



## RVHaulers Presentation 2016

Locating, Researching and Inspecting your  
Own RVHauler Candidate truck.

Why are we even considering a heavy duty truck (HDT) to pull our trailers? Comparisons between

- Light duty
- Medium duty
- Heavy duty

HDTs aren't always needed – but there are emotional factors to consider too. Not only a logical and empirical decision.

In business you can't be good at everything. I had to make some business decisions and choose my specialty. I only do Volvos – reasons? – Why Volvo?

- quietest interior
- best mileage
- best auto transmission (ishift)
- largest interior
- nicest ride
- Volvo is usually cheaper than a Pete, FL, Kenworth

Notes about my presentation – I don't sell trucks >9 years old – In my opinion they are generally risky. This presentation includes some Volvo specific items, but the general concepts can be transferred to any manufacturer.

I represent only one opinion – get other opinions.

### Learning outcomes and objectives –

- Have some confidence in locating great RVHauler candidates.
- Be able to save your own time during the research stage.
- Reduce the risk of costly surprises, and be close to your project budget.

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1. Establish your Budget
  - a. Budget Asset costs include Truck, Bed, Toys (Smart), Trailer
  - b. Budget Recurring costs including Storage, Insurance, Registration, Maintenance
2. Narrow your search



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- a. Models – I want a low sleeper – okay, but...
  - b. Years – no older than 2004
  - c. Height – How tall is your 5<sup>th</sup> wheel trailer?
  - d. Length – 65 feet overall – be aware
  - e. Exhaust Emissions and Ishift Transmission “timing” in 2007/2008
  - f. Rear End Ratio, Locker
3. Bed Design – Does Not Affect the Truck Decision
- a. No Bed is required on day 1. I advise customers that the bed is expensive. They have the option to drive their truck first, and really be sure of what they require.
  - b. Simple bed can be done – sides, storage, and options add up fast \$16,000
  - c. Smart Bed with skirting \$22,000 and up
  - d. Drom \$4000
  - e. Hydraulic Loader \$45,000
4. Finances and Insurance Preparation
- a. Now is the time to ensure you have the ability to put insurance in place on the model year etc that you have chosen. When the right truck appears, be ready to move!
  - b. Don’t assume your bank will finance you as if this was a “pickup”.
5. Locating - Where do I look?
- a. Truck paper online
  - b. Dealerships – make yourself known (not just Volvo) to every salesperson. Offer a commission for a cream-puff up-coming.
  - c. Trick – ask about trade-ins up-coming. Dealers LOVE to have a used truck pre-sold.
  - d. Service Counter Reps
  - e. Mechanics -
  - f. Escapees Forum
  - g. Private Listings – kijiji, craigslist, etc
  - h. Talk to Fleets that use Volvos – watch the trucks as you travel
  - i. Locating Tricks – search for terms – mis-filed ads/incomplete ads – search for ishift, VNL64T, 670, 780
6. Researching – What important things am I looking for?
- a. Physical Points -
    - i. Transmission
    - ii. Engine
    - iii. Mileage
    - iv. Hours
    - v. Codes
    - vi. Leaks



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- vii. Body condition – remember our “RV standards” are completely different than “trucker standards” for condition and appearance.
- viii. Ask for 20+ pictures. I ask them to take pictures of things that are not perfect. I care about what I have to fix, not what is already good. Inside, outside, underside.
- ix. Smoking in Interior
- x. Interior condition
- b. History
  - i. Are you original owner?
  - ii. Why are you selling
  - iii. Accidents
  - iv. Types of loads, weights
  - v. Idling hours
  - vi. How many drivers

### Maintenance and Repair Points

- vii. Who did oil, grease, regular maintenance?
  - viii. What were the oil change intervals? Oil analysis?
  - ix. Who was the preferred repair shop(s)? Who did you work with there?
  - x. Do you have a repair history?
  - xi. Ask the KEY big-price repair questions. (listed in decreasing order of cost)
    - 1. Injector harness leaks
    - 2. Engine injectors, cups, valves, EGR
    - 3. Tires
    - 4. Kingpins
    - 5. DPF maintenance
    - 6. Transmission oil change
    - 7. Oil leaks
    - 8. Brakes
  - c. Owner Operators – tend to care about their rigs, as they represent their livelihood. However, there are some owners that aren't the best business people
  - d. Fleet can be good – as the good ones have corporate policies on mandated maintenance, frequent inspection and repairs. Not all have the best practices though.
7. Inspecting
- a. Start with a blank inspection form downloadable from my website. Before you go, get the VIN number, and check for leins, accidents, and registration history. Still camera and video camera are very helpful.
  - b. Best solution - If you can first inspect yourself, you will get the best appreciation for the vehicle condition. I think this is more valuable than having a mechanic shop inspect it first.



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- c. BEFORE you drive, inspect the error logs which contain active and inactive codes. If they are completely empty, be suspicious. NOTE: inactive codes are normal, and there should be some. ACTIVE codes require investigation / repair.
  - d. Look for the number of hours – idling and PTO. Do the hours “jive” with the mileage? Average 35 MPH?
  - e. Drive it, or get a ride-along if the owner prefers. Not a 5 minute drive. Get on the highway.
    - i. Listen, and start to build a “library” of normal sounds for future comparison.
    - ii. Feel in your hands, feet and seat.
  - f. At the end of your test drive, check the computer logs of codes again. Any changes?
  - g. If far away, find a trusted mechanics shop. Have them report to you on your inspection criteria. Also, ask them to take pictures for you. Every shop has a camera. Setup a free dropbox ([www.dropbox.com](http://www.dropbox.com)) so e-mailing large attachments is not an issue.
  - h. Do not accept the statement “well, my truck has a current DOT safety”. Was it done yesterday, or one month ago? Lots can happen and change in a day of driving.
  - i. My form has blanks for repair costs. Have the mechanics shop fill those in!
  - j. Engine Dyno – a must in my opinion. Sometimes an owner is a bit hesitant. It takes time, fuel, and some risk to have one performed. If the owner is still counting on this truck for their livelihood, you can understand. If you have interest, negotiate a price, and put down a refundable deposit conditional on a successful dyno.
8. Conditions of Sale
- a. Manuals
  - b. All keys and remote fobs
  - c. Maintenance and repair history documents
  - d. If there is a lien / lease, ensure you pay the correct amounts to the right groups, and you receive a lien release in writing. It can take some time for the lien to be processed at the DMV.
9. Get it home – safely.