

# **Dometic RV TOILET BUYING GUIDE**

## **SELECTING THE RIGHT TOILET**

Toilets are essential to your comfort on the road. Yet with so many technologies and features to choose from, selecting the perfect toilet for your recreational vehicle (RV) can be confusing! We've put together this guide to assist you in making the right choice for you and your RV:

### **YOUR PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCES:**

#### **HOW MANY TOILETS WOULD YOU LIKE YOUR VEHICLE TO HAVE?**

If you have a large RV and would like more than one toilet, then you'll appreciate a vacuum or macerator toilet as a second unit. These toilets don't need to be positioned directly above the waste holding tank. Instead, effluent is pumped through a sanitation hose to the tank up to 50 ft (15 m) away – giving you a wider choice of installation location.

#### **WHAT IF YOU HAVE LIMITED SPACE FOR A TOILET?**

Bathrooms with limited space and unusual layouts are common on RVs. These three features very often provide the solution:

A cassette toilet with 360-degree bowl-to-base rotation gives limitless positioning options in extremely small spaces.

Low-profile toilets with a small footprint fit in tight spaces, even on raised platforms, without sacrificing user comfort.

Compact pedal-flush toilets are now available in macerating and vacuum toilets, so you don't need to rely solely on gravity toilets for small bathrooms.

#### **WHICH IS THE BEST TOILET FOR ELDERLY OR DISABLED USERS?**

Avoid low-profile toilets unless they are installed on raised platforms. High-profile toilets, which offer similar dimensions to household toilets, are easier for people to sit on and lift themselves off from. Also, avoid a foot-pedal flush and, instead, opt for an electric toilet with a traditional flush handle or wall switch.

#### **WILL YOU BE TRAVELLING FOR LONG PERIODS?**

If you're likely to be away for a long time without the possibility of frequently discharging your waste tank, your toilet system may require additional consideration to ensure your comfort. Vehicles equipped with a cassette or portable toilet should also carry a spare waste tank (or two) so the waste tank capacity is easily increased.

## **WILL YOU TRAVEL TO REMOTE PLACES?**

If you're likely to be away from sources of water or electrical power for long periods, it's worth having a cassette toilet or portable toilet on board. Both types can be used anywhere and do not rely on electrical power. All portables and some cassettes also have their own water reservoir that's filled before beginning the trip.

## **BIG QUESTION: WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF TOILETS?**

### **THERE ARE FIVE POPULAR TYPES OF RV TOILET:**

**Gravity flush** – this is the most traditional toilet; tried and tested in RVs for decades. It uses the simplest method of flushing – bowl contents drop directly into a large holding tank – ensuring reliable, straightforward performance. The gravity-flush toilet must be installed directly over the waste holding tank.

**Macerating flush** – motor-powered blades macerate waste into viscous slurry before the waste goes into a large holding tank. This flushing technology allows the toilet and waste holding tank to be positioned apart from each other. As a result of maceration, holding tank effluent is more fluid. This reduces “mounding” of waste while also making discharge from the tank easier and more thorough.

**Vacuum flush** – bowl contents are powerfully pulled from the toilet bowl through a stored vacuum vessel and macerating vacuum pump, and then pumped to a large holding tank. Like macerating toilets, this flushing technology also allows the toilet and waste holding tank to be positioned apart from each other. This allows a vacuum toilet to be located virtually anywhere in a motorhome.

**Cassette** – primarily designed for caravans and campervans, this toilet technology provides a compact toilet bowl that's permanently installed over a small, removable “cassette-style” waste tank. When flushed, the bowl contents drop directly into the waste tank. When the waste tank is full, it is manually removed through a service door and emptied into a standard toilet or other waste disposal station, then re-installed under the toilet bowl.

**Portable** – popular in small campervans and also for tent camping, portable toilets are composed of a lightweight plastic toilet bowl and small waste tank. When the tank is full, you remove the lower tank from the upper seat and bowl, empty it into a standard toilet or other waste disposal station, then re-connect it with the toilet bowl.

## **HOW CAN YOU AVOID BAD SMELLS FROM A TOILET?**

In many cases, the primary cause of a smelly toilet is when the waste holding tank is located directly under a gravity-flush toilet. Toilets that open directly above the tank are likely to allow tank odor to penetrate into the bathroom. Two good options to prevent this from occurring are the installation of a macerator toilet or vacuum toilet. These two types of toilets are installed without a direct path from the tank to the toilet bowl, isolating smells from the user.

