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The Secrets To RV Toilet Replacement



By Dee Montana

The Secrets To RV Toilet Replacement

RV toilet replacement can be a pain in the neck. In this article, I will walk you through the ins-and-outs of choosing the correct toilet for your rig. We will also discover the basics of standard, and marine, toilet installation.

Before we begin, let's make sure you need a new toilet. Just because your RV toilet is leaking does not mean you need an RV toilet replacement. You may instead need a water valve replacement. This is a common problem, and checking it might help you avoid additional expense. *(Details of how to check your water valve are below.)* However, if you are planning an RV toilet replacement, we will assume you have already ruled out other problems.

Today, there are more RV toilet options than ever before, so it is important to examine your personal needs prior to shopping. RV toilet replacement starts by measuring your

existing space. How tall is your current toilet? How deep? Is the bowl round or elongated? Is there room for a bigger unit? Write each answer down and keep the measurements handy for reference.

Next, examine the mounting considerations. For this part of the RV toilet replacement, you will need the old toilet pulled out of the bathroom. Once this is complete, look at the way the toilet was mounted. Did it use a floor flange? How large is the existing hole? Most standard RV holes are around 3 inches, but they can be as small as 1 inch. Write down the exact measurements.

Dometic RV Toilet Installation, RV How To Video



Now you are ready to choose an RV toilet replacement.

Step #1 Look at the features and benefits that each type of toilet has to offer. Some RV toilets are anti-microbial, some are low water, and a few are even composting. Do you want a bidet or spray unit attached to your toilet? Do you want a macerator that will grind the waste and provide more space in your black tank? Do you want to use gravity, electricity, or air to power your flushing system? If you have a 3-inch (or larger) waste hole, you will have a variety of choices. If you have a

smaller than average hole, you may be able to purchase a marine toilet that uses electricity and a macerator.

Step #2 Decide on the bowl seat and the overall height of the toilet. Generally, the higher the toilet and the larger the bowl, the more it feels like a residential unit. Inexpensive plastic RV toilets can also be used for an RV toilet replacement, but while affordable they will seldom feel like home.

Step #3 Choose the overall appearance and the color of the toilet. The most popular color is white, with bone coming in (a distant) second. Most companies make both colors, but you may have to order and wait for the color bone. This is the phase where you decide what shape and size you want the toilet. Tall and narrow? Short and squat? Whatever you decide, make sure that both the mount, and the measurements, will work in your current restroom space.

Step #4 Pick your flush. Do you want a foot pedal? A slide handle? A hand-held handle, or an electric push-button flush? RV toilet replacements come in a variety of styles, and most allow you to pick the type of flush you desire.

Step #5 Choose the materials. RV toilets come in plastic, china, and a hybrid mix of the two. Your budget or decorative desires will set the tone for your choice. Are you looking for an “at home feel?” If so, you will want to choose a china pedestal. Would you prefer to “feel like you are camping!” If so, save money and buy a plastic toilet, which is perfect for many campers and travel trailers.

Step #6 Pick the brand. Thetford and Dometic are the most popular companies for RV and marine toilets. You can buy units online, at Camping World, and at many boating stores. Be aware! You may have to order the toilet you want and wait for several weeks. There are only a handful of toilets carried in stock at RV shops, and they are usually identical. If you need a toilet quick, you may have to compromise your earlier decisions and get what they have on hand!

RV Toilet Gasket Replacement



Before we move on completely from choosing your RV toilet, to installing your RV toilet, let's take a brief look at composting toilets.

Composting toilets are different than regular RV toilets, but they are becoming increasingly popular, especially for those who like to boondock (dry camp). Composting toilets range in price from \$800-\$2,000, however, most do not require any form of water or power, now or in the future. (Which makes up for the initial cost.) Nature's Head is the most popular brand of composting toilet, and can be found in marine stores, as well as online.

The main complaint many people have about composting toilets for RVs is that they are plastic, and rarely look residential. They also require special installation and fittings. Composting toilets, if cared for correctly, do not smell. They do, however, have to be dumped every few days for liquids, and once every couple of weeks for solids.

Replacing a Dometic Water Valve on a 300 series Toil...



In most cases, the inside of the composting toilet uses peat moss or coconut fibers, to absorb the waste and create human compost. So what is the advantage to a composting toilet? Well, it saves water, there are no chemicals, and you never deal with raw sewage. Suddenly, your black tank is empty! (So there is no need to dump your tank.) You are also “going green,” which is important to many boondocking RVers.

For everything you need to know on composting toilets (and more), check out this video from Gone With The Wynn’s:

The Big and Dirty Questions about Composting Toilets



Now, back to traditional RV toilet talk: Here are the steps to the RV water valve replacement. If you haven't checked it, be sure to go through this process PRIOR to ordering your new RV toilet.

Step #1 Fully dump your black tank, and make sure you are parked on a level surface. Turn off the water pump and the water in your toilet.

