

Making Life Easier in My GMC

GMCMI – 2014 Spring Convention – Montgomery, Texas

Kerry & Carolyn Pinkerton led a sharing session where people spoke up and described things they had done in and to their coach to improve their livability.

1. Cut foam squares to cover interior windows and ceiling vents for increased insulation.
2. Use the KISS tray to store the oil filler cap while putting oil in the motor. Or screw a wire basket on top of the headlight bucket.
3. Vaseline around hoses and cables will keep ants out.
4. Bleach kills fire ant hills.
5. Plastic shoe boxes are great organizers for overhead cabinets.
6. 1 gallon Ziplock bags for storage of 'stuff'. Just carry inside when not on the road and carry out to load.
7. Hanging a shoe holder over the closet door allows for lots of storage for stuff besides shoes.
8. Put a magnet on the gas door and put your gas cap on it when filling so you don't leave the cap behind.
9. Bathroom vanity shelves slope and things fall off. Glue or tape plastic drywall edge protectors to each shelf.
10. T-Fal made pots and pans with removable handles that nested and were easy to store.
11. The Regusa 3 battery tray is great for storage. Ken Henderson also has paper templates if someone wants to cut out a plywood shelf in front of the front wheels. Located in Ken's folder on the photo site.
12. The Doanes demonstrated their fold up table that expands from 2 1/2x3 to 2 1/2x6 for seating up to six.
13. Microwave/convection oven needs ventilation. Don't install without sufficient air space.
14. Use a water pressure regulator to keep from blowing out your plumbing if the city water is too high.

Adjustable regulators are best. Several people reported leaks (some disastrous) from overly high city water pressure.

15. A thin cedar panel in the back of the closet keeps clothes smelling fresh.
16. You can now buy an induction hot plate. VERY fast but requires cooking pans that are ferrous, that is, magnetic. Aluminum won't work. SOME stainless will.
17. Emery Stora has published how to increase the heat from the front gas burners by drilling out the orifice to a new size. Details in his photo album.
18. A clear Plexiglas panel at the bottom of the closet keeps things from constantly falling out when you open the door and you can still see what is there.
19. Raise the bed on 1x8s and hinge it for additional storage underneath.
20. If you ever have your windshields out, take the opportunity to remove the screws holding the dash in, clean, and reinsert finger tight so they will be removable IF you ever need to pull the dash. They are very difficult to remove in the best of conditions but if rusted in place very, VERY difficult.
21. LOTS of space behind the fridge can be utilized. Some of the fridges want ZERO space behind the fridge.
22. Use a belly board when working on the engine. If cut to width of the aluminum angle, it can be placed wherever it is needed.
23. Use a heavy plastic spatula to tuck in the bedspread where you can't reach it.
24. If your dash or satellite radio has 'electrical' noise on it, try running it from a new dedicated 12V wire and ground from the fuse panel under the hood. Twisting the ground and hot wire around each other throughout the run helps.
25. Use city water to fill the water tank and run off the water tank instead of city water. When you've used the 30 gal of water, your black tank is full and it's time to dump.
26. Use an adjustable window rod (spring rod) on the top closet shelf to keep things from falling off.

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October 2014 - GMCMI 2014 Fall Convention – Chippewa Falls, WI

27. To verify your refrigerator is working properly, put a bag of ice cubes in the freezer. If you come home and find them melting, you have a problem.

28. Use the remote (outdoor) monitor of an indoor/outdoor thermometer inside the fridge to check the temp at a glance.

29. Speaking of temperatures, put the wireless outdoor thermometer in a plastic jar surrounded by packing peanuts to keep it from rattling around and place behind the bumper to get an accurate outdoor temperature.

30. Junkyard rear view mirrors with built in outside temp display. The sensor is usually behind the front bumper somewhere.

31. Road noise can be reduced by sealing off gaps in the firewall, especially the steering column.

32. Make a departure checklist before pulling out...don't forget the wife.

33. Ken Fry said there is a position on the bathroom lights that can be used to turn on/off the water pump.

34. You can put the no slide rubber shelf liner on top of the toilet lid during showers to hold shampoo, etc. They also work as floor mats to keep your feet from slipping. When you are finished, just hang them on a suction hook and they dry almost immediately.

35. Wipe down the bath module with a flexible squeegee (Lysol has a very flexible one) or California water blade. Pull any water directly to the drain. Easy to pick up any hair that might go down the drain and the module dries in minutes.

36. Kerry Pinkerton has posted a how-to on rebuilding the shower diverter in the GMC photo albums. No more leaking faucet while showering.

37. Price Pfister Catalina is a bathroom style faucet that has a nozzle that comes out and works just like a handheld shower wand.