With a macerator or vacuum toilet, there is still the small risk of smells penetrating a flexible hose if one is used for connecting the toilet to the waste holding tank (odor will not permeate PVC pipe). So make sure the waste line drains properly into the tank to avoid sewage remaining in the sanitation hose after flushing.

In gravity-flush toilets, the water that stays in the bowl acts as an odor seal between the bowl and the tank. To continue performing this vital job, the seal and flush ball or valve must remain clean and smooth so that water does not leak down and out of the bowl. Be aware that it takes regular cleaning to ensure this function remains effective. Mineral and waste build up can damage the seal, meaning the protective water seal cannot function.

To avoid bad smells from a cassette or gravity toilet, use tank treatments that are designed for those toilet systems. Proper waste tank ventilation is also important to make sure that tank treatments work properly and odor is kept to a minimum. Also bear in mind that a cassette toilet's waste tank is technically inside the vehicle. So any odor may be more noticeable if the waste tank is not properly treated or ventilated.

Toilets of all types benefit from tank treatment solutions. Whether in liquid or drop-in packet form, they effectively combat odor.

## **WHICH PERMANENT TOILETS USE THE LEAST AMOUNT OF ENERGY?**

Foot-pedal-operated gravity flush toilets do not require any electrical connections, so they consume no energy at all. Other toilets that use very little electrical power (to operate an electric water valve or a flush valve motor) include cassette toilets and all-ceramic gravity-flush toilets. Also considered to be "low-power" units are vacuum toilets that use a foot pedal for flushing (a vacuum generator uses a mere 6 amps of electric power).

### **WHICH PERMANENT TOILETS USE THE LEAST AMOUNT OF WATER?**

Foot-pedal operated toilets use the least water, while electric flush toilets are programmed to use a little more. However, most electric flush toilets offer “Normal” and “Low” flush options to help control water use.

Gravity-flush toilets consume very little water because they do not need extra water to flush waste from the bowl. Vacuum toilets also require very little water, as the vacuum power pulls waste from the toilet bowl and keeps the plumbing line clear without extra water.

### **WHICH TOILET IS THE QUIETEST?**

The absence of a motor in cassette, portable and pedal-flush gravity toilets means they’re very quiet. Another option to consider for keeping noise down is a slow-close seat which prevents closing with a bang!

### **WHICH TOILET IS THE EASIEST TO EMPTY?**

While the waste from gravity-flush toilets can cause “mounding” inside a tank that can be difficult to rinse out, the pulverized effluent from a macerator or vacuum toilet is more easily and thoroughly discharged from a waste holding tank. In fact, barely any waste will remain inside the tank after emptying and, unlike gravity and cassette toilets, potential blockages caused by wads of toilet paper do not pose a risk.

**Tip:** If you may be exposed to tank odor during discharge, use a tank deodorant immediately before emptying the tank so that the deodorant is at its most potent.

### **WHICH TYPE OF FLUSHING MECHANISM SHOULD YOU CHOOSE?**

Since the late 1970s, most residential-style RV toilets used a foot pedal for flushing. Recently, however, electric flushing models which either use a remote switch or electronic flush handle are increasingly popular.

Some electric flush switches include a “full tank” shut-down option that cuts off power to the toilet to avoid overfilling the holding tank. While most RV toilet systems let you determine when a waste holding tank is full (either by a built-in tank monitor system or by looking down through the toilet bowl when the flush valve is open), not all will prevent you from overfilling the tank.

With the risk of damage caused by overfilling, an electric flush with full tank shut-down can be reassuring.

## **HOW CAN YOU MAXIMIZE THE COMFORT OF YOUR TOILET?**

Most people find high-profile toilets to be the most comfortable to sit on and easiest to stand up from. Hand sprayers have become popular options for additional bowl rinsing when desired. The simple replacement of plastic seats with enameled wood or slow-closing seats is also a common upgrade. Finally, when toilets may be used in the dark, remote flush switches are both easy-to-use and feature helpful illuminating backlights.

However, if you have no restrictions on space, weight or budget, the premium model of toilet would be: a high-profile, full-ceramic vacuum toilet with a slow-close seat. It offers the most powerful, odor-free flush; uses little water and electricity; and results in free-flowing effluent that pumps out very thoroughly. Your toilet would be the envy of all who use it!

## **HOW CAN YOUR TOILET SYSTEM BE KIND TO THE ENVIRONMENT?**

Use environmentally friendly tank treatment liquids, drop-in packets or dissolvable tabs. You can also conserve water by choosing a low-volume flush when the toilet system offers this option. Gravity, cassette and portable toilets, which do not rely on electricity, are also great friends of the environment!