

Avion RV Inspection Suggested Check list

NOTE: This list has been modified and edited (**those items are in bold**) as we felt necessary by ThePewterPalace.com, (1987, 32S Avion) owners Kevin & Luise Sherman to assist those looking specifically at purchasing an Avion travel trailer.

This punch list is by no means a guarantee or warranty that the following areas to check will ensure a solid, safe and road worthy trailer. We are simply providing a starting point for a layperson to check various items so that their heart does not lead their head in making a decision to purchase any recreational vehicle.

When conditions permit (cost, location, availability), it is always a good idea to have a professional, certified RV Inspection done by a trained professional. A great national resource for this is: <https://rvinspection.com/>

We appreciate the work done by Changin' Gears for the basic punch list resource below as provided by: A free resource from [Changin' Gears](http://ChanginGears.com) (<http://ChanginGears.com>)

Most items on this list can be inspected by an average person; for more specialized items such as brakes, engines, etc., consider having a qualified technician do the inspection.

RV Details	
RV Number (your own #):	Inspected By:
Year:	Owner:
Make:	Address:
Model:	City:
RV Type:	Phone:
VIN:	Asking \$:
License Plate:	Mileage:

Items to Take to Inspection

	This inspection checklist
	Notebook and pen
	Fifty foot tape measure
	Calculator <i>if you want to ascertain if your vehicle can safely tow this trailer within weight parameters</i>
	Flashlight with fresh batteries
	Screwdriver with Phillips and flathead tips
	Awl or ice pick
	Small mirror (for looking into hard-to-see areas)
	Tire pressure gauge with 100 psi range
	Tarp or creeper (for inspecting underside)
	Ladder to at least 8' (Free standing if possible) (to at minimum view the Avion roof from several points) Use your cell phone, take photos then blow them up on your screen to look closer at seams, seals, gaskets around AC, Vents, etc. If you don't have a ladder, perhaps a selfie stick and cell phone can do the trick
	Work gloves
	Small plug in night light (plug into each outlet to check if outlet is working)
	Wet towels (for cleaning hands)
	Kleenex type tissues (you can use tissues to confirm possible wet spots better than relying on your finder. A tissue will pick up the slightest of wetness.
	Cell phone car charger , preferably one with a light that glows when charging (this will be used to test the DC power ports-these look like cigarette lighters in cars)
	Butane "clicker" to light stove top burners and stove. Ask owner to show you how stove works.

OUTSIDE: Walls	Right	Back	Left	Front
Aluminum surface condition				
Signs of leaks (look for exterior rusted rivets, brittle or missing sealant in lap seams)				
Seals and caulking on seams, windows, around hatches				
Trim (vinyl rub rail around midline and lower level)				
Doors & screens, do they close easily and securely?				
Windows & screens – ck vinyl trim condition around windows				
Handles at entry, deadbolt? If not, you will need to install one. Does the original handle lock work? Key?				
Awning mechanisms, unroll to check				
Awning canvas, unroll all awnings to check fabric				
Lights – do a ck of all running and courtesy lights				
Rock Guard? Lift and lower, ck support arms and travel pins. If a rockguard on front window is missing, you will need to replace at your cost which can be easily \$400-900				
Steps, pull out and in manually. Bent? level?				
Covers for Hot water heater, furnace, water fill present?				
Exterior storage and utility doors, condition? Open and close, latch conditions?				

OUTSIDE: ROOF-bring a freestanding ladder if possible and at least visually inspect roof. Do not climb on roof unless you know how-which is to only put weight on the rivet seams and use a board to kneel on to distribute your weight. Do not lean a ladder on the front nose or rear-there is no support structures there.

	Surface condition , layers of roof sealants? Rusted rivets? Holes, tears? missing vent covers for bathroom?
	Corners and edges, dents?
	Signs of leaks , look for rusted rivets
	Seals and caulking, Is there Eternabond on seams? Rivets?
	Vents and vent hoods- <i>bonus if have MaxAir style roof covers so vents can be open while towing.</i>
	Air conditioner (s), test
	Antennas and satellite dish upgrades? Check seals on roof and see if working
	Vent/AC/Antenna condition and caulking where it attaches to RV
	Solar panels ? wattage? Age? Type? DIY or professionally installed?

