



Contents

Preface	6	Chapter 5: Good buys	42
About the author	6	<i>Ten top tips about buying</i>	
Acknowledgements	7	<i>second hand</i>	45
Chapter 1: Introduction	8	First impressions	46
How big a caravan should		Chapter 6: Finance	55
you buy?	9	<i>Top tip</i>	58
Trailer tents	15	Chapter 7: Taking to the road	59
All seasons touring	17	First journey	61
Chapter 2: The early days	20	The way forward	67
Caravanning yesteryear	22	Stability	68
Nanki-poo's half century	25	Chapter 8: Caravan design	70
Chapter 3: How easy? How safe?	28	Weighty considerations	76
Driving licences	29	Chapter 9: Stabilisers	81
The 85 per cent		Chapter 10: The way	
recommendation	29	backwards	83
Understanding the jargon	30	<i>Towing tips</i>	86
Some other legal points	30	Difficult parking	86
Servicing and maintenance	32	Useful addresses	88
Chapter 4: What makes a good		Chapter 11: Economical towing	89
towcar?	34	<i>Top tips for economy</i>	91
Petrol or diesel?	35	Wind deflectors	91
Manual or automatic?	36	Tyres and their care	91
Front or rear wheel drive	36	What if you have a puncture?	93
4 x 4 off roaders	37	Changing a caravan wheel.	93
Additional equipment for		Safety equipment	94
towing	37		
Electrics	39		

How easy? How safe?



Police periodically make safety checks.

UK have been known to exceed the permitted dimensions.

Passengers may not be carried in a moving trailer caravan, except in the case of maintenance engineers in the course of their work.

Learner drivers. Learners are not allowed to tow. For other limitations regarding licensing, see the previous section.

Overnight parking is not allowed in lay-bys except where specifically permitted under local by-laws. So you cannot use one as a convenient and cheap stopover.

On street overnight parking of an unhitched trailer caravan is not allowed either, because the rules which allow unlighted cars to be parked facing the same way as the flow of traffic in certain areas do not apply to them. When parked at night and hitched to the car, side lights must be used. Unhitched trailers may not be left without lights on public roads, or roads to which the public has access after

dark, including lay-bys.

Headlights. The Road Vehicle Lighting Regulations require headlights to be properly adjusted so as not to cause dazzle. The drivers of vehicles towing caravans need to take special care that the balance of their car is not upset by the weight of the trailer, thus creating an offence.

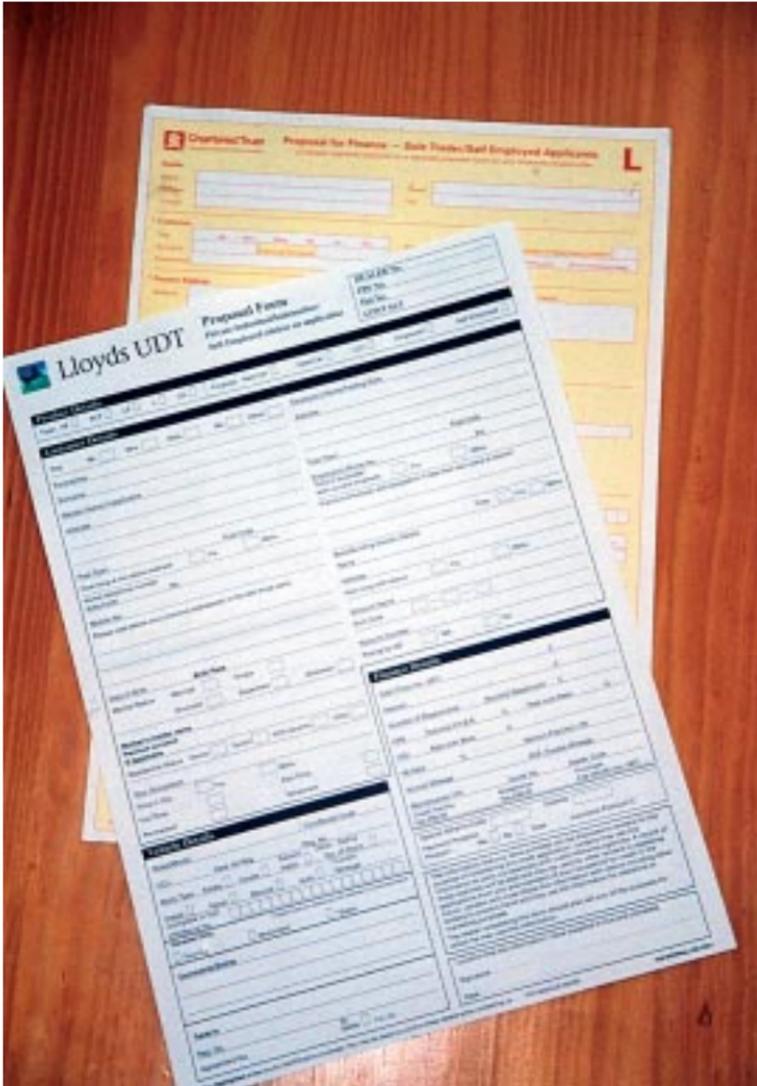
Parking meters. Vehicles towing a trailer are not allowed to park at parking meters.

