

# HOW TO BOOK A CAMPGROUND



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Dreaming of cool campsites, smores 'round the fire, and starry night skies? Here are some tips to help make it a reality!

- Moterra campervans are 19 feet, meaning they can fit in any conventional parking space - you don't need to seek out "RV" specific sites. Be wary of "walk-in" or "tent-only" sites – campervans are not typically welcome in those spots.
- **Our vans** do not require electrical or water hook-ups - they are equipped with a custom solar system and fresh water tanks, allowing you to be fully off-grid!
- Intent on getting a site with a great view, lots of privacy, or the perfect trees to string a hammock? **Campsitephotos.com** showcases individual sites at a given campground and even recommends the "best" ones.

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The best place to start your search is with a visit to **recreation.gov**, which is the primary booking platform for campgrounds on federal or state land\*. Want to reserve a site in Grand Teton, Glacier or Zion? This is the way to go about it! To up your odds of scoring a sweet site...

- Scope out options and create a free recreation.gov account in advance of making a reservation. You need to be logged into your account in order to book.
  - Research when your sites go on sale – most are released at 8 am mountain time, six months in advance of arrival. If you are traveling in August, your sites will typically be released in February. For competitive campgrounds (virtually all NPS sites), you'll need to reserve the site right as the clock strikes 7:59:59 am mtn... it may sound dramatic, but clocking in casually (even a few minutes later) will likely result in disappointment.
  - Rather than try for one single site, select multiple in your date range that would suit your needs. This gives you a better shot at securing at least one! If you get lucky and successfully snag more than one, you can then remove the extra site from your cart without any penalty.
  - Have a friend, partner, or tech savvy kid? Increase your odds by asking them to queue up a site or two as well. The more the merrier!
  - No luck? There's still hope! Check back frequently for cancellations; as your departure date approaches, a site or two is bound to open-up. If you really have your heart set on securing a spot at a particular campground, consider utilizing a subscription service like **Campnab**; their algorithm alerts you immediately when a site in your predetermined date range becomes available.
  - \*Notable parks that do not release sites through recreation.gov are **California State Parks** and some of **Yellowstone's campgrounds**.
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Eager to get a bit more off the beaten path? In that case, consider boondocking...

Boondocking is a colloquial term for camping with no amenities – if you are comfortable without formal bathroom facilities or a trusty campground attendant, this dispersed-style camping can be a great option. Believe it or not, you can boondock on just about any land controlled by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) or the National Forest Service – this amounts to some 440 million acres where camping is totally free, no reservations necessary! Check out **Campdium** or **TheDyrt** to easily browse dispersed options; see what's available in a specific locale, read real reviews from past campers, and get GPS coordinates to navigate to the boondock sites.

Don't forget private campgrounds!

- Private campgrounds can be found just about anywhere you want to go! Typically situated just outside park boundaries, private campgrounds oftentimes book up at a more leisurely pace than park-operated sites, making them a particularly great option if you are a little late to the planning process. Though private campgrounds tend to have a decidedly more "front country" vibe than NPS operated campgrounds, there are definite advantages; private campgrounds almost always have shower facilities, they are more likely to offer wifi or cell service, and some even have amenities like pools, restaurants, or general stores. In short, incorporating a night or two at a private campground can be a nice change of pace! The best way to get a sense of options in your area is simply to give it a Google - use the map feature to get a sense for what's available and book directly through the campground.
- **Hipcamp** offers a happy hybrid between boondocking and private campgrounds - these sites are "hosted" by private landowners and offer a wide range of experiences, ranging from a flat spot in a grassy pasture right on up to multi-storied treehouses! **Under Canvas** can also be fun to throw into the mix. These glamping-style resorts are conveniently located outside of popular parks and can be a fun option if you are looking to build in a night of unique accommodation!

If this process sounds intimidating or overwhelming, you can always leave the **planning to professionals!** Our team of local experts will not only create a day-by-day itinerary tailored to your individual interests and abilities, but will even take care of booking your campsites! Maximize your time in the parks and minimize your stress - our **itinerary planning service** will help ensure you have the trip of a lifetime!