

# MICROWAVES

This leaflet is prepared as part of The Club's free information service to members. The contents are believed correct at time of publication, but further information may be available from The Club's Information Department. The Club does not endorse products and you should satisfy yourself as to their suitability. As always check that the installation of an after-market accessory does not invalidate your Warranty.

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Now that electrical hook-ups are standard on the majority of caravan sites, microwave ovens have become an essential item for many caravanners and motor caravanners. All the main UK manufacturers now fit them to their top of the range models, while some fit them as standard throughout their range. For those that own a caravan without one, it is important to purchase a microwave

that is suitable for caravanning purposes. The following is a guide that should help in your decision.

## 1. Power consumption

The model number or power rating associated with the microwave, eg. 600W or 800W, is the cooking power only, and is approximately half the power input requirement of the microwave. It is therefore important to find out the power output before purchase. There is also a heavier power demand when the microwave first starts up, estimated by one manufacturer as an additional 25W, but believed by others to be considerably higher. This higher current is only drawn for milliseconds, but could possibly affect a sensitive trip or overload a circuit already approaching its limits, so it would be helpful to know what this is as well, as it must be taken into account when looking at the power supply available to you. A 5 amp site supply would not be adequate and therefore the microwave must not be used on pitch outlets limited to this value, or on a caravan circuit with a 5 amp circuit breaker. Similarly, a 10 amp supply may also be inadequate, so it is important that you look at both your caravan circuit limitations, bearing in mind other

appliances which may also be in use at the same time as the microwave, and the site supply you normally use, before deciding a microwave would be suitable. (Club Sites generally offer 16 amps maximum per hook up). Refer to the manufacturer/retailer for advice as to whether they would consider their product adequate for the supply available.

## **2. Suitable for use abroad?**

European site hook-ups offer between 3 and 20 amps, with an average of between 6 and 10 amps, although some sites will allow members (for an additional cost) to upgrade – ask at sites reception if upgrades are available. Therefore, many site hook-ups will have insufficient power for a microwave oven.

## **3. Do microwave ovens travel well?**

If you refer to the microwave oven fitting instructions, you will probably see they are designed to be placed on a stable surface, with attention paid to clearance/air circulation and heat resistant surfaces. Caravans on the move receive a fair amount of joggling around, so does any equipment built or carried within. Will the electronic gadgetry within the oven stand up to this treatment? Check with the manufacturer/retailer for confirmation. You will also have to consider if the space limitations of a caravan meet any other installation requirements relating to air circulation etc.

## **4. Will the warranty be affected?**

Most microwaves have a 12 month warranty, some the option of a further extended warranty on the payment of a one-off sum at time of purchase. Check whether the warranty conditions would be invalidated if used in a touring caravan.

## **5. Weight**

Check the weight of the microwave before purchase and remember to ensure that you have sufficient payload available to carry it.

## **6. 12V Microwaves**

Microwaves which will operate from a 12V supply are available, and in many respects are ideally suited to caravan use. However, it must be noted that these models tend to draw extremely high currents from the 12V supply – perhaps 60-70 amps. This means that a special, high current supply cable will need to be fitted between the oven and the caravan battery. Prolonged use of the oven will flatten many batteries very quickly, and you should check with the battery manufacturer that your battery can deliver the necessary current without harm.

## 7. Microwaves with variable power settings

It is difficult to be specific on the effect of a lower power setting because figures are not readily available, since manufacturers tend to express these settings only in descriptive terms, eg low/medium, rather than quote figures.

While it seems fair to assume that lower power settings will be less problematic than using full power, it is impossible to state with 100% confidence that this will always eliminate power supply problems. If you have problems with power supply, however, using a microwave on a lower setting, if it has such a facility, may help.

Specific queries should be addressed to the manufacturer of the microwave oven, or your dealer.

## 8. Positioning



If you are purchasing a motor caravan or caravan already fitted with a microwave oven, make sure that it is not positioned too high for you to comfortably place your dish in the microwave without reaching up and, more importantly, removing it, when it will be very hot and there is a real likelihood that hot food or liquid will spill. This advice also applies, of course, if you are considering fitting one yourself.

**Some contact telephone numbers;** there are, of course, many makes of microwave oven which may be suitable for caravanning/motor caravanning, and you should check with the manufacturer:

Sanyo - 01923 477162 – [www.sanyomicrowave.co.uk](http://www.sanyomicrowave.co.uk)  
LG Electronics - 0844 8471400  
RoadPro - 01327 312233 - [www.roadpro.co.uk](http://www.roadpro.co.uk)  
Sharp - 0800 262958 - [www.sharpdirect.co.uk](http://www.sharpdirect.co.uk)  
The 12 Volt Shop - 01726 338086 – [www.the12voltshop.co.uk](http://www.the12voltshop.co.uk)

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