you'll find a 'perfect' motorhome,

because they're all a compromise in one way or another, but if you can live with the small foibles, don't write off that model. If it would be an irritation (and can't be altered) every time you use the 'van, look elsewhere.

### Ask about the extras

One reason buying from a show can be advantageous is that there are often goodies thrown into the deal.

Manufacturers will sometimes add extras for 'free', such as an increased spec or other options, or offer you exclusive show-only discounts on vehicles sold at the event (5). If you can't see any deal mentioned, don't be afraid to ask - you're the paying →

**5**

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customer, so you have absolutely nothing to lose by this.

Eventually you'll settle on one 'van that ticks the vast majority of your boxes, when it will be time to start talking to a dealer.

Seasoned motorcaravanners will know of good dealers not too far from home, and can check beforehand whether they're represented at the event. If you're buying from a larger brand, you might even find a selection of dealers at the show.

But if you're new to the world of leisure vehicles, be careful. Find out where any dealer you speak to is based. It might be that you're being offered a fantastic deal on a new motorhome, but if they're a couple of hundred miles away from where you live, it's likely to be a poorer deal overall.

Why? Sadly, the chances are that you will need something rectifying under warranty, so you don't want to have to travel for hours to reach them.

If there is a dealership for the brand you're set on closer to you than the one you are considering buying from, you could be lucky and find they might do the repairs, but don't be surprised



if they refuse, meaning you'd have to return to the dealer you bought from.

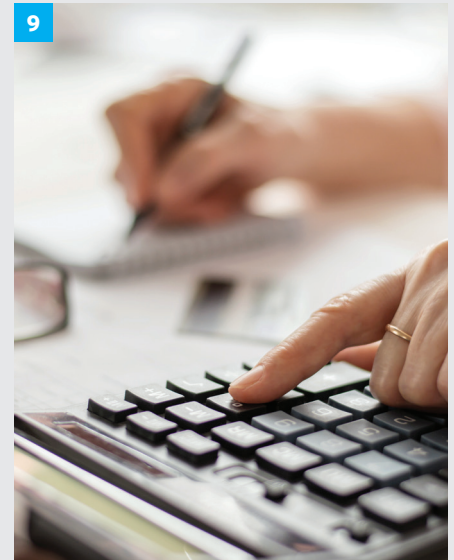
Other dealers are not obliged to do the repairs, and will prioritise their own customers. We often compare the motorhome industry to that of the car, but in reality they are miles apart.

To find out more about our most recent award-winning dealerships and manufacturers (6), see p112.

Finally, if you own a motorhome and are looking at part-exchange, consider carefully what each manufacturer or dealer can offer you (7).

### Clinching the deal

Remember that you don't have to sign there and then (unless it's the last hour of the last day of the show, when you



might well be under a bit of pressure). If possible, speak to a couple of dealers. Get a definite price that it's going to cost you, and if you find a dealer who waffles and won't give you a firm price, walk away and seek out another (8).

I've been lucky over the years and found a great dealership that might not be the nearest to home, but is still reasonably convenient. He simply gives me a price (with any extras and so on). I then go home and consider things away from the hype of the show, and if I'm happy with the deal, give him a call a day or so later to place my order (but before the end of the event, as special offers may end with the show).

### Organise the finance

How are you financing your new 'van (9)? If it's by a loan, there are sometimes financial arrangements available at the shows. Some finance companies are likely to be represented at these events, too, so you should be able to get a pretty quick decision.

Chances are that you'll be given a date for manufacture, but don't be too surprised if that comes and goes, particularly in the current climate, which is seeing supply chain issues resulting in manufacturers sometimes struggling to keep up with orders. Stay in touch with your dealer to find out the latest delivery date.

To summarise, choose your vehicle carefully by comparing a selection of models, and then be even more careful with the dealer you select, especially their location. And never feel pressured into signing on the dotted line – give yourself the time you need to make the right decision, so you can go away and think about it if you feel you should.

With all that done, you can now wait with anticipation for your new arrival!



# MEET THE BRAND PILOTE

Contact [www.pilote-motorhome.uk](http://www.pilote-motorhome.uk) Stand number 10-50 and 10-60

We meet father-and-son team Martin and Miles Storey, UK agents for Groupe Pilote, ahead of the NEC show.

