

Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles'

Canine Campervan Guide



Commercial
Vehicles



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As the nation’s favourite four-legged friend, dogs are much-loved members of many families. And, with 55% of UK families looking to staycation this year, what better time than to plan a getaway with your furry friend? Admittedly, travelling with pets isn’t always simple – until you try canine camping.

So, what should you be aware of before taking your pup on tour? Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles’ Canine Campervan Guide tells you all you need to know, just in time for your next trip...





The Guide

Canine Camping in a Volkswagen Campervan



With so many Brits living in the company of a furry friend, the familiar guilt-ridden feeling of dropping your pup off at the kennels can be enough to make anyone reconsider escaping on a weekend excursion.

But, why not take your four-legged friend on the journey?

Admittedly, travelling with pets isn't always simple. At least, not until you try **canine camping** in a Volkswagen campervan...

The ultimate vehicles for a weekend getaway with pets, Volkswagen campervans take camping to the next level, with **space, clever facilities and home comforts for every dog-friendly adventure.**

To help you on your way, Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles has pulled together its **Canine Campervan Guide** – a helpful handbook with all the best dog-friendly spots to explore in a campervan this summer.

Each 'Top Dog' location also has a what3words address, which takes you to a nearby dog-friendly campervan spot.

Whether you're new to canine camping or a seasoned expert, these useful tips and tricks will be sure to keep your pup's tail wagging along the way.



Tips & Tricks

For the Ultimate Trip

Packing For Your Pooch

As with any holiday, your first step is to make sure you're prepped with all the essentials for a stress-free trip. We suggest packing: a lead and seatbelt harness, fixable dog crate or bed, towel, portable water bowl, food for the duration of the trip, and a goody bag of toys and treats to keep your dog entertained along the way.

Go on a Pre-adventure Walk

Taking your dog for a run-around before setting off is a good idea to expend any pent-up energy and help them to relax (while making sure they've done their business outside the campervan!)

Set up Their Home-From-Home

The next step is to prepare their 'home-from-home' in the campervan. We suggest using a seatbelt harness or fixable dog crate, filled with their favourite toys and blankets to calm any pre-adventure excitement.

Check Campsites' Pet Policies

While the majority of campsites are dog-friendly, it's a good idea to check before booking, with most requiring dogs to be kept on a lead while on the campsite.

Bon Voyage

And just like that, you're ready to set off on your canine campervan adventure.

Take Regular Pit Stops

As you take in the views, embracing the ultimate #VanLife, don't forget about your canine chum in the back! Be sure to take frequent rest breaks to give your dog a chance to stretch their legs and seek some much-needed attention.

Snacks on the Go

We suggest treating your pup to a few extra snacks and goodies, to keep your dog distracted during the journey. Bone Appétit!

Create a Designated 'Sleep Zone'

Whether your pup sleeps in your bed, or in their own dog bed, make sure there's a designated 'sleep zone' in the campervan, with familiar blankets and toys to provide comfort and security.





**Volkswagen campervans
are the ultimate vehicles
for a getaway with
pets, combining space,
facilities and comfort for
every journey, no matter
the destination**



Top Dog Spots

- 1. North York Moors National Park, Yorkshire
- 2. Hadrian’s Wall Path, Northumberland
- 3. York Museum Gardens, York
- 4. Whitegate Way, Cheshire
- 5. Heaton Park, Manchester
- 6. Lake District National Park, Cumbria
- 7. Peak District National Park, Derbyshire
- 8. Hemlock Stone Circular Walk, Nottinghamshire
- 9. Wyre Forest, Worcestershire
- 10. Norfolk Broads, Norfolk
- 11. Dunwich Heath ‘Woof Walk’, Suffolk
- 12. Fynn Valley Path, Suffolk
- 13. New Forest National Park, Hampshire
- 14. Chiltern Hills, Oxfordshire
- 15. South Downs National Park, Sussex
- 16. Exmoor National Park, Devon/Somerset
- 17. Dartmoor National Park, Devon
- 18. Trevoze Head Walk, Cornwall



North East



North York Moors National Park, Yorkshire

[///coverings.stalemate.zealous](http://coverings.stalemate.zealous)

The North York Moors are a great place for you and your furry friend to explore ancient and dramatic landscapes. While at the National Park, you can take your pooch on a forest trail or stroll along its 26 miles of Jurassic-era coastline.

Special Qualities: You could walk every day for a year and still not cover every corner of the National Park.

Top Tip: With its rich variety of wildlife, it's important to keep your dog under control and make sure to put them on a lead when signs tell you to do so.