OUTSIDE: Underside

	Fluid leaks , ck belly pan near mid to rear where fresh/gray and blk tanks will be
	Frame condition, signs of damage or repair
	Welds
	Axles
	Suspension
	Electric brake wiring
	Holding tanks (water, waste) are they present? Do a visual if possible. Older models (pre '72) may not have grey tank
	Underside enclosure and insulation , are aluminum belly pan sheets attached? Loose? Missing?
	Straps holding pipes, hoses, wires
	Stabilizing jacks, crank down and up to see if working condition. They only stabilize, they are not meant to be used as levelers.

OUTSIDE: Storage Compartments (only designed to hold light wt items)

	Overall condition, look inside exterior storage compartments with flashlight.
	Signs of leaks (large side compartments that access to under the bunks are notorious for leaking
	In lower compartments, look in & up to inspect floor AND trailer frame condition
	Shine flashlight into all openings, inspecting all visible components
	Doors and seals
	Exterior Lights-working?, may also be one electrical outlet on curbside rear most storage compartment.

OUTSIDE: Wheels

	Tire pressure
	Tire tread
	Tire walls
	Tire date of manufacture: (**look at end of this document for how to read the # if unsure)
	Spare tire (bonus if has original spare hard shell cover, rare to find!)
	Lug nut torque
	Wheel rims (avoid old "split rims- these are dangerous!)
	Brake function of each wheel

OUTSIDE: Utilities

	Power cable and connectors
	RV batteries (house batteries) how old? Type? Maintained well?
	RV battery disconnect switch- Avions will not have unless have been modified
	Cable TV connector
	Satellite dish connector if installed as upgrade
	Fresh water hose and connectors
	Fresh water tank fill valve
	Fresh water tank drain valve
	Winterizing connector and valve (antifreeze)
	Water heater tank drain valve , condition of heater? Rust, sediment buildup? Leaks? Pilot working? Original or updated?
	Sewer hose and connectors
	Gray tank dump valve, pull bayonet valves to see if working or seized up
	Black tank dump valve ,ditto as above

OUTSIDE: Propane

	Propane bottle condition and age
	Propane bottles and tray secure
	Tanks have OPD valves (triangular shape)
	Connections, pipes, and hoses
	Level or empty indicators
	Automatic tank selector device
	Regulator output pressure

OUTSIDE: Trailer Coupling Components

	Tongue overall condition, rust? Corrosion? Cracks-look underneath to frame
	Supplemental hitching equipment (sway bars, weight-distributing hitch, etc.)
	Safety chains
	Umbilical cord and plug connector, ck for fraying or burn out
	Breakaway switch and cable

INSIDE: General	Kitchen	Living & Dine	Bedroom	Bath
Floor plan (layout) original? Missing cabinets? If redone-sufficient storage? Suitable for travel or more for stationary guest house?				
Flooring, are multiple layers hiding secrets?				
Stomp on floor to detect weak areas, use an awl to poke suspected rotted areas with sellers permission Critical areas in Avion's are: under beds, under kitchen and bath cabinets, by entrance door, front and rear nose areas				
Walls, look for water staining, look at walls inside base and upper cabinets with a flashlight				
Trim, beltline vinyl- is it intact? Shrunk? Needs replacement?				
Windows and screens, locks? Some Avions have interior Plexiglas storm windows-this is a bonus!				
Drapes and shades, condition? Tracks missing?				
Door locks or latches , is there a deadbolt besides handle lock? (strongly advised) When door is aligned properly you should hear the Bargman lock do a distinct "click" when you close the door indicating the handle has seated itself properly.				
Cabinetry finish, dried out? Peeling off on edges (if on the bottom can indicate prior water damage)				
Cabinetry hinges, slides, latches, ck to see if working				
Cabinetry interior, use flashlight and look along walls for water damage/stains coming down the wall				
Drawers, do they work properly, look for rodent droppings				
Ceiling – look for rusted rivets, water stains, recent repainting could have been done to hide issues				
Ceiling exhaust vents and fans , ck to see if working, look for cracks, missing parts. Have they been upgraded to modern fixtures like FantasticFans?				
Furniture, general condition, does the sofa work to make a bed?				
Look under and behind any movable furniture				

