

WHY AIRSTREAM?

A guide to the quality differences that make
your experience unforgettable



AIRSTREAM®



WHAT MAKES AN AIRSTREAM

TRAVEL TRAILER DIFFERENT?

If you're shopping for an RV, chances are you've wondered what makes an Airstream Travel Trailer different from another towable RV on the market.

If we had to answer in one word, it's quality.

Airstream's commitment to quality began with our founder, Wally Byam. Way back in the 1930s, Wally started a tradition of innovation in RV design and a level of quality that meant Airstream Travel Trailers could be handed down from generation to generation. And while our world has changed a lot since Wally's time, our commitment to quality and innovative design remains just as strong.

It takes an average of 350 hours and 3,000 rivets to build an iconic aluminum Airstream Travel Trailer. Our way isn't the fastest or the easiest way to build an RV, but it is the right way. We don't believe in shortcuts, because they always leave you feeling shorted in the long-run.

So let's take a closer look at what building the right way means on our factory floor, and more importantly, what it means to your life and your adventures to come.

TABLE OF
CONTENTS

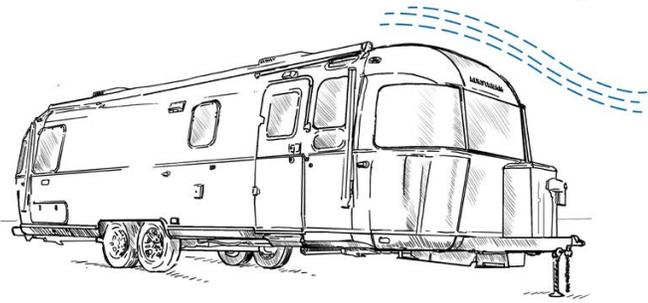
01 | **WHY THE CURVED SHAPE?**

02 | **WHY BUILD THE EXTERIOR FIRST?**

03 | **WHY DO HANDCRAFTED COMPONENTS MATTER?**

04 | **WHY DO AIRSTREAMS HOLD THEIR VALUE?**





WHY

01 THE CURVED SHAPE?

Most travel trailers are rectangular. Why are Airstream Travel Trailers curved?

When Wally Byam named the company Airstream, he said he wanted to design a travel trailer that would flow down the road like a stream of air. After working in the aircraft industry during WWII, Wally took a lot of inspiration from airplanes: lightweight enough to fly, curved to prevent wind resistance, and yet strong enough to withstand the elements.

That's why even to this day, all Airstream Travel Trailers consist of a curved aluminum outer shell for aerodynamic performance – one that we've continually improved over the years. In fact, our most recent aerodynamics study (conducted with impartial experts) proved that an Airstream Travel Trailer is up to 20% more fuel efficient than similarly sized box travel trailers.

Want to see the study? [Watch our testing video and read more about the results.](#)

01

WHY THE CURVED SHAPE?



So what do aerodynamics do for your experience?

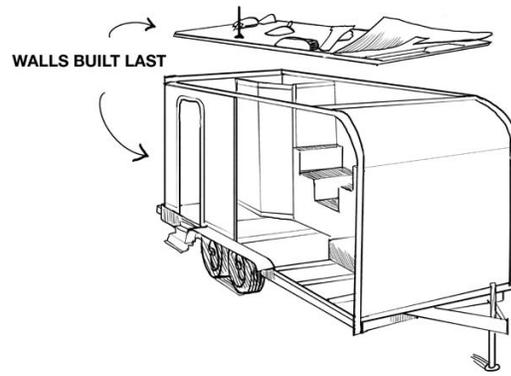
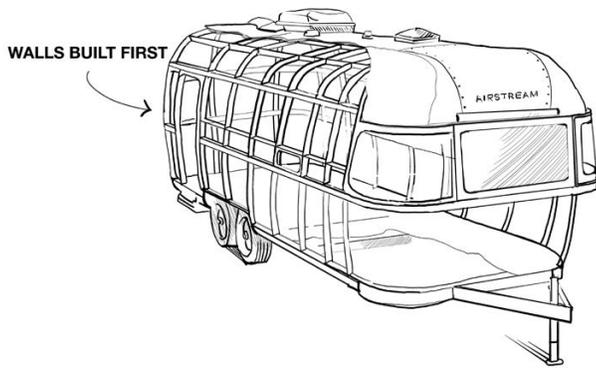
Beyond the cool factor of having a travel trailer that's sure to turn heads on the highway, owning an Airstream has some very real benefits for your pocket and your travel experience.

