

Back in 2003 Richard Wooldridge prepared this article about the desirable attributes of the ideal RV companion. Sadly Richard is no longer with us after he passed away on holiday in North Africa a few years ago. We are re-publishing his article in memory of someone who loved RVing.

The list had been drawn up by a committee of motorhomers after much discussion at a number of RV Rallies last year.

That article provoked a series of meetings this year by a small group of RV wives/partners/companions who were determined to respond to what some of them called "a male chauvinists charter" while others used less flattering descriptions.

They decided to respond by setting down what they determined were the minimum qualifications for the ideal RV chauffeur. Please note their use of the word "chauffeur" and not "driver". In the interests of fair play, ARVM presents their response in full and unedited.

'The Ideal RV Chauffeur' final Committee Decisions were made at Americana July 2003.

1. Is a quiet, safe, unobtrusive chauffeur.
2. Appreciates that his role is merely to be the chauffeur/handyman/helper/assistant.
3. Understands the RV Companion role is far more important, complex and demanding than that of the chauffeurs.
4. Accepts that, regardless of what the map reader may or may not have said, it is ALWAYS the chauffeurs fault if a wrong turning is taken.
5. Insists on doing all the cooking thus leaving the RV Companion free to do important things, like doing her hair, talking with the guests, reading magazines etc etc.
6. Is a quiet unobtrusive sleeper.
7. Is an early riser, always ready to bring the RV Companion a cup of tea and the morning paper in bed.
8. Accepts that talking RV talk and technical talk with other chauffeurs is utterly boring and must never be conducted in the presence of RV Companions who have far weightier matters to discuss like dresses, perfume and shoes.
9. Understands that RV Companions make all important decisions and the chauffeur may or may not be consulted.
10. Understands that the duties of the chauffeur include cleaning up behind the RV Companion.
11. Accepts that buying a motorhome accessory is a complete and unnecessary luxury and that more important purchases like new clothes, new shoes, or perfume for the RV Companion must take precedence.
12. Never argues, understanding that the RV Companion is always right.
13. Accepts that the RV Companion's need to have a night out with the girls cannot be reciprocated.
14. Appreciates the magnanimity and generosity of the RV Companion in even allowing the chauffeur to have a motorhome.
15. When changing the RV, accepts that the interior colour scheme is far more important than engine, transmission, tyres etc.
16. Is clean, quiet, respectful and obedient.
17. Is totally responsive to all the RV Companion's needs and desires.
18. Has wonderful sense of humour.
19. Has an easy-going, kind, laid-back character but is always ready to snap into action when the RV Companion decides.
20. Appreciates that all chauffeurs have to wait for their turn to read the newspaper or magazine. Fully accepts that when their turn finally comes, the newspaper or magazine will be handed to them with articles and adverts torn out and often with whole pages missing.
21. Never loses tools. Always able to find everything in drawers, cupboards.
22. Always knows instantly where the RV Companion has left her handbag.
23. Able always to find immediately the RV Companion's reading spectacles, driving spectacles, lipstick, driving licence, passport, handkerchief, assorted cosmetics, purse, bus tickets, children's school reports, old concert programme, paper napkins, out-of-date credit cards, supermarket cards, used cheque book, diary, old lottery tickets, wallet, loose change, bunches of keys, nail sizzors, tweezers, nail file, wallet, spare RV keys, front door keys for the house sold three years ago, ball-point pen, old ball-point pen that doesn't work, wadges of unfiled references, newspaper clippings, visiting cards, phone numbers, bulging filofax, aspirins, assorted bottles of medicines, spare supermarket plastic bags, mobile phone, old unusable mobile phone, pencils, odd assorted foreign coins, series of recipes torn from magazines, gloves, sun glasses, bank notes from that foreign holiday ten years ago along with used air-plane tickets from same, paper handkerchiefs, new un-used purse, or in other words any of those items normally found inside the RV Companion's handbag.
24. Realises that the RV Companion has far more important things to think about than engines, transmissions and inverters.
25. Always agrees with the RV Companion's choice of destination, camp site and pitch. Accepts that it is always the chauffeurs fault if the choice doesn't work out well.
26. Is a mechanical and electrical wizard, thus ensuring that the motorhome never breaks down, never has a failure of any component or accessory.
27. Should the RV Companion happen to need urgently one or two of life's essentials like a particular hat, coat, dress, perfume, necklace, brooch, earrings, pair of shoes, or whatever, is always ready to assist in whatever shopping pursuit is deemed necessary, ready to drive uncomplainingly, cheerfully, to the most distant shop in the land.
28. Is always waiting, credit card at the ready, at every check-out/pay desk the RV Companion may need to use.
29. Is faithful, brave, obedient, sits when told to, doesn't bark and is called Rufus (sorry no, that's for the dog).