Hadrian's Wall Path, Northumberland

[///crispy.loom.craft](http://crispy.loom.craft)

Stretching coast to coast across Northern England, Hadrian's Wall Path is an 84-mile National Trail, with plenty of idyllic spots for you to enjoy with your pup, and a choice of shorter circuits and more challenging routes.

Special Qualities: It is the largest Roman archeological feature in Britain, and a designated UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1987.

Top Tip: You may come across livestock, so be sure to keep your dog under control. And make sure to hose your pup's paws off afterwards; this hike can get a little muddy!



York Museum Gardens, York

[///hidden.fear.hails](http://hidden.fear.hails)

Situated in the heart of York, this ten-acre botanical garden is a gorgeous backdrop for a family day out accompanied by your four-legged friend.

Special Qualities: Set against the medieval ruins of St. Mary's Abbey, the York Museum Gardens were established in 1830 and have been famed for their collection of plant species ever since.

Top Tip: Dogs should be kept on a lead when exploring the botanical gardens, to protect the array of wildlife and plant species found at this haven.

North West



Whitegate Way, Cheshire

[///removable.headlight.stilted](#)

Whitegate Way is a 6.4-mile, level trail and a great spot for an on-the-road adventure with your canine chum. Plenty of pup-arazzi worthy moments and perfect picnic locations looking over the patchwork fields.

Special Qualities: For almost 100 years, the old railway line carried salt from mines along the River Weaver up to Cuddington, where it went on to Manchester.

Top Tip: The route takes roughly two hours, so make sure your pooch is well fed, hydrated and ready for the adventure!



Heaton Park, Manchester

[///chin.frog.bank](#)

Located in Manchester, and one of the city's major attractions, this 600-acre park offers stunning views towards the famous Pennines. Comprising of Heaton Hall house, open parkland, woodland and lakes, families can also enjoy an adventure playground and animal farm for kids. (Best to keep dogs from getting too close, though!)

Special Qualities: From the mid-17th to early-20th century, just two families owned the entire Heaton estate.

Top Tip: It's recommended that you keep your dog nearby or on a leash, due to the scale of the park!



Lake District National Park, Cumbria

[///centuries.shuffles.strutted](#)

This world-famous, must-see spot, located in the heart of Cumbria, is known for its beautiful lakes, picturesque landscapes. It's the perfect place to park up in your campervan and take in the views with your four-legged friend.

Special Qualities: The Lake District is England's largest National Park, and now a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Top Tip: From fishing to swimming, paddleboarding to fell walking, there's so much to explore here – make sure you plan what you'd like to do, to ensure an action-packed trip to remember for you and your dog!

Midlands & South Central



Peak District National Park, Derbyshire

Peak District National Park, Derbyshire

[///sandpaper.myself.restored](http://sandpaper.myself.restored)

With a wide selection of routes to suit all visitors, this famous British spot provides access to amazing views and moorland expanses, as well as more tranquil areas for your dog to explore.

Special Qualities: The first of Britain's National Parks, the Peak District is also the most accessible, with an estimated 20 million people living within an hour's drive of the park.

Top Tip: A wide array of wildlife can be seen at the park, including the only English population of mountain hares, as well as red deer – so make sure to keep an eye on your four-legged friend.



Hemlock Stone Circular Walk, Nottinghamshire

Hemlock Stone Circular Walk, Nottinghamshire

[///leans.secret.zips](http://leans.secret.zips)

This 4-mile countryside trail traverses parks and field, areas of shallow water for your dog to paddle in, and – of course – taking you right past the mythical site of Hemlock Stone.

Special Qualities: Hemlock Stone, a 28-feet high sandstone deposit is believed to be 200 million years old, from the Triassic Period.

Top Tip: Be aware of mountain bikers who may be using the trail for jumps!



Wyre Forest, Worcestershire

Wyre Forest, Worcestershire

[///upsetting.barstool.pinging](http://upsetting.barstool.pinging)

Make sure to bring your walking boots to this 'Top Dog' spot, as it can get pretty muddy at times! Tucked away within the forest, you can find a former corn mill to explore.

Special Qualities: Wyre Forest is the largest woodland national nature reserve in England.

Top Tip: Make sure to keep your pooch in sight, and away from fenced off areas.



East & East Anglia



Norfolk Broads, Norfolk

Norfolk Broads, Norfolk

[///congested.functions.scoring](#)

With caravan and motorhome sites just around the corner in Great Yarmouth, you can enjoy the gentle landscape, rivers and lakes without worrying about high peaks or steep climbs. Its range of mills and historic landmarks, along with waterways and woodland offers something for everyone to enjoy.

Special Qualities: Despite covering as little as 0.1% of the UK, the Broads boast more than a quarter of the UK's rarest wildlife.

Top Tip: From canoeing to wildlife spotting, fishing to good old hiking, there's plenty to discover at the Broads, so make sure to plan your visit in advance.



