

RV TRIPGEN

The Complete Guide to
RV Travel in

New Hampshire

White Mountains, no sales tax, Kancamagus grades, free state-line fuel runs,
and the Mount Washington Auto Road that is genuinely not for your RV.

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RV travel in New Hampshire

New Hampshire is small, mountainous, tax-free, and excellent value once you understand the geography. The White Mountain National Forest is the largest area of free dispersed camping in the Northeast, the Kancamagus Highway is the region's most scenic two-lane, and the state's no-sales-tax status makes Kittery-Portsmouth fuel and Walmart runs worth the detour. The catch is altitude and grade: the Whites have real mountain passes with 9% descents, the back roads have low covered bridges, and Mount Washington has its own weather system that has killed unprepared hikers in July. Plan around the Notches, respect the bridge clearances, and New Hampshire pays back the planning with the best public-land camping east of the Mississippi.

New Hampshire by the numbers

Boondocking + dispersed sites	149
Established campgrounds	67
Dump stations	7
Propane refills	20
Potable water fill-ups	18
Laundromats	8
RV showers	11
Verified-bad spots (overnight prohibited)	26

Source: iOverlander community database (71% of New Hampshire spots verified in the last 24 months).

Driving rules

Interstate (cars)	70 mph (I-93 and I-89 rural)
Interstate (trucks + towing)	Matches posted
US/State highway (cars + towing)	55 mph default; 35-50 mph through Notches
Built-up areas	25-35 mph (posted)
Drive on	Right
Seatbelts	Required for under-18 only (no adult seatbelt law -- but use them)
Cell phone use while driving	Hands-free only; texting prohibited statewide

Highways

RV-friendly corridors

Highway	Note
I-93	Salem to Littleton via Manchester, Concord, and Franconia Notch. Main north-south corridor. Franconia Notch section narrows to one lane each way around the Old Man site -- still RV-friendly but slow.
I-89	Concord to West Lebanon and into Vermont. Smooth four-lane through the Sunapee region.
I-95	Coastal toe of NH (16 miles between Mass and Maine). Toll, fast, gets you through the state in 20 minutes.
US-3	Parallels I-93 through the Whites. Slower, more scenic, no tolls.
NH-16	Conway to Berlin via Pinkham Notch. Two-lane with shoulder; big-rig manageable but slow through Glen and Jackson villages.
NH-101	Portsmouth to Keene cross-state. Mostly four-lane, easy.

RV-restricted segments

Segment	Restriction
Kancamagus Highway (NH-112)	Beautiful, two-lane, no services for 35 miles between Lincoln and Conway. Big rigs legal but tight at the height-of-land overlooks. No fuel, no propane, no dump. Drive it east-to-west to descend the steeper grade if your brakes are marginal.
Mount Washington Auto Road	Private toll road. 7.6 miles, 12% average grade, no guardrails most of the way. RVs technically permitted up to a length limit but it is genuinely not advisable. Park at Pinkham Notch and take the shuttle, or skip it.
Bear Notch Road	Tight, gravel-paved, low covered bridges nearby. Big rigs use Kancamagus instead.
Crawford Notch (US-302)	Two-lane with 9-10% grades on the descent into Bartlett. Manageable for most RVs but use low gear -- brake fires on the descent are a real thing here.
Most covered bridges	NH has 50+ historic covered bridges with clearances from 8'6" to 12'6". Check posted clearance before approaching -- the cost of a bridge strike runs into six figures.

Mountain passes

Pass	Elevation	Note
Franconia Notch (I-93)	1950 ft	Interstate narrows to single lane each way through the Notch. Tight but legal for all RVs. Brake-check pullouts both sides.

Crawford Notch (US-302)	1773 ft	Two-lane with 9-10% grades. Use low gear descending. Snow Nov-Apr.
Pinkham Notch (NH-16)	2032 ft	Two-lane, moderate grades. Manageable for most rigs.
Kancamagus Pass (NH-112)	2855 ft	Highest paved pass east of the Mississippi. 6-7% grades both sides, no services for 35 miles. Manageable for most RVs in dry weather; avoid in snow or fog.