## ■ Miles, you joined Pilote recently, tell us about your new role there.

My job is to assist Dad! Until I started working with him about a year ago, I didn't realise how big his role in the UK was. He manages the dealer network, liaises with the factory in France and organises shows. I'm here to help with all of those aspects.

## ■ Why have you decided to take a stand at the show this October?

The October NEC show is the biggest industry event in the UK and there hasn't been one since 2019. We think that it's important to show Pilote as one of the major manufacturers, and we want to show that despite supply issues with chassis and chips, we are building for the future and there are exciting times ahead.

## ■ What can showgoers look forward to seeing on your stand this year?

Essentially, a selection of the most popular of our vehicles specific to the UK market. We're keen to show the differences between our ranges, particularly the Evidence and the Expression.

Expression is a base vehicle that can be personalised and tailored to what the customer wants, while Evidence is a range of our most popular layouts and options. We've selected five profiles in the Evidence range, including one A-class, and the spec is standard – you can't change them.

The show will be different from previous years. Previously, we have had a 'season' of vehicles, but supply chain issues have meant that the industry has had to adapt, and there won't be a large amount of new models, although there will be the odd tweak or change to the vehicles.

Of course, because of the pandemic, for the most part people haven't been able to see the physical 'vans. So at the show in October, you'll be able to see and touch and explore the vehicles.

## ■ How important is it to be able to show customers the physical motorhomes?

A motorhome is a big purchase in terms of price, so it's important to be able to

go to a show and make an informed decision, rather than just seeing it online.

It's good for buyers to be able to talk with agents, manufacturers and dealers and to take advice based on what they plan to use the vehicle for.

To be able to physically touch and explore a motorhome is very important. Being able to enter a vehicle and open drawers, doors and cupboards allows customers to gain a sense of how they might use it – you really can't do that on a screen or a piece of paper!

We have a selection of vehicles on show, which means that people can compare them properly, too.

## ■ What are the advantages of buying a motorhome at the show?

Given some of the stock and supply issues, things have changed in the industry, and so it will be different from the last show, in 2019. There's big demand and short supply, so one of the main advantages of being at the show is that if you express an interest in a vehicle, you'll be first in line for that model.

## ■ What about accessories? What should buyers be thinking about to complement their big vehicle purchases?

It's a personal choice, really. With our Evidence range, a lot of popular accessory options have been incorporated into the

price – for example, awnings and reversing cameras – which will make the purchase a little bit easier and makes for an excellent package. But of course, if you want something particular, the Expression range can cater for that.

## ■ What advice would you offer people visiting the show for the first time?

Don't just jump in and buy the deal. Take your time, do plenty of research and find out which models are likely to be the most practical for you.

Ask loads of questions and compare different vehicles – that way, you can make sure it's the right one for you.

If you're unsure about what you want, be prepared to put in the time and do your homework. Try to establish exactly how you will be using the vehicle.

## ■ Any other advice you'd give those thinking of buying at the show?

Make sure any vehicle you're hoping to see is actually going to be there. Think about the location of the dealer you are buying from – aftersales care is important and you might want to be near them.

## ■ Where do you like to eat while at the show – we hear the curry's good locally?

We live in the Midlands, so we like to go home for tea – shows can be exhausting, so it's good to recharge at home.





# VISITING THE NEC SHOW

The next major motorhome and caravan show is about to take place at the NEC in Birmingham – here's our guide to getting the most from your day



If you're planning to visit the NEC show next month – something thousands of motorcaravanners do every year – it pays to do a bit of research before you go, to help you make the most of your day.

Here, we've included a map of the venue, which clearly shows where each type of manufacturer will have a stand – you can use it to help plan your route through the halls.

We'll have a full run-down of show highlights you can look forward to in the next issue of *Practical Motorhome*, which goes on sale on 13 October.

## ESSENTIAL SHOW INFORMATION

### Opening hours

The Motorhome & Caravan Show is open 10am–6pm every day from 18–23 October 2022, at the NEC Birmingham (postcode B40 1NT).

