

# MEERKAT OWNER'S MANUAL

After years of being a dealer for many smaller trailer brands new and used, we came to the conclusion that no one trailer fit our specific camping needs perfectly. We then adopted ideas from many different trailer lines new and used and developed the MeerKat. We wanted a stand up trailer that would fit in a garage and weigh in at less than 1,000 pounds. We wanted a hanging closet and comfortable bed with cooking capabilities, and an Icebox. We also wanted good ventilation

a porta potty and lots of storage. Large tires were a must and full insulation. We have added several options and improvements over the years to help make the MeerKat a better trailer and hopefully to meet your specific needs also.

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## 1) IMPORTANT SAFETY INSTRUCTIONS

Please read and follow all related operational manuals and the instructions in this owner's manual before use. This owner's manual is intended to act as a general guide for operation. This manual is subject to change without notice and may or may not include information regarding your camper. Always refer to the specific manufacturer's owners, operations, and safety manual for optional equipment which includes, but is not limited to, refrigerators, cooktops, and detectors.

Supplied camp stove is designed for outside use only.

Always secure trailer hitch and safety chains prior to towing.

Check all lights; brakes, tail, turn signals, and markers

Lock side door and top fan cover

Lock pop top securely in closed position

Secure all cargo to prevent shifting and damage

Do not tie anything to the top of the trailer

Obey all speed limit and trailer towing regulations.

Always be aware of the trailer behind you. Avoid making sharp turns.

Instead of backing....the trailer can be unhitched and rolled into the camp site.

Double check chains and ball lock before towing.

Do not allow anybody to ride in the trailer while moving.

Remove camp stove before use.

Set stabilizers before walking to the inside rear of the trailer.

## 2) Chassis

**\*\*NOTE\*\*** Mechanical maintenance should only be performed by a qualified mechanic. If you do not have the experience or the tools to safely complete maintenance procedures, please contact your dealer. We assume no liability for injuries or damages incurred as a result of irresponsible, unauthorized servicing.

### **Tires/Air Pressure**

Air pressure is the most important factor determining the tire life and under inflation is the number one cause of trailer tire failure.

Maintain recommended air pressure listed on the tire sidewall, and periodically inspect both tires for tread wear and damage from road hazards. All tires must be identical in size for the tires to properly manage the weight of the trailer. All "ST" tires have a maximum speed rating of 65 mph. The mileage expectation of a trailer tire is 5,000 to 12,000 miles. It is suggested that trailer tires be replaced after three to four years of service regardless of tread depth or tire appearance.

Tire Size is ST175/80D13 SB-BIAS and 4.5 on 5 Lug pattern

Max air pressure is 50 psi cold.

It is important to maintain proper wheel mounting torque on your lug nuts. When possible, use a torque wrench to prevent loose wheels and broken studs. Start all nuts by hand to prevent cross threading. Tighten the lug nuts in stages. First, tighten to 20-25 ft. /lb., then to 50-60 ft./lb., and finally to 85-90 ft./lb. Check lug nut torque before the first use, and after 25 and 75 miles. Check periodically thereafter. Rims use 13/16+" lug nuts.

### **Axle**

Follow all safety and specific operating instructions supplied by the Axle manufacturer

The rubber torsion axle which offers greater dampening than conventional leaf spring suspensions and allows each tire to move independently. This feature gives a smoother ride and improved tracking and cornering over rough road conditions.

### **Coupler**

Your coupler needs no adjusting or maintenance other than periodic oiling to ensure smooth operation. The coupler uses a 2" ball.

Set the hitch height of the tow vehicle so that the trailer is being pulled in a horizontal position. The optimal height after the tongue weight is resting on the hitch is 12 inches to the bottom of the ball. Trailers must be towed as level as possible for proper handling and weight distribution.

### **Stabilizers**

Trailers are equipped with four low-profile, lightweight stabilizer jacks and sand pads. The high strength design allows for increased load stabilization and fine leveling. Each stabilizer has a corrosion-resistant finish.

Included is one speed crank handle for quick response of both the up and down movement. This handle can be found under the sink. Oil the jacks periodically to ensure smooth operation.

Never use the stabilizers to raise the camper tires off the ground.

Always raise the stabilizers completely before travel.

## **3) Main Camper Assembly**

### **Floor**

One solid piece of vinyl flooring covers the 1/2 inch exterior grade compressed board floor. The underside has an auto grade undercoating applied.

### **Sidewalls**

The side walls are skinned with a .0032 aluminum siding and insulated with 1 inch foil backed foam insulation. There is then a moisture resistant panel with vinyl facing. Drilling into the sidewall is not recommended.

### **Seals**

There are varying sizes and shapes of both rubber and foam seals. These seals should be inspected regularly for tears, rips, or deterioration

### **Lights**

**There** are two separate lighting systems in your camper. The convenience lights require power from the converter, battery, or the battery of the towing vehicle. The trailer signal lights receive power from the towing vehicle's brakes, turn signals, and running lights. You should test the trailer and towing vehicle lighting systems before every outing.