National parks + monuments

National Park / Monument	Entry fee	Reservation note
Saint-Gaudens NHS	\$10/person (16+); under-16 free	Cornish, NH. Day-use only, no camping. Small lot; park-and-walk fine for tow cars and small RVs.
Appalachian National Scenic Trail (corridor)	Free	Crosses NH through the Whites including Mount Washington. Trailhead parking only; no RV camping on the corridor.

State parks

NH State Parks operates 90+ parks; about 15 have RV camping. White Lake, Bear Brook, Pawtuckaway, and Franconia Notch are the popular RV units. Reservable up to 11 months in advance via [reserveamerica.com](https://www.reserveamerica.com) (NH portal). Day-use \$4-5/person, camping \$25-35/night for state-park standard sites. Most NH state parks have electric-only hookups (no water/sewer at site -- centralised fill and dump).

Boondocking + dispersed camping

BLM: No significant BLM land in New Hampshire. Public-land boondocking is concentrated in the White Mountain National Forest.

National Forest: White Mountain National Forest (770,000+ acres straddling NH and Maine) allows free dispersed camping along most forest roads, 200 ft from any road, water, or trail. Popular areas: FR 27, FR 113 (Tripoli Rd -- check seasonal closure), Sandwich Notch Rd (rough, small rigs only), and the Wild River area. Stay limit 14 days, then move 5 miles. The WMNF is the best free RV-friendly camping in the Northeast.

Stay limit: 14 days at any one location (federal rule, applies to BLM and NF dispersed).

Tribal lands

No federally-recognised reservations in New Hampshire. The Abenaki are state-recognised but do not operate sovereign land or camping facilities open to the public.

Propane, dump stations, fuel

Propane: Plentiful in Manchester, Concord, North Conway, Lincoln, and Berlin. Sparse in the Whites themselves -- top up in North Conway or Lincoln before heading into the National Forest. State-line stops in Salem and Portsmouth carry full RV propane services tax-free. Most KOA and Good Sam parks fill

on-site.

Dump stations: Reasonable coverage along I-93 and I-89. Most NH State Parks with camping offer free dump stations for registered guests. The Lincoln/Woodstock area has several commercial dump stations serving the WMNF crowd. Truck stops along I-93 at Salem, Manchester, and Lebanon have fee stations (\$10-15). Sparse in the Great North Woods (Berlin north).

Fuel: Diesel and gas widely available along all interstates and US-3. Genuinely sparse on the Kancamagus (no services for 35 miles), in the Great North Woods north of Berlin, and on the back roads through the WMNF. NH has no sales tax on most goods including motor fuel (federal/state excise still applies), so prices are typically the lowest in New England -- worth a detour from Mass or Maine to fill up. Carry an extra 5 gallons for the WMNF backroads.

Weather windows

Best months: Late June through mid-October. Daytime highs 70-85 F valleys, 50-70 F in the Whites. Foliage peaks late September to early October. Mt Washington summit averages 26 F in July -- bring layers.

Avoid: Mid-November through mid-April. Most state-park campgrounds close. Snow common; nighttime lows in the single digits or below zero. Mud season (April-early May) can close back roads and forest roads. Black-fly season (late May to mid-June) is brutal in the Whites.

Climate caution

Mount Washington has the worst documented weather in the Lower 48. The summit has recorded 231 mph winds and below-zero temperatures every month of the year. Check the higher-summits forecast before any hike, regardless of season.

Emergency + road conditions

State patrol	Dial *SP (*77) from a cell phone for non-emergency state police; 911 for emergencies
Road conditions	https://www.newengland511.org

How RV TripGen helps

Bridge-clearance routing through New England

RV Tripgen routes around the 50+ covered bridges in NH and flags posted clearances on every overnight-leg, so you don't approach a 9'2" covered span in an 11'6" rig.

WMNF dispersed-camping spots verified on the ground

RV Tripgen tags White Mountain NF forest-road dispersed spots that big rigs can actually access -- not just "there's a forest road there".