### Tickets

Tickets must be booked in advance – it won't be possible to buy them on the door. But here's the good news: we've grabbed a very special discount for *Practical Motorhome* readers. Simply use the code 'PMH' to

get your tickets at [www.mcshow.co.uk](http://www.mcshow.co.uk) for just £11.50\* (T&Cs apply, see below).

### Parking

Free parking is available for showgoers – you can take your motorhome (you will be directed to an appropriate bay), but note that no overnight parking is allowed. Shuttle buses to and from the car parks run daily from 8am to 7pm. NEC car parks are open from 7am to 11pm.

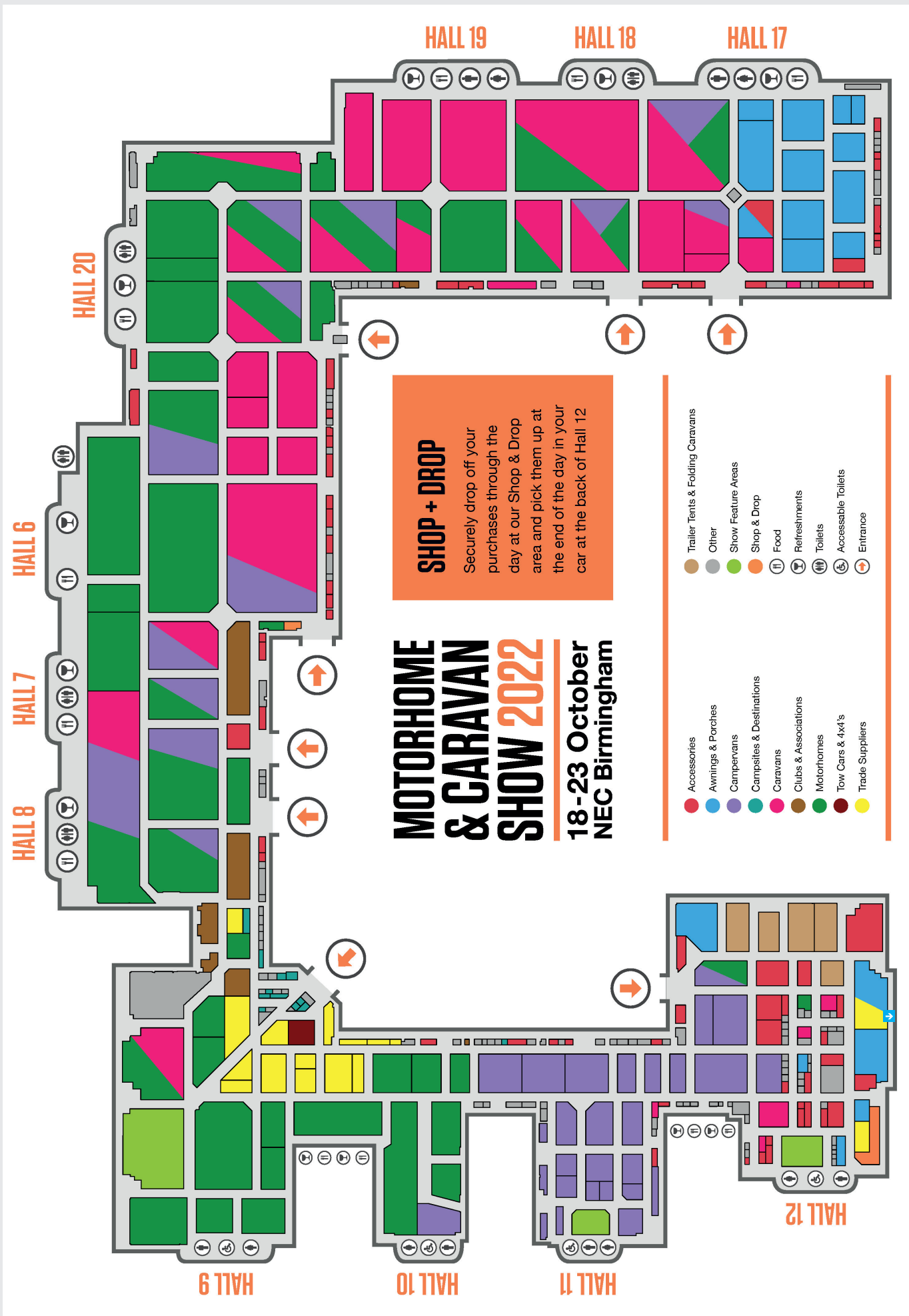
Disabled-parking spaces are also available, but cannot be prebooked.

