

## Shock Absorbers for Towable RVs

This article applies specifically to those towable RVs with OEM Lippert Industries standard shock absorbers installed, although it could apply to other towable RVs.

During my monthly chassis inspection I found one shock absorber on my Heartland Big Horn Fifth Wheel disconnected from the frame. Because the RV had about 40,000 miles on it I decided to replace the shock absorbers which raised the question of should I use the same OEM shocks as replacement, or install an upgraded, sturdier shock.

Even when the RV was new, the OEM shocks seemed weak, doing little to reduce “hitch surge” caused by the motion of the trailer feeding back to my tow vehicle.

My Research indicated the Monroe Gas Magnum Shocks (555001) would probably be a good upgraded replacement for only a few dollars more per shock than the Lippert standard shocks.

Because I was not sure the replacement shocks would fit on my RV I purchased two at Pep Boys and two at NAPA, in the event I had to return them. I paid just north of \$50.00 per shock but the same shocks can be purchased on line at a lower price.

The Monroe 555001 shocks were easy to install. The problem was removing the old shocks (no surprise) and I ended up cutting the old shocks, just for expediency.

Specifications I considered during my research were the shock’s compressed length, extended length, and the length of both stem mounts. Another important consideration is whether the new shocks installed would require additional bushings.

When comparing shocks I could find no commonality in some specifications between the different shocks. For example, the OEM shocks were rated at a specified PSI, but the Monroe shocks were rated at tensile strength.

At time of this writing I have towed the RV about 2,000 miles and have been pleased with the Monroe shock absorbers.

If you are considering replacing shocks on your towable RV the Monroe 555001 shocks may be a good choice for an RV up to about 15,000 pounds (my RV GCWR is 15,500). For RVs over that weight, such as the Heartland Landmark, or the Jayco Pinnacle reviews I read seem to suggest the Bilstein brand of shocks may be a better choice because of the RV weight.



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