- **More travel on less gas**
20% more fuel efficiency means fewer fill-ups and longer travel in between.
- **Reduce your carbon footprint**
More fuel efficiency makes your travel easier on the environment.
- **A smoother ride**
Your Airstream won't have to fight as hard against crosswinds, which is great for car-sick travelers.
- **Prepared for electric vehicle towing**
We're always looking at what's next, and better aerodynamics will set you up for a smooth transition to an electric towing vehicle.

Why aluminum?

Another inspiration from the aircraft industry, aluminum is naturally lightweight, yet durable. That's why it's been our material of choice since day one. Today's Airstream aluminum includes a clear coating to inhibit UV damage and protect from yellowing, acid rain, flaking, cracks, pulverization, and mold.





WHY

BUILD THE EXTERIOR FIRST?

Most travel trailers are built from the inside out. Why are Airstream Travel Trailers built from the outside in?

With a typical travel trailer, you start with the chassis, build the floor on top, add furniture and everything that goes inside the living space, and then finish by adding the walls and ceiling. That's the opposite of how an Airstream Travel Trailer is made, and there's one key reason why: structural integrity.



WHY BUILD THE EXTERIOR FIRST?

The semi-monocoque superstructure

“Semi-monocoque” means combining a load-bearing shell with integral frames. Airplanes have semi-monocoque shells, which balance the need to be lightweight with the need to withstand intense travel. That’s exactly what an Airstream Travel Trailer’s aluminum shell is designed to do.

Here’s how we build it:

1. Start at the bottom

We start with a steel travel trailer chassis and add the water tanks, shock absorbers, stabilizer jacks, tires, wheels, and a multi-layer subfloor. This sets up the travel trailer with a low center of gravity for a smoother, easier towing experience.



2. Assemble the shell

While one team works on the chassis, another assembles the aluminum shell. Two riveters work together in tandem to fasten custom-shaped aluminum sheets together into one exterior load-bearing shell, attached to aluminum ribs for support.



3. Attach the shell to the floor

Via machine lifts in our factory, we then pick up the entire shell and place it onto the chassis and travel trailer floor. The two pieces are attached permanently together to create the semi-monocoque superstructure.



4. Everything else goes in through the entry door

Once the superstructure is created, we never alter it. Every single piece of furniture and every appliance is then engineered to fit through the entry door and attach to the ultra-secure walls – instead of the other way around.



See this process in action in our [video tour of the Airstream Travel Trailer Plant](#).

02 WHY BUILD THE EXTERIOR FIRST?



What will a semi-monocoque superstructure do for you?

To put it simply, it lasts. Your Airstream is built for the road and all the bumps, winds, rains, and surprises that come with it.

- **Less wear and tear**

Because the furniture is attached to the superstructure, it's less likely to rattle, wobble, and come apart, even after generations on the road.

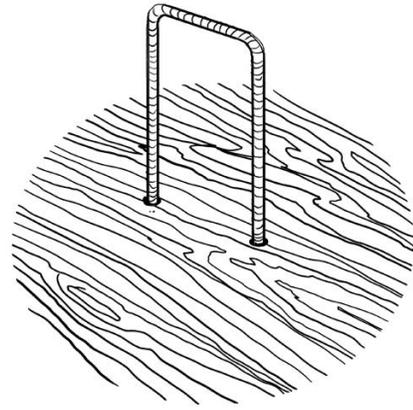
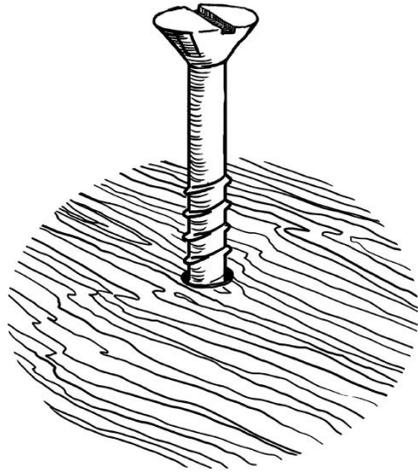
- **Protection from leaks**

Airstream aluminum seams are strategically placed, and each sheet is riveted tightly together and sealed. Before we start adding furniture, we send every Airstream through a high-pressure water test to ensure there are no leaks.

- **Better driving and towing**

Because your Airstream's center of gravity is lower than a typical box trailer, you get an inherently smoother towing experience with less sway.





WHY

DO HANDCRAFTED COMPONENTS MATTER?