### Other attractions

As well as all the action across the halls, a variety of activities – such as motorhome manoeuvring sessions – will be available to try. See the next issue for more details.

*\*£11.50 before 23:59hrs on 17 October 2022 when quoting 'PMH'. After this time tickets cost £15.00. A £1.25 transaction fee applies to all bookings. Tickets are limited & non-refundable. Car parking and a Show Guide is included in ticket price. No dogs (except assistance dogs). Children 15 years and under go free when accompanied by a paying Adult/Senior but still require a ticket to attend (max four children per adult).*

CUT ALONG DOTTED LINE



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 Securely drop off your purchases through the day at our Shop & Drop area and pick them up at the end of the day in your car at the back of Hall 12

**MOTORHOME & CARAVAN SHOW 2022**  
 18-23 October  
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- Other
- Show Feature Areas
- Shop & Drop
- Food
- Refreshments
- Toilets
- Accessible Toilets
- Entrance





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# FINANCE & WARRANTIES

You've chosen your dream motorhome! Now, before you close the deal, it's time to consider the important questions of finance and warranties

## Financing your purchase

Arranging finance for your purchase is often easier than paying in one lump sum, but you need to be careful not to spend more than you meant to.

Think about your monthly income and outgoings. How much is left to pay for the motorhome? Don't forget to budget for annual servicing, insurance, and storage if necessary.

Dealers at a show will usually offer finance packages, but do compare the interest rates with a personal loan to find the best deal for you.

A few minutes online will give you a clear idea of how much you'd have to pay each month if borrowing from a bank rather than arranging finance through a dealership. Consider the size of the deposit and the whole cost of the loan, not just the monthly payments.

## Checking out the warranty

Warranties provided by manufacturers in general offer to repair any defects without cost to you as the consumer – with certain exceptions and provided that certain conditions are met.

But motorhomes are almost always a base vehicle made by one company and the conversion provided by another.

That means two warranties, one for the base vehicle and a bodyshell warranty for the conversion. Large components in the motorhome, such as the microwave or the heater, usually have their own warranties, too.

More modern motorhomes also have a specific water-ingress warranty, which lasts longer than the bodyshell warranty – often up to a decade.

These can be extended warranties – optional, but you pay for them. It's

because you pay that the Consumers' Association says such warranties are more like an insurance policy.

Finally, your dealership might also offer you its own warranty, particularly if you are buying a used model. These are organised by the dealer through a separate insurance provider, and are far more varied.

No matter which brand you go for, you should always read all of the small print extremely carefully when buying a motorhome that's covered under warranty, to check exactly what you are getting, and what you would need to do in terms of ensuring that the warranty is maintained.

For example, you might be required to have your vehicle serviced only at a specific workshop – which could be a long way from where you live.



This article is based on information in August/September 2022 and is intended as a general overview of common finance and warranty questions and issues. References to specific products are for illustration only and not intended as any form of recommendation. Future Publishing Limited, the publisher of *Practical Motorhome*, provides the information in this article in good faith and makes no representation as to its completeness or accuracy. Individuals carrying out the instructions do so at their own risk and must exercise their independent judgement in determining the appropriateness of the advice to their circumstances. To the fullest extent permitted by law, neither Future nor its employees or agents shall have any liability in connection with the use of this information.

# EXPERT TIPS FOR BUYING AT A SHOW

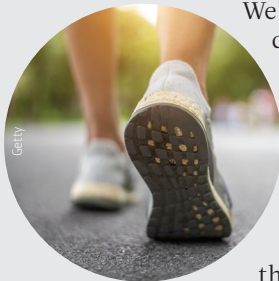
We asked our team – who have walked hundreds of miles at shows over the years – for their tips on making the most of your visit

## Wear decent footwear

Yes, a motorhome show is all indoors on flat surfaces. But you'd be amazed how much distance you will cover traipsing around looking at new models. One year a colleague of mine clocked up 13 miles on her FitBit in just one day! Make sure your shoes will be comfortable during that time.