The trailer connects to the tow vehicle with a round 7 connector.

### **TOP**

The top of the trailer is fiberglass with a gelcoat finish. The underside is a bow tensioned headliner. The pop top is secured in the closed position with four locks. To raise the top remove the small carabiner locks from the front and rear lock assembly and flip up the hold down latch. Then release the quick release locks on the raiser bars. Use the center support bar to push the top up rear first. After it is fully raised push the scissor raiser bars into the locked up position and lock the quick release clamp. Keeping pressure on the top cross bar repeat on the front side of the pop top. Reverse the above procedure to lower and lock the top before travel.

Keep upward pressure on the top cross bar and fingers clear of the scissor support arms while raising and lowering the top. Remember to attach safety carabiners before travel.

### **Fant-Tastic Vent**

This roof vent features a fan to evacuate the hot air that collects inside a trailer. The roof vent must be open approximately 3" before the motor will operate. Always lower and lock the vent in the down position before travel.

There are four opening vents in the pop top section that can be zipped open fully, or partially to adjust your air flow.

### **Windows**

Side **windows** and rear window slide open for ventilation. It is important to fully close them when traveling or in strong rain. Make sure they lock closed and that the lower weep holes are clear for water

drainage. Window blinds pull up and down and the tension can be adjusted by tightening the side guide strings.

#### **4) Standard Electrical Features**

##### **CONVERTER**

Follow all safety and specific operation instructions supplied by the Converter manufacturer

The Converter changes standard household electrical power into 12 volt dc, the type of electrical power necessary for the operation of RV appliances and recharging RV batteries. There are three modes of operation that the converter automatically senses and then self-adjusts.

Absorption / Normal mode; Nominal battery charge and supplies power to appliances or lights.

Bulk / Charge mode; fast battery charge and supplies power to appliances.

Float / Trickle Charge mode; supplies a slight trickle charge to maintain battery charge during storage.

Do not block the small, automatic cooling fan on the converter.

##### **BATTERY**

Standard battery size is 12 volt 35 Amp hour deep cycle sealed lead acid AGM battery.

To avoid converter damage do not reverse the battery polarity!

A battery enables you to operate 12-volt dc appliances without draining your tow vehicle battery or plugging your converter into a 120volt ac receptacle. Lights, fans, cigarette lighter receptacles can run on the auxiliary battery power. Air conditioners, Microwave ovens, refrigerators, and standard outlets operate exclusively on 120 volts and therefore cannot run from the battery power. You will need to use a generator or plug your trailer power cord in. Solar panels only recharge the battery and do not actually run anything.

Use a deep cycle battery because its design gives maximum performance between recharging without damaging the battery.

Note; A deep cycle battery will take longer to recharge as compared to a regular automotive battery.

Secure the lug and wire that has the 20-amp in line fuse to the batteries positive terminal along with the red wire coming from the battery box lid solar plug. The remaining wire connects to the battery negative or black terminal along with the black wire coming from the battery box lid solar plug.

If there is an electrical problem, first check the 20-amp fuse at the battery then check the fuses located in the converter.

##### **Ground Fault Circuit interrupt (GFCI)**

In accordance with RVIA standards as well as the NEC, your camper is equipped with a ground fault circuit interrupt (GFCI). The GFCI receptacle is a safety device designed to protect against shock hazards.

Test the GFCI monthly by pressing the test button on the outlet. After testing, press the reset button to restore power to the receptacle and the branch circuits.

If you lose power to your outlets, check the GFCI to see if it needs to be reset, If the GFCI will not reset, check to see if a breaker on the converter or campground supply has tripped.

##### **Refrigerator**

1.7 cu/ft refrigerator with a half-width freezer compartment. This is a 110 volt refrigerator that can be plugged into the converter to be able to run on 12 volt while driving. To prevent the battery from running dead while camping, it is important to have an outside power source while operating the refrigerator.

## **Icebox**

This is a true Icebox. We recommend putting an unopened bag of Ice on the top shelf. As the ice melts it will drain out of the Icebox via a drain tube. Make sure to keep drain tube unkinked and clear.

## **12 volt vs 120**

It is important to keep in mind that your trailer works off two separate power sources. The 120 plug will look like a standard household plug and will require you to plug your trailer into an external power source or generator to work. 12 volt is like the power supplied from a car type battery. You can charge cell phones etc. but you will have to be mindful of your power consumption...your car would eventually get a dead battery if you ran the radio and lights too long if it was not running.

## **5) Water System**

### **Tank**

MeerKats are designed to be simple. There is no on board water tank and therefore no cleaning or sanitizing tanks required. We recommend using a 2.5 gallon rectangular water bottle (available at any grocery store). Remove the bottles cap and insert the hose that is under the sink into the bottle. You then slowly prime the pump by pulling the handle at the facet several times until the water is drawn up the tube. You can carry as much or as little water as you need.

### **Pump**

This is a manual hand pump. Make sure the bottom of the hose is under water to allow the pump to draw water. You may need to prime it by pumping the handle slowly a few times to begin water flow.