Most RV companies use standard building components that provide a path of least resistance. Why does Airstream create its own?

While we have outside partners for building components like our aluminum sheeting, window glass, tires, and appliances, we create as many components as possible ourselves. It's how we ensure the absolute highest quality.

Every single Airstream is assembled by hand in Jackson Center, Ohio by hundreds of hardworking craftspeople. That includes engineering and manufacturing components you'll find in no other travel trailers on the market.

WHY DO HANDCRAFTED COMPONENTS MATTER?

5 Key Components we build ourselves:



1. Composite subfloor

Instead of the industry's standard plywood subfloor, we source a special state-of-the-art composite subfloor and custom-fit it ourselves. Not only does the composite naturally resist water better than plywood, but it also provides more screw retention and overall strength.



2. All-aluminum doors

The natural curvature of an Airstream Travel Trailer isn't the only reason we build our own entry doors from scratch. It's also because your entry door is one of the most important parts of your RV. That's why we cut, shape, weld, insulate, and assemble doors that shut like a bank vault to keep you secure.



3. Window frames

To ensure a perfect fit into the aluminum superstructure, we hand-build every window frame. Our craftspeople bend, shape, and cut to exact measurements and clear coat each frame for long-lasting performance.



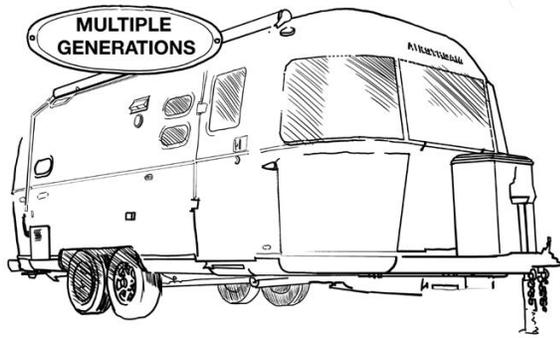
4. Wood furniture

While many other brands install pre-built furniture and cabinetry, we take the time to custom-craft each cabinet, wardrobe, and seating base. Our woodshop team cuts, sands, and assembles using wood screws, dowels, and glue. We never use stapled particle board.



5. Custom-sewn curtains

The custom blackout curtains in your Airstream Travel Trailer are unlike the thin fabric and minimal coverage you find in some RVs. Each curtain is cut and sewn by our craftspeople, using industrial sewing machines right here in our factory.



WHY

DO AIRSTREAMS HOLD THEIR VALUE?

Most travel trailers last about 15 years. Why do Airstream Travel Trailers last multiple generations?

By now, you've gotten a feel for some of the individual choices that make Airstream Travel Trailers different from other RVs on the market. But it's really about how all those choices come together that make Airstreams last – not just for years, but for multiple generations. For nearly 100 years, Airstreams have been passed down to family members or other travelers with the same adventurous spirit.

Approximately 75% of Airstream Travel Trailers made since 1931 are still on the road today.



WHY DO AIRSTREAMS HOLD THEIR VALUE?

That means when you invest in an Airstream, you get:

1. Quality built-in

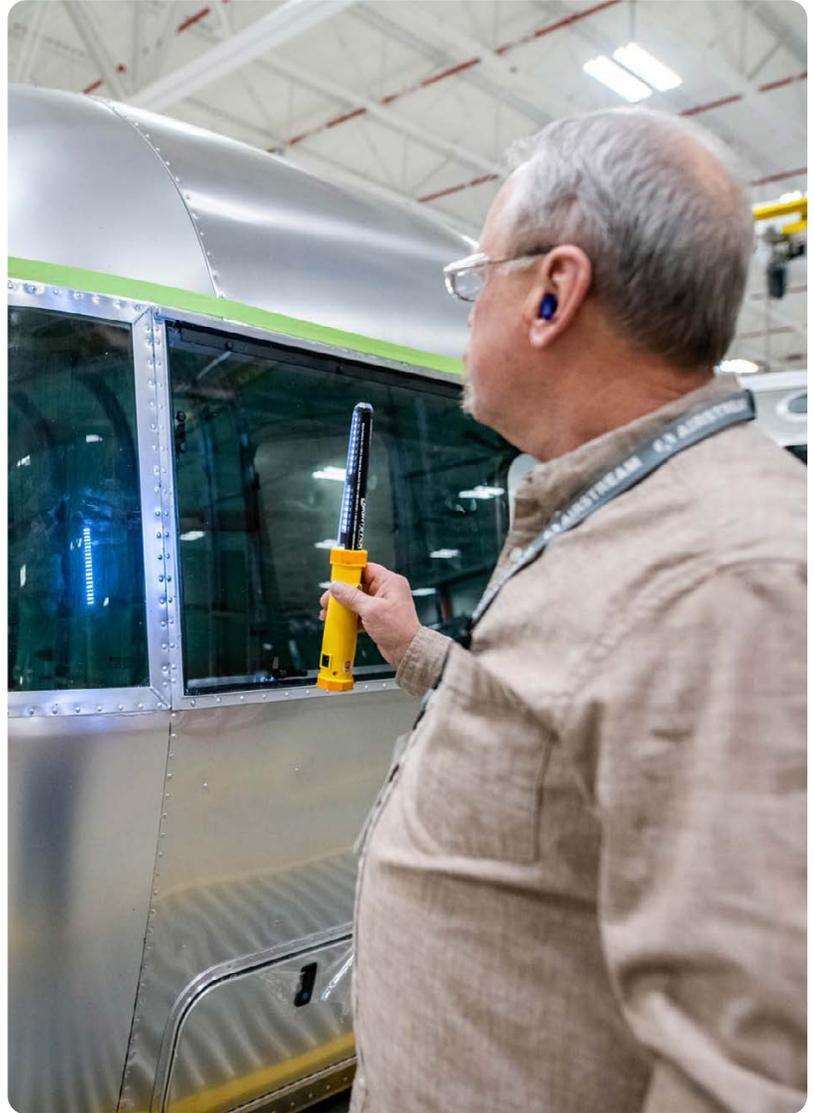
Before your Airstream Travel Trailer leaves the production line, quality control experts confirm 1,500 points of inspection, including testing the appliances, pressure checking the LP gas system, filling the drain system to check for plumbing leaks, and so much more. We're not just thinking about your first trip in your new Airstream when we do these checks; we're thinking about years of use. And we won't roll your Airstream off the line until it's just right.

2. Great re-sale value

The Airstream re-sale market is booming and has been for decades. Pre-owned Airstreams often fetch prices as high as their original listing price, which is a testament to just how well the quality and design withstand the tests of time.

3. Lower costs-to-own

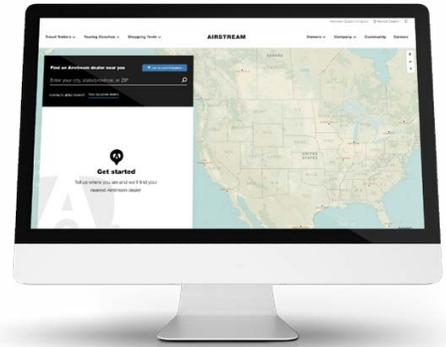
When you amortize the purchase price over its length of service, an Airstream actually costs less to own than any other travel trailer. That means a smart investment in quality now pays off in the long run.



MORE QUESTIONS? WE HAVE ANSWERS.

While you're shopping, you're bound to have specific questions about certain models, features, and more. Whether you're still researching or ready to buy tomorrow, your Airstream dealer is here to help you get the answers you need. Find your dealer and take a zero-pressure walkthrough in person.

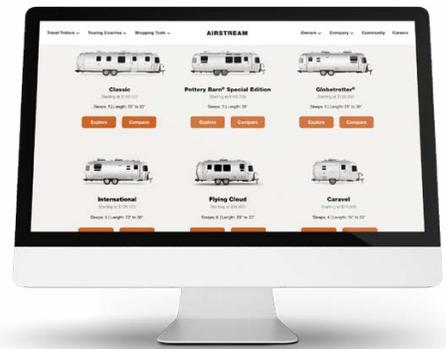
[Find Your Dealer](#)



See all Airstream Travel Trailers

Take a closer look at all the current Airstream Travel Trailers models and floor plans and find the right one for you.

[Explore Travel Trailers](#)



Configure your perfect Airstream

Start with any model and choose a floor plan, interior décor, and additional options that feel right for you. When you're done configuring, you'll receive a tailor-made brochure to download, print, or share.

[Configure Yours](#)





ADVENTURE, INSPIRED BY AIRSTREAM®

Our founder, Wally Byam, was driven by an unending desire to see what was over the next hill, and the next after that. And he wasn't alone. Thousands of Airstreamers know just how important the freedom to wander really is, and how enjoyable having the whole world at your doorstep can be. So what are you waiting for?

[Find yours at Airstream.com](https://www.airstream.com)

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