38. Sew denim with pouches that hangs on the towel rack above the toilet. Bathroom items can store in the pouches. (kind of like a hanging shoe bag)

39. You can get bamboo with rubber feet from Amazon.com for the bathroom floor. It is ¾" thick and easy to cut to fit.

40. Many small towns have campgrounds that are free or nearly so. Freecampgrounds.com is a good resource. Many county fairgrounds and county seats also have some camping spaces for very small costs.
41. Vodka in a squeeze bottle is great for removing mold and mildew. You don't even have to wipe it up.
42. Bounce dryer sheets seem to keep mice out. So will Cayenne pepper.
43. Comet around your wheels keeps ants away as will a ring of Vaseline on your water hose, TV coax, and power cord.
44. If you have carpet and want to cover it, you can make cardboard patterns and have a glass company cut 3/8 or 1/2" lexan cut to your specifications.
45. A cheap and effective way to balance your tires is to put 4 oz of Airsoft beads (Walmart) in each tire (\$17 worth will do all 6). Similar result to Equal or Counteract. If you're using either of those products, don't put 'wet' air in your tires or it will clump.
46. Got a dog? Hang your leash by the door to ease dog handling.
47. Use a collapsible hose for the macerator output. Wrap it around two hooks inside the rear bumper for storage.
48. Ever left your gas cap at the station? Put a magnet on your gas door (it is steel) to hold your gas cap while you fuel. Some folks put their gas cap in the slot where the fuel nozzle goes. Can't put the hose up without picking up the cap.
49. There is a lever on the door lock (inside the door), when set, the door will only lock with the key from outside. Impossible to lock your keys inside. Still locks with the knob from inside.
50. If you want remote door lock/unlock capability, you can get a two contact switch from hot rodder supply and key fobs receiver/transmitter 2 button controls for about \$10 on ebay.
51. To increase effective storage, some have put a shelf in the overhead shelves over the galley.
52. Radio Shack has turn signal flashers with BEEPERS. You can add a switch to turn off the BEEP in city driving to cut down on the annoyance and turn on when you're on the highway and need the louder reminder.
53. Use plastic boxes for storage. Just carry in the house when you get home and back to the coach when you're ready to travel again.
54. There are small trash cans designed to be lined with plastic grocery/Walmart bags.
55. A BRIGHT flashlight will help pinpoint oil leaks.
56. Whack your tires with a bat type stick. The sound will tell you if one is lower on air than the others.

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3-28-2015 GMCMI Spring Convention Patterson, LA

57. The Doanes showed their multi-purpose table. It's based on a folding table from Wal-Mart. Surface was removed and replaced with wood. Folded in half it works as a table for two or four in the coach. Unfolded it seats eight and can be carried outside.

58. Close curtains behind seats and AC works better.

59. Adding an additional AC unit under dash (available from Applied)

60. Curtain behind seats made from clear shower curtain liner allows you to see through it so you can keep track of things happening inside the coach.

61. Additional AC units can be found in passenger vans under the rear seat or on the ceiling. These are self contained units.

62. Table Mate II folding table, multiple heights, legs straddle passenger front seat pedestal. Bed, Bath & Beyond, Walmart, online

63. Under dash (or hood) trouble light out of 88-92 GM pickups comes with long cord. Find them in Junkyards

64. Use rigid or foam insulation to make an interior cover for fans to keep out heat/cold.

65. Fantastic Fans in bathroom are a GREAT upgrade!

66. Some carry a small pen light in their pockets always. \$6 from Advance/Lowes etc.

67. Black shower curtains work around windows to darken the coach in bright areas. Use Velcro to hold in place.

68. Cosco has a rechargeable flashlight (amazon, too). Doubles as emergency light. When you lose power it comes on automatically.

69. At Cosco, you can ask for a visitors pass. Won't get the discount but can shop.

70. The new 10 blade developed by John Biwersi lowers cockpit sound level. Available from Applied.

71. Tight cell foam ¾" Put in windows cut to fit for cold weather. Also works in hot weather.

72. Got A/C with heat strip. Install a line voltage thermostat. Here is the link to the seminar notes: <http://www.gmcmi.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Pinkerton-Line-Voltagethermostat.pdf>
73. A model of the Fantastic Fan (possibly others too) have a built in thermostat to regulate temperature.
74. Atwood bought Fantastic Fan and is honoring the FF warranty like the old days.
75. On the shower bar above the toilet, hang a fabric shoe holder. You can store sundries in the pockets.
76. The bathroom vanity shelves slope down and stuff falls out. Use double sided tape or silicone to put some clear drywall corner protectors on the edges. Keeps things in place and you can see through it.
77. Clear Plexiglas at bottom of closet keeps things from falling out and you can see through it.
78. A piece of cedar panel on the back wall of the closet keeps things smelling nice.
79. Sand cedar lightly to wake up the smell
80. Bob Dunahugh widened his door 8" and added a ramp to make it wheelchair accessible. He's willing to advise anyone needing to do similar.
81. Use a spring loaded shower rod from wall to wall in the hall to hang wet/damp clothes to dry.
82. Add a shelf inside the overhead cabinets to increase storage space.
83. Adding a lower shelf in the closet reclaims unused space.
84. Ventilated closet shelving can be bent to fit. Walmart has extendable shelving.
85. Search for plastic boxes that fit inside shelves and cabinets. Keeps things in place and easy to find.
86. Slide out shallow drawers can go under the top of the big cabinets.
87. On some double sinks, a modified cutting board will sit around the faucet and cover the small bowl for increased work space.
88. Moen makes a small pull out kitchen faucet that works well in our spaces.
89. When remodeling, move the P-trap to the back wall away from directly under the sink. Frees up a lot of space.
90. Replace large propane tank with smaller tank and use the reclaimed space for storage.
91. BBQ propane tanks are not legal to go in all tunnels but the smaller RV tanks can. Must be permanently mounted to be legal.
92. 3" memory foam mattress pad over original.