Speed limits. Unless some lower speed limit is in force, vehicles towing trailers are limited to a maximum of 50mph on single carriageway roads. On motorways and dual carriageways the maximum permissible speed is 60mph.

Lane discipline. Trailer caravans are subject to the same rules regarding lane discipline as other large vehicles, and are excluded from the outside lane of motorways with three or more carriageways.

Rear view mirrors. Drivers are required

Chapter 6



There is more to obtaining a loan than just filling in a form. Enquire if there are early settlement charges, and how the interest rate is calculated.

daily rate. It is also important to know, not only the rate of interest being charged, but also if there are redemption penalties or settlement charges.”

Chapter 10



Let's try and reverse straight towards the box seen in the mirror.

It's true that small to medium sized caravans, together with folders and trailer tents, can easily be unhitched and pushed into position by a couple of people, nullifying the need to reverse anyway. But to have to do so would show a complete lack of expertise, as well as taking far more time than necessary, not to mention muscle power.

One obvious way to learn how to place the caravan exactly where you want it while executing a backwards manoeuvre, is to take one of the towing courses which are held at various centres throughout the UK by both the Caravan Club and the Camping and Caravanning Club. They teach a great deal about the theory of caravanning as well, concentrating upon the legal and safety aspects. Time spent on such a course is time well spent.

Almost as easily, you can teach yourself. Find yourself a quiet open space, such as a field, or, if you are lucky,



Almost immediately the tail of the caravan begins to veer to the right. Its image is decreasing in the left mirror (not shown). Correction right hand down on steering wheel.

a disused car park, empty lay-by or a quiet corner of a certificated location, one of the thousands of five caravan sites for the exclusive use of club members, for example.

You will need the car to be fitted with supplementary mirrors, and a light object which you will position the caravan against. A traffic cone or a cardboard box will be fine, as would a garden cane with a piece of cloth tied to it - anything which will do no damage if you hit it. You will also need an assistant to act as a safety look out.

First, try to reverse in a straight line. This is the key to all other manoeuvres, and is not as simple as it appears. Before you have covered many feet, the caravan will develop a mind of its own and decide to turn one way or the other, unless you stop it.

Chapter 20

vaccinated against rabies.

- Thirty days later a blood test should be taken. This is sent to a DEFRA approved laboratory for certification of immunity.
- Six months must elapse between the

date a satisfactory blood test was taken to the issue of the Pets 1 Certificate.

- The need for an export licence for animals to enter France from the UK has already been amended, being replaced by a form called Pets 5, a French version



Patra, the author's English Springer Spaniel, photographed on a site at Guines.