### **Drain**

The sink drains under the trailer to a drain tube located directly under the sink outside the trailer next to the tongue. You will need to remove the cap to allow the water to drain from the sink. If you are in a water sensitive area you can purchase an adapter that will drain to a standard garden hose that then connects to portable tote-along tank making it totally self-contained.

### **Porta Potti**

MeerKats are designed to use a Thetford 260B Porta Potti. This is a two piece self-contained chemical toilet. Fresh water capacity is 2.6 gallons and waste water tank is 2.6 gallons. Average flushes 27. Add approximately two tablespoons of chemical to waste tank. Never add deodorant chemicals to fresh water tank.

## **6) Preparing to go**

The beauty of the MeerKat is the simplicity and ease of preparation. It is important to make sure your pop-top is closed and fully secured. To lower the top, keep pressure on the top cross bar and release the quick release clamps. Carefully pull the rear scissor lift mechanism to allow the top to come down all the while keeping upward pressure on the cross bar and fingers clear of the scissor lift mechanism. Next follow the same procedure on the front of the pop-top. Once the top is down, secure the front and rear "Y" hook to the flange on the top cross bar and lock into the secure position. Then clamp the quick release into the locked position and finish with inserting the carabiner to prevent the latch from opening while traveling.

Next make sure your windows are closed.

### **Balance the load**

Loading improperly can adversely affect handling while towing. Try to distribute your camping gear so the hitch weight is 10-20% of the gross vehicle weight. (Total weight of the loaded Camper). For rough figures your trailer weighs approximately 1000 pounds and you can safely load an additional 1000 pounds of gear. (That is a lot of gear). Ideally, whenever possible the heaviest objects should be stored near the axle.

Raise stabilizer jacks, lock the door.

### **Attaching to the tow Vehicle**

Position the receiver over the ball, and lift the tab handle of the coupler. Lower the coupler onto the ball. After the ball is seated, push the coupler handle into the locked position. Attach the safety chains, insert the camper plug into the towing vehicle receptacle, and test the signal lighting. Raise the jack wheel as far as it will go by turning the crank handle clockwise. Pull the release handle and swing the jack wheel up parallel to the trailer tongue. A locking pin can be inserted into the hitch coupler handle for added security. Do not tow the vehicle with the front tongue jack in the lowered position.

Next attach safety chains and electrical connection.

## **7) Arriving at Camp**

Position your MeerKat so it is level front to back and side to side. If adjustment is necessary, use leveling boards under the wheels and raise or lower the tongue jack.

Lower the front and rear stabilizers.

Do not use the front and rear stabilizers to level the camper. The stabilizers should be lowered into position after the camper is leveled. The sand pads of the stabilizers should be firmly on the ground, but not to the point of raising the camper.

Position wheel chocking if needed.

### **Raise the Roof**

To raise the top remove the small carabiner locks from the front and rear lock assembly and flip up the hold down latch. Then release the quick release locks on the raiser bars. Use the center support bar to push the top up rear first. After it is fully raised push the scissor raiser bars into the locked up position and lock the quick release clamp. Keeping pressure on the top cross bar repeat on the front side of the pop top.

Refrigerator note.... If you have the optional refrigerator you will need to plug your trailer into a power source or unplug your refrigerator so it does not drain your battery.

Access the electrical shore power by plugging in with a standard exterior extension cord to the driver's side of the camper and plug into a standard household 15 or 20 amp outlet. An adapter can be used to plug into the campground's 30 amp outlet.

### **Awning**

### **Setting up the bed**

To set up the bed first pull up the dinette table and leg and stow them on the ground. Next pull out the roll-top slats. The seating cushions and back rest cushions then slide to the center to make up the mattress. The optional bed extender can be set up at the foot of the bed for extra length and the rear cushion fits on top to complete the mattress.

Many people use memory foam and then roll the bedding up to the back of the trailer for easy storage and put the back cushion in front of the bed roll.

### **Cooking**

MeerKats come with a removable butane single burner camp stove. Please remove the stove and cook outside.

## **8) Breaking Camp**

Lower pop-top and properly secure/lock in travel position.

Close all windows and vents.

If equipped with refrigerator, plug it in for 12 volt cooling.

Load and secure camp gear.

Disconnect all campground utilities.

Raise all the stabilizers.

Attach to tow vehicle hitch and lock into position.

Attach safety chains.

Attach 00 volt pigtail cord to tow vehicle.

Raise the front jack completely  
Swing jack wheel back  
Remove wheel chocking.

**9) Care and Cleaning**

The exterior of the camper can be cleaned with mild soap and water. Do not pressure wash. Your MeerKat can be washed and waxed like a car with a high quality wax.

Exterior caulking should be replaced as it wears  
Hubs should be lubricated every 12 months or 2000 miles

**10) Modifications**

Structural or electrical modifications will void your warranty.  
Structural modifications include but are not limited to drilling or cutting into your side wall or top.  
Welding onto the frame. Attaching roof racks.

Bikes should be carried on your tow vehicle or between the trailer and tow vehicle with a double-decker hitch.