WHAT MAKES THE IDEAL RV CHAUFFEUR?

Richard Wooldridge

30. Is a young, virile, handsome Adonis.
31. Cheerfully accepts the absolutely crucial necessity of visiting half a dozen or even more shops – for as long as it takes - in order to find exactly the right colour of shoes.
32. Never expects the RV Companion to read a map.
33. Never allows the RV Companion to do the washing up, the ironing, the vacuum-cleaning or any other task more suited to the chauffeur.
34. Never dares to hang up his own clothes in the wardrobe, which is of course, the sole province of the RV Companion.
35. Accepts that in life there are certain natural rhythms and ratios, like the ratio that ordains two pairs of shoes per male, 102 pairs of shoes per female.
36. Always makes sure the RV Companion's shoes (all of them !) are clean.
37. Accepts that no matter what signal the RV Companion made as the chauffeur backs the RV into a tight spot, it is always his fault if the vehicle is dented.
38. Makes sure the RV Companion is never around when he empties the black and grey water.
39. Is a patient, loving father, able to stay cool and calm even when the teenage children cause havoc.
40. Always uses the outside tap/shower to wash, clean hands etc, and always uses the camp site lavatories, thus ensuring that at all times the RV Companion has first call on the RV bathroom, hand basin, lavatory etc.
41. Able to anticipate exactly what drink, dry martini, glass of wine, cup of tea, glass of champagne, etc that the RV Companion needs in her hand at any moment.
42. Able to produce the above within ten seconds of putting the handbrake on.
43. Makes certain that his razor and toothbrush is always stored away neatly, thus ensuring plenty of bathroom space (all of it) for the RV Companion's cosmetics and other vital equipment.
44. Accepts it is his duty to check electrical equipment after use by the RV Companion to ensure that the hair dryer, hair curlers, are turned off.
45. Never hassles the RV Companion to leave on time, even when there is a boat/ferry/plane to catch.
46. Never complains when the RV Companion accidentally spills a glass of red wine on the carpet.
47. Never complains when the RV Companion has her friends in for drinks just when the motor racing or soccer final is due to start on the television.
48. Never complains when a repeat of a soap is considered far more crucial TV viewing than the start of the Grand Prix.
49. Never complains about make-up, cosmetics, women's magazines, clothes, shoes, hair-dryers, etc etc littering the RV.
50. Never complains.

CHECK LIST SCORE CARD
to be completed by RV chauffeurs.

Check how you scored. What matters is the number of "yes" answers you can truthfully count.

- 0-10:** Absolutely useless. Should not be let loose anywhere near an RV and definitely not near an RV Companion.
- 11-20:** Almost useless. You are a menace to liberated womenfolk everywhere.
- 21-30:** Average and we mean average. If you can't shape up better than this and start to pay proper attention to the needs of the RV Companion then you don't deserve to have an RV.
- 31-40:** Tolerable and by this we mean that maybe, just maybe, you could work really hard on this and become a half-decent RV chauffeur.
- 41-50:** A hopeless liar and cheat: Like all RV chauffeurs you clearly have delusions of competence and delusions of reasonableness. Just not credible. Lose 20 points for delusion and 20 for cheating.

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