Mattresses , look underneath for staining/moisture				
Pull mattresses off beds, remove bed foundation boards and ck flooring underneath for rot by standing and stomping on floors under the beds, be sure to go right to the outside/exterior edges!				
Rodent and pest presence or damage				

INSIDE: Kitchen

	Countertops, condition? Upgraded?
	Run water down sink to see if drains properly and look under sink for leaking while running water
	Sink condition? Upgraded?
	Seals and caulking around sink
	Stove top, burners, igniters, test with butane clicker
	Stove hood exhaust fan and vent cover , test to see if working
	Oven and pilot light
	Microwave oven ? original? Working or updated?
	Refrigerator works on all power sources (A/C, propane) 2-way? 3-way? 120V only?
	Freezer ,chk for cracks on interior plastic body
	Drinking water filter, does it have this upgrade/update?

INSIDE: Bathroom

	Toilet- flushes? Original or updated? Plastic or porcelain?
	Signs of leaks around toilet base, ck for soft spots or staining around base
	Look into black tank through toilet for hardened solid waste (the pyramid!) Use your flashlight, hold flush pedal or handle down. You can do this even if no water in fresh tank.
	Sink and fixtures
	Shower and tub walls- look for cracks, condition of walls
	Shower fixtures
	Shower curtain track?
	Unscrew access panels around and behind shower/tub, inspect for leaks if possible

INSIDE: Fresh Water Systems

	Faucets work
	Plumbing ? original? Pex? Mixed? All original? (Original material was pulled from the market long ago)
	Water heater works on A/C and propane
	Water pump works , age?
	Water pump shuts off automatically soon after all faucets are closed
	Water pump on/off switch
	Fresh water tank level indicator -most on vintage trailers do not work anyway

INSIDE: Waste Systems

	Gray tank level indicator – probably does not work
	Black tank level indicator – probably does not work
	Sink and shower drains work
	No foul odor inside RV when toilet not in use (unless toilet flush valve has been open for extended periods for inspection)

INSIDE: Heating & Cooling

	Furnace controls
	Furnace puts out hot air through all vents (front, bath and rear of trailer)
	Air conditioner controls
	Air conditioners put out cool air
	Air conditioner filters
	Is there a heat strip or heat pump on the A/C? test it
	Some 70s models had skylights, ck seals interior and exterior, look for signs of leaks
	Thermostat controlled vent fans (<i>Fan Tastic Vent</i>) does it have roof cover like a MaxAir cover? Rain sensor type?

INSIDE: Entertainment Electronics

	TV's
	TV mount locking mechanism
	Audio equipment -is it original? Or updated
	Video equipment (VCR, DVD)
	Video source switch box (antenna, VCR, DVD, satellite, etc.)
	Antenna signal amplifier
	TV antenna controls for raising, lowering, and rotating -try turning roof handle
	Satellite dish controls for raising, lowering, and rotating, If present

INSIDE: Electrical

	Lights, 120 Volt A/C
	Lights, 12 Volt DC
	A/C outlets have power- use your nightlight to test
	GFCI breakers function if present
	12 Volt DC ports have power – test by using your cell phone car charger
	A/C supply to RV when connected to shore power
	A/C supply to RV when inverter is running off batteries, if inverter present
	DC supply to RV when connected to shore power to test converter
	DC supply to RV when generator is running
	DC supply to RV from batteries
	DC supply to RV from tow vehicle via umbilical cord
	Battery charging when connected to shore power
	Battery charging from tow vehicle via umbilical cord
	Battery charging from solar panels if solar is present
	Automatic power switching between available systems (shore power, generator, inverter) You can also test this with 2-way refrigerator to see if it auto switches from electric to LP when you unplug shore power.
	Location of fuse and breaker boxes , inspect condition

INSIDE: Safety Devices

	Fire extinguisher
	Smoke detector (s)
	Carbon Monoxide detector
	Propane gas detector
	Emergency exit windows, are latches present and secure

