



Websites and Apps to help you find free camping

<https://www.boondockerswelcome.com/>

<https://freecampsites.net/>

<https://daysenddirectory.com/>

<http://overnightrvparking.com/>

<https://www.campendium.com/>

<https://allstays.com/>

<http://www.ioverlander.com/>

<https://freeroam.app/>

<https://harvesthosts.com/>

<https://www.rvparky.com/>

<http://www.ultimatecampgrounds.com/>

18 Tips for Finding Free Overnight RV Parking Almost Anywhere

With Boondockers Welcome, finding free overnight parking, especially in the more populated areas, just got a whole lot easier. But the Boondockers Welcome platform won't meet your needs in every situation. The other apps and websites I reviewed in the seminar may not either.

Many RVers rely on "stealth camping"; they find a legal overnight parking spot and make it appear as if no one is sleeping in the RV. If you don't have a Boondockers Welcome host or other free camping location lined up, this may seem like your only free option. But is it?

The following tips have helped us personally find free overnight parking almost anywhere, whether on public or private property with permission.

1. Examine the possibilities. Whether city or rural, scout out potential free locations that would suit you.
2. Look for and respect signage. Avoid any area with *No Trespassing* or *No Overnight Parking* signs. Note that, sometimes, a sign depicting a tent with a line slashed through it or a sign that reads

“no camping” may only be there to ensure no tents are set up. If overnight parking is allowed, an RV may be okay.

3. Ask permission. Whether your potential site is on public property (like a town park) or on private land, ask nearby neighbors, shopkeepers, staff at a town hall, visitor center, or police station, who controls the property and can give permission. Ask permission as nicely as possible.
4. Be friendly and honest. Take the time to chat and let people get to know you and your intentions – where you’re from, how you’re traveling, and that you only need a spot to park and sleep overnight.
5. Don’t call it “camping.” People unfamiliar with RVs, may envision you setting up a tent, having a campfire, and creating your bathroom behind a tree. If they’re curious, consider offering a tour of your rig. Tell them that finding free overnight RV parking “occasionally” is the part of the fun of traveling this way.
6. Talk about some of the other free overnight parking situations you've had recently. Mention *Boondockers Welcome* where property owners formally advertise their location as a free RV parking option.
7. Keep your RV and yourself in good, clean, neat, presentable condition. People will judge you by your appearances. If it looks like you take good care of yourself and your RV (even an older model) it tells them you will be considerate of their property, too.
8. Parking lots at malls, independent stores, casinos, public transit stations, etc. that are open 24 hours often have security guards – befriend them. If they approach you, tell them what you’re up to, how long you plan to stay, about your plans to shop here, eat in a restaurant, or take the subway into town in the morning and what you hope to see and do while you're in the area. Offer them a coffee and conversation – their jobs are boring. They may even keep an eye on your RV while you're absent. Enforcement officers feel a lot more comfortable if you approach them before they feel they have to approach you.
9. Ask locals - the person at the visitor's center, the clerk in the grocery store, the gas station attendant, the person at the side of the road cutting their lawn, or anyone who lives in the area if they can think of a place you might be able to spend a night or two in a free, secluded, safe area. Talk to everyone you meet. We've been invited to camp in people’s driveways after chatting with them. That’s partly how the idea of Boondockers Welcome came about.
10. Outfitters and sports shops are a great place to ask about local remote boondocking options. Even if you're not a fisherman, ask where you might be able to fish and camp in the area for a few days or if there are any great trails in the area where you could park overnight at the trailhead (to get an early start on the hike).
11. Be inconspicuous. Even if you have permission, don't set up chairs, or a barbecue grill, or pull out slides and awnings unless the setting is appropriate and you know it's permitted.
12. Don't push your luck or overstay your welcome. When you have permission, keep to your promised time frame, whether one or two nights – just enough to see the area and move on.
13. Have a Plan B. Even when you think you won't encounter a problem you may get a knock on the door after dark and be asked to move on. Never argue but apologize, thank them for letting you know, and agree to move right away. Decide ahead of time where you’ll go if this happens – perhaps you’ll end up in the local campground after all. Always ask for a suggestion from the person who's asking you to move. Chances are this isn't the first time they have encountered

this situation and may know of a nearby legal option. This has only happened to us a couple of times and both times we were directed to a free legal option.

14. Town festivals and special events are great opportunities. Most towns and cities don't have enough campgrounds to accommodate the extra visitors during these special weekends, so enforcement officers often turn a blind eye to RVs in the local parking lots or parks, especially those near the events. The town may also offer free designated overflow camping. We've found ourselves camped beside entertainers, carnival staff, and other festival participants.
15. Restaurants and bars don't want their patrons to drink and drive. A vehicle left in the parking lot overnight is common so it's not likely to be questioned. Just leave promptly in the morning. If it's a busy bar, be aware that the parking lot might be a bit noisy at closing time and rowdy patrons who notice a lone RV in the parking lot could be more of a nuisance than it's worth.
16. Ask permission anywhere that you've spent money. A business owner who has just benefited from your business may be willing to grant permission. Smaller (non-chain) businesses such as vehicle repair shops, restaurants, stores, gas stations, and laundromats are a good bet. Be sure you're speaking with the person in charge and ask them to ensure the person who opens up in the morning is made aware.
17. Show gratitude. Make your free stay a positive experience for everyone. Show your appreciation to the person who helped you out. Before leaving the area, stop in to say how much you appreciated it, say goodbye, or even leave a token gift. If that's not possible, leave a thank you note or send a post card within a few days.
18. If you do end up stealthily parking curbside, keep your interior lights and radio off. Spend your time away from the RV, perhaps in a nearby park, and come back to your chosen spot in time to quietly and immediately go to sleep. In the morning, get up early and immediately move the RV, perhaps, back to the park. If you plan to stay more than one night, choose a different parking spot, preferably in another part of town, the following night.

We've used every tip on this list successfully. We still end up in pay-campgrounds once in a while but a combination of boondocking options sure stretches our budget. Your RV was built for boondocking. Your bedroom looks the same after the lights are off, no matter where you're sleeping. Our daytime activities are the reason we're traveling and the money we save in camping fees, doesn't stay in our pockets. It pays for the "must-sees and must-dos" of each area we visit and keeps us on the road that much longer.

Happy Travels!

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www.boondockerswelcome.com

www.frugal-rv-travel.com