93. GET a carbon monoxide monitor!
94. Move the water fill on late model coaches closer to the water tank and eliminate the 4" bulkhead at the foot of the rear bed. Gain 4" of legroom and use less pink stuff to winterize.
95. Use a flexible spatula to tuck bedding in on the back bed.
96. Sew the bottom and top sheets together at the foot.
97. Some folks make their own "BedSacks" but sewing two sleeping bags together. One side is lighter weight and use that as the top in warmer weather. Thicker side in cold weather.
98. Add more cigar lighter sockets by dash for connecting more 'stuff'.
99. If you're replacing your headliner, microfoil under whatever you are using works great. You can order it on-line.
100. Get a plastic cup holder that hangs in a window. Most auto supply and WalMart has them. Cut off bracket and screw to the plastic by the cockpit windows for somewhere to put your drinks.

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Fall 2015 Rapid City, SD

101. LED lights use much less power and produce little, if any heat.
102. China toilets work great
103. Redesigned kitchen with a single sink and a flip up counter extension
104. To keep things from sliding out of the bathroom vanity, use a closet rod on the front edge (or a clear sheetrock edge guard held on with double sided tape)
105. Multiple switches to turn the water pump on/off
106. Remote 12V adapter installed in bedroom for C-Pap machine
107. Install a vertical Plexiglas shield next to skin to keep couch clean and dry
108. Frig/Freezer remote temperature gauge allows you to know the temps at a glance
109. Raise the rear bed and make a nice storage space below it. Some have put gas lifts and hinges so it's easy to get to.

110. Inverter just for Microwave. On countertop if the stove top is removed you can make a cutting board to cover the hole.
111. Microwaves will fit where the oven was if you remove the back of the cabinet. You can also mount them in the hall drawer space at eye level by removing the back of the cabinet and modifying a door.
112. If you are redoing the kitchen plumbing, you can put the P-trap over by the vent stack instead of directly under the sink. Works the same and you save a bunch of room under the sink.
113. On some of the sewer lines that you might want to take apart, instead of gluing the PVC use rubber hose and hose clamps for future removal.
114. Timer on hot water heater works great.
115. Fantastic fan in bath is a huge improvement over the little original
116. Some trucks have 24V (DC) bulbs. Use these as night lights, they will be much dimmer
117. Drop a Styrofoam cup inside a plastic cup. Keeps ice and things cold a LONG time.
118. To dry a wet bath after a shower, use a foam paint roller to roll up moisture.
119. Loose rugs against the hall night lights can cause fires!!!! They get pretty hot. This is believed to be the cause of at least one coach fire.
120. GMC Photo site is a wealth of information for interior upgrades and repairs
<http://www.gmcmhphotos.com/>
121. A USB charger has a small power indicator LED that is enough light for a night light. Small LED lights would work also.
122. In wet bath, "DryDeck" is a great way to let the water drain out while your feet stay dry.
123. Some folks have removed the dinette and replaced with table and two chairs that swivel and recline. Storage under the chair base.
124. Propane quick connectors available from a propane store so you can quickly attach a propane BBQ for outside cooking.
125. A drawstring bag by the toilet is a great place to store dirty clothes.
126. An extra shelf in the closet increases storage.
127. A vertical piece of Plexiglas across the bottom of the closet keeps things from falling out when you open the door and you can still see what is in there.
128. Cellular blinds make good replacements for curtains or mini blinds. Some brands like Levelor have a lifetime warranty. Many styles and colors available at big box stores. Shades are cut to length free.

129. There is some dead space behind and below the drivers side tail light area.
130. Also dead space around and below the back of the fridge.
131. On 77's ad 78's the water fill is on the drivers side rear. Moving it to the left side allows removal of the small bulkhead and gives an extra 5" of bed length.
132. If you buy something from the big box stores, make a copy of the receipt. They quickly fade out.
133. The "gun cabinet" over rear window between the hanging cabinets provides some great storage.
134. Replaced the dinette with a couch/bed. Storage and drawers under it.
135. Frank Jenkins makes a padded cabinet end that conceals a pistol.
136. Use a shop vac to pull out all the "Pink Stuff" RV antifreeze.
137. One person recommended using Vodka instead of Pink Stuff to winterize.
138. A rod between the two rear overhead cabinets is a great place to hang clothes and wet towels.
139. As a reminder that your antenna is up, write "ANTENNA" on a piece of Velcro that normally lives on the antenna crank. When the antenna is raised, move it to the steering wheel as a reminder to lower the antenna.