INSIDE: Misc things to check inside

	Upholstery, lift all and ck wood below
	Carpet or other flooring materials, look under beds or floor of cabinets for original
	Cabinetry finish, look for water stains, esp along mop board
	Cabinetry hinges, slides, latches
	Cabinetry interior
	Door locks or latches
	Windows and screens
	Window cracks and chips , (the curved windows are near impossible to replace)
	Drapes, shades
	Rear view camera and monitor
	Instrument panel with tank monitors, thermometer, barometer, etc. Original? If original don't be surprised if all are not working.
	Check floors for rot or "squishy bounce" at entry area, in front nose and rear esp. around curved wall sections/windows and under dinette benches.
	Security system arm, disarm, and documentation -does it have?

Dimensions & Capacities

External length (in): Avions are measured from hitch ball to rear bumper	
Fresh water tank (gal): Grey water tank (gal): Black water tank (gal):	
Top clearance remember highest point, probably Air Conditioner if present (ft & in):	
Length when towing (ft):	
Propane bottle size (gal):	Number of propane bottles:

Weights – aluminum plate on outside of trailer

RATINGS from manuf. (lbs)	ACTUAL WEIGHS from scale (lbs)
GVWR:	GVW:
GAWR 1:	GAW 1:
GAWR 2:	GAW 2:
GAWR 3:	GAW 3:
GCWR:	Left side:
Tire rating:	Right side:
ESTIMATES (lbs)	
Curb Weight (GVW - fluids already in GVW + all tanks full):	
Expected personal cargo weight (items you will add to RV):	
Persons weight (avg. 180 lbs × # persons):	
Adjusted GVW (add above 3 items):	
Maximum tongue weight (lesser of [GVWR - Adj. GVW] or rating): For towing a trailer behind this RV.	
Maximum tow capacity (lesser of [GCWR - Adj. GVW] or rating): For towing a trailer behind this RV.	

Documentation

	Title , is there one? Are those listed on title able to sign? Death? POA?
	MSRP sheet, is there an original one?
	RV manuals
	Appliance & fixtures manuals
	Maintenance records
	Warranty documentation for all major components and appliances that have been upgraded in recent years

*How to read the DATE code on tires:

The final four digits of your DOT number will tell you the tires age. The first two number of this grouping indicate the week of the year your tire was manufactured. The final two digits indicate the year that your tire was manufactured.

SAMPLE found on sidewall of tire: DOT BB CC DDD 4519

DOT= Department of Transportation

DDD= The manufacturer

BB= the manufacturer/plant code

4519= the 45th week of 2019 -tire made

CC= The size code

Some final notes from The Pewter Palace; Kevin & Luise Sherman

Especially in recent years many Avions have come onto the market. This can be simply due to aging out of original owners, death in the family/inheritance of Avion, an existing Avion owner decides they want a different model or size.

OR it can be that the seller has bought the Avion purely as a short term investment to rehab and resell.

Due to the resurgent interest in all aluminum trailers and the high cost of Airstreams- Avions have made a huge comeback. They certainly are wonderful vintage trailers and were far better made with quality materials and workmanship.

We have seen more and more that folks have bought an Avion on the cheap (often because they have been neglected or literally abandoned in a field) and done sometimes some very good rehabs and upgrades to them...in other cases it has been “rehab’d” with just a bunch of superficial cosmetic updates-essentially “window dressing” to get a quick sale to an unknowing/unsuspecting buyer.

It is always hard to put aside the first positive visual impressions of a well-staged, tastefully repainted interior, possibly with new carpet, wood or tile floor *that looks pretty*.

It is very important as a potential buyer that you look past the “window dressing” and do your due diligence to check at minimum the major systems of the trailer, the frame, windows, exterior aluminum, roof, and overall safety.

We wish you all the best with your search for your Avion! We welcome you to visit our blog, ThePewterPalace.com and our YouTube Channel and find us on Facebook. We offer links to resources/materials/parts, how to do specific projects that we have done, chronicles of our travel with both our ‘73 and now our ‘87 Avions.

Happy journeys!

Kevin & Luise Sherman

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