Bear in mind that sales agents who approach you on a stand usually do not work for the manufacturer, but for one of its dealers. They might be able to offer you a great bargain, but if their dealership is right at the other end of the country, this could cease to be a bargain if anything goes wrong.

**Peter Baber, Reviews editor**



## Dealer specials

Look out for dealer specials over the standard model range. For not much more than the standard price, you can get your hands on some great extras. This means things such as upgraded soft furnishings, solar panels and awnings.

**Andrew Jenkinson, Contributor**



## Research your dealer

Do your homework on any potential dealership. We've bought several new models from an excellent dealership 70 miles away from us who I totally trust, so I'm happy to do the travelling.

We've also bought one from a poor dealer half that distance away, so I speak from experience.

**Nigel Hutson, Contributor**

## Decide your route

Plan your route around the show to avoid endless doubling back. Before you arrive, visit the show's website and download a list of exhibitors and a layout plan (and see p109). Highlight stands you are interested in and go through them hall by hall. If you arrive as the show opens, start in the hall furthest away.

In addition, if you are planning a change of vehicle, consult all aboard to find out what they like best about your current one and make sure those models on the shortlist for your next 'van are similarly equipped.

Then ask them what else they would have liked to see in your current 'van and try to accommodate as many of those requests as possible/affordable.

**Gentleman Jack, Contributor**

## Get in touch early

Consider approaching dealers and/or manufacturers in advance of the show with specific questions about models you're interested in. That way, you'll be better prepared and able to spend your time at the show viewing the 'vans and, of course, taking advantage of those excellent show prices.

And in my opinion, food outlets at shows can be a bit hit and miss – the quality varies, queues are long at peak times and prices are invariably high. Take a packed lunch and be properly refuelled for the afternoon.

**Paul Critcher, Deputy editor**



## Draw up a list

Make a list of all the things that are essential to you, in a grid with the model name next to them, and score each one on merits in that department (and any special show offers). By the time you've done the rounds, this should make it easy to shortlist your favourites for a second viewing.

Back this up with loads of photos. If you see a 'van you want to shortlist, start with a pic of the information and tech spec board (usually found near the door), so you'll know which 'van the photos relate to. Over lunch, you can delete pics of 'vans that fall off the list.

**John Sootheran, Contributor**

## Raise the roof

Thinking of an elevating-roof camper? Ask the stand personnel for permission to raise and lower the roof and convert seat(s) to bed(s). On some 'vans, these operations require Herculean effort, others are easy-peasy! Make sure you have sufficient 'oomph' and the reach.

**Gentleman Jack, Contributor**





# OUR READERS RECOMMEND...

Before buying at a show, we'd recommend taking a look at the results from our most recent Owner Satisfaction Survey, held in conjunction with The Camping and Caravanning Club



If you're thinking about purchasing a campervan or a motorhome at a show in the near future, these two pages – which feature the results from our most recent Owner Satisfaction Survey, run in conjunction with our scheme partners, The Camping and Caravanning Club – will make essential reading before you buy.

Our Owner Satisfaction Awards are the collected wisdom of thousands of owners – real customers, with real experience of buying leisure vehicles.

Our 2022 survey attracted more than 2600 fully completed responses, with readers giving their opinion on their motorhome and supplying dealer.

We asked about everything, from how the fridge performs to whether they would visit that dealer again.

### Expert analysis

Once all the results are in, we carefully run them past expert data analysts, who review all of the numbers, before

rigorously stress-testing them – that way, we can be confident our results are as accurate as possible.

A Gold Award is on offer to any firm with a score of 85% or more (this is an increase from 80% in the past, making this accolade more difficult to achieve). To earn a Silver Award takes a score of at least 60%.

Manufacturers and dealers achieving high scores, but with an insufficient sample size to be included in the main survey, are 'mentioned in dispatches', provided they reached the minimum sample size of 10. That way, the smaller brands can get their share of praise, but there's still rigour to the results.