Step #2 Unscrew and remove both the plastic toilet base cover, and the toilet handle. Hold onto the screws and set them aside.

Step #3 Look for the water valve in the back. Unscrew the valve and throw away the old screws. (They will often be corroded.)

Step #4 There is a small mesh net in the back that should be cleaned. On occasion, minerals or other matter will build up and block the flow of water.

Step #5 Attach the new water valve, and screw it in using the new screws that came with the valve.

Step #6 Turn the water and water pump back on. Look for leaks.

If you plan to replace the RV toilet yourself, you may need a little help. Here is a quick overview of the steps required.

A. Turn off the water pump and flush the toilet. You don't want any pressure in your water lines before you start this project. Once that is done, remove the old RV toilet. It's best to prepare an area to place the old toilet before pulling it. Old rags or towels work good for this.

B. Clean all around the base of where the RV toilet use to be. You may need to remove floor wax or silicone that secured the tank. Make sure to remove anything that could accidentally fall into the tank hole.

C. Drain your RV waste tank completely. You don't want to remove old plumbing connections with it full. Once everything is drained you can unscrew the plumbing and hoses that lead from the old toilet into the black water tank. **IMPORTANT:** Don't forget to wear rubber gloves for your safety and **DO NOT** touch your eyes or mouth.

D. Replace the gasket that creates a seal between the toilet and the floor. This keeps sewage at bay. Lift off the old one, and set the new one (that came with your new toilet) in place. Carefully place the new RV toilet on top of the flange or gasket ring, and line up the mounting holes. You will want the new bolts to fit in the old holes.

E. Now that the RV toilet replacement is complete, add the new nuts and bolts to the holes. Make sure you have a tight fit, without over tightening. (Just in case you need to take the toilet out again!) Sit on the bowl and try to move it back and

forth. Does it feel loose? Does it move? If so, you may need to use a small plumber shim to fully level the unit.

F. Reconnect the water host to the toilet. Tighten, but don't strip the nuts over the bolts.

G. Turn the water back on and flush the toilet. Check for leaks below the toilet, in the basement of your rig, and around the fittings. Congrats! If it all worked, than that was a simple RV toilet replacement.

Troubleshooting: RV toilet replacement is not an easy process to describe. There may be a variety of variations, including the need for electricity, air, or the drilling of new mount holes. Be sure to talk to your distributor about any issues you may incur. A water connection may need to be shortened or lengthened. Check with your service center for suggestions. Always measure carefully BEFORE you order your new toilet.

Replacing an RV toilet with a Marine toilet.

For some coaches, marine toilets are a better fit than traditional RV toilets. This includes many bus conversions, Prevosts and Newell coaches. If you have a smaller than average waste hole to your tank, a marine toilet may be your only option. Boat toilets come with a hand pump flush or a gravity/water flush. Marine toilets come in a variety of shapes and sizes, from the very small to the very large. They also come in several colors, with white being the most popular. Installation of a marine toilet can be similar to an RV toilet, however check with your distributor. A marine toilet

may need you to drill new mount holes, as they rarely line up with the previous RV toilet. If so, be sure to fill in the old holes with silicone when you are done.

Checking your vent as part of an RV toilet replacement.

It's important to check your RV toilet vent from time to time. If your RV toilet smells, chances are your vent is blocked.

Here's what to do

Step #1 Get on the roof and inspect the vent. If the vent has a cap on it, remove it immediately. Caps are sometimes placed on a vent during the winterization process.

Step #2 Grab a drill and connect a toilet cable snake (available on Amazon.com) to the bit. Push the snake down the vent, and turn the drill on. Move the snake up and down, in order to remove any blockage from the pipe.

Step #3 If everything looks good, but the smell continues, consider purchasing a ventilation assistant. A ventilation assistant connects to the vent pipe and blocks the wind, which will sometimes blow gases back down into the rig. (Instead of up and out!)

An RV toilet replacement takes some planning. If possible, take time to find the perfect fit for your coach, and allow for a special order, if needed. While RV toilets can be replaced by the coach owner, it is always easier to have it installed by a professional RV technician.

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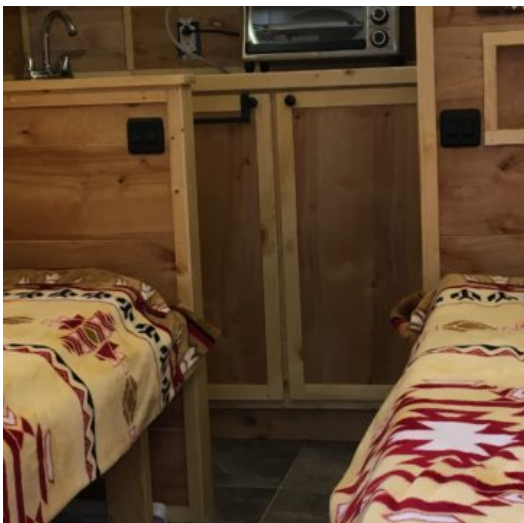
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