Dunwich Heath 'Woof Walk', Suffolk

Dunwich Heath 'Woof Walk', Suffolk

[///reverses.songs.implanted](#)

From July to September, pink and purple heather fill Dunwich Heath's landscape, with dogs welcome to roam free throughout the two-mile trail. Dunwich Heath also has a shingle beach where you can find rare plant and bird species along Suffolk's coastline.

Special Qualities: A far cry from its serene present, Dunwich Heath has quite the turbulent past, after being used for Operation Kruschen – a military exercise designed to prepare Allied forces for D-Day landings.

Top Tip: Be aware that from Spring until Autumn, adders can be active at Dunwich Heath.



Fynn Valley Park, Suffolk

Fynn Valley Park, Suffolk

[///reds.paths.lists](#)

Meandering along some of Suffolk's most picturesque countryside, this route follows the course of the River Fynn, with trails catering up to 20-mile hikes.

Special Qualities: The route passes through idyllic villages, including Little Bealings, Playford and Tuddenham St Martin, loved for their 13th century, medieval churches.

Top Tip: Plenty of spaces along the route to stop and grab a well-deserved bite and a worthy rest for your pup.

South East



New Forest National Park, Hampshire

[///funky.admiringly.former](#)

From coastline views to open moors, forests and streams, this hot spot will not disappoint. With the freedom to ramble across unfenced land, your four-legged friend can explore all the exciting sights and smells that New Forest has to offer.

Special Qualities: Known for its native 'New Forest Ponies', many thousands of ponies roam free across the area.

Top Tip: The ponies are not tame, so try to keep your distance, and refrain from feeding them.



Chiltern Hills, Oxfordshire

[///shoebox.nothing.illogical](#)

With charming villages and historic churches dotted throughout the hills, Chiltern countryside has been an inspiration for many famous artists in the past. This spot is a great place to let your furry friend off the lead, for a tear around before the next leg of the journey in your home-from-home campervan.

Special Qualities: The chalk rock started forming 145 million years ago in shallow subtropical seas far from land.

Top Tip: Be aware that most of the sites have steep slopes and rough paths.



South Downs National Park, Sussex

[///damage.status.condensed](#)

Known for its biodiversity, with rare butterflies and a wide range of birds, along with medieval churches found in the area, there's a healthy dose of countryside and culture to discover with your canine chum.

Special Qualities: In 2016, the National Park was granted International Dark Sky Reserve status – one of only 16 such Reserves in the world.

Top Tip: Its Dark Sky status makes it the perfect spot to view the night sky from the comfort of your campervan.

South West



Exmoor National Park, Devon/Somerset

[///coolest.outcasts.grief](#)

A setting where moorland, woodland, rivers and a coastal landscape can all be found, a visit to Exmoor National Park is one for the bucket list! Whether you're into your long hikes, or a brisk walk accompanied by your pup, there are plenty of breathtaking spots to discover, whatever you fancy.

Special Qualities: At just 693 square kilometres, Exmoor is one of the UK's smallest National Parks.

Top Tip: From coast to countryside, dogs are welcome to roam free across the whole of Exmoor.



Dartmoor National Park, Devon

[///shock.seagulls.inhabited](#)

Ponies roam freely across the Park, which boasts impressive views and wildlife. Here, you can surround yourself with British military history, accompanied by your pooch on specially curated dog walking routes.

Special Qualities: With its dramatic landscape, it's no wonder Dartmoor has been the backdrop to so many films and TV shows – from War Horse to Sherlock, Revolution to Doctor Who.

Top Tip: There's a lot of livestock here, so be sure to keep your dog under control and follow the instructions on signs.



Trevoze Head Walk, Cornwall

[///radiates.configure.spends](#)

Perfect in spring and summer for a chance to capture the spectacular wildflowers. The iconic Trevoze Head Lighthouse can be found on the headland along with sandy bays and breathtaking views, with a range of walking trails to suit you and your pup.

Special Qualities: Trevoze lies in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, designated as such due to its variety of wildlife and marine species.

Top Tip: Check tide times before setting out to avoid a wait.



As icons of freedom and adventure, Volkswagen campervans take camping to the next level



The Paw-fect Companion

Volkswagen Grand California



As icons of freedom and adventure on the road, Volkswagen campervans offer a high level of ride comfort with premium equipment, perfect for any dog-friendly adventure.

This includes the larger motorhome variant – the Volkswagen Grand California – which, at 6.00-6.80m, provides ample space for a family of four with two children and your canine chum.

Featuring a range of clever dog-friendly features, this means you can enjoy a holiday in every corner of the globe, all from the comfort of your home-away-from