So that's an overview of how our Owner Satisfaction Awards work. Now read on to discover the top-scoring motorhomes and the best places to buy them from – you'll no doubt be carrying out your own research, too, but these tables are a great place to start before looking to buy at a show!

## BEST MANUFACTURER NEW MOTORHOMES



### GOLD AWARDS

■ Adria	90.9%
■ Bürstner	87.4%

### SILVER AWARDS

■ Roller Team	84.9%
■ Hymer	84.4%
■ Auto-Trail	82.7%
■ Auto-Sleepers	82.4%
■ Bailey	80.7%
■ Chausson	79.7%
■ Elddis (EHG UK, including Compass)	77.8%
■ Swift	74.7%

### Mentioned in dispatches

Benimar, Carado, Carthago, Dethleffs, Rapido, Pilote/Bavaria, Rimor

**BEST DEALER**  
NEW MOTORHOMES

**GOLD AWARDS**

■ Richard Baldwin	97.1%
■ Choose Leisure	95.9%
■ Peter Roberts	95.0%
■ Todds Motorhomes	92.6%

**SILVER AWARDS**

■ Motorhomes & Caravans, Hull	74.5%
■ Brownhills	64.7%
■ Marquis Group	60.8%

**Mentioned in dispatches**

3A's Carmarthen, Davan, Dolphin Motorhomes, Don Arnott, ES Hartley Group, Knowepark Caravans & Motorhomes, Perthshire Caravans, Premier Motorhomes, Salop Leisure, SMC Motorhomes, Spinney, Tyne Valley Motorhomes, Vehicles 4 Leisure, West Country Motorhomes

**BEST VAN CONVERTER**  
OVERALL

**GOLD AWARDS**

■ Bilbo's	96.6%
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**Mentioned in dispatches**

Murvi, Vantage, Wellhouse, WildAx



**BEST MANUFACTURER**  
PRE-OWNED MOTORHOMES

**GOLD AWARDS**

■ Hymer	90.1%
■ Bailey	88.0%
■ Roller Team	87.0%
■ Auto-Sleepers	86.9%
■ Auto-Trail	86.3%

**SILVER AWARDS**

■ Swift (including Autocruise)	84.6%
■ Elddis (EHG UK, including Compass)	78.6%

**Mentioned in dispatches**

Adria, Benimar, Bürstner, Carthago, Chausson, Dethleffs, Rapido, Pilote/Bavaria, Rimor



**BEST DEALER**  
PRE-OWNED MOTORHOMES

**GOLD AWARDS**

■ Meridian Motorhomes	100.0%
■ Peter Roberts	93.6%
■ Choose Leisure	92.2%
■ Todds Motorhomes	91.2%
■ Salop Leisure	89.3%

**SILVER AWARDS**

■ Marquis Group	76.2%
■ Brownhills	70.6%

**Mentioned in dispatches**

Highbridge Caravans, Erwin Hymer Centre Travelworld, Richard Baldwin

**BEST MANUFACTURER**  
OVERALL (NEW & USED)

**GOLD AWARDS**

■ Hymer	86.6%
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**SILVER AWARDS**

■ Auto-Sleepers	84.7%
■ Auto-Trail	84.5%
■ Bailey	83.2%
■ Swift	79.8%
■ Elddis (EHG UK)	78.2%

**Mentioned in dispatches**

None

**IT'S NOT TOO LATE  
TO HAVE YOUR SAY!**

If you've bought a new or pre-owned motorhome since 1 January 2019, and have owned it for at least three months, then we'd love to hear from you. We'll reveal the results online and in the magazine towards the end of 2022. What's more, everyone who completes our survey is in with a chance of winning a seven-night stay at a Camping and Caravanning Club (our scheme partners) site of their choice; there are two additional prizes of a three-night stay at a Camping and Caravanning Club site of their choosing. For competition T&Cs, see [www.campingandcaravanningclub.co.uk/tc](http://www.campingandcaravanningclub.co.uk/tc).

To tell us about your experiences, visit [www.practicalmotorhome.com/vote](http://www.practicalmotorhome.com/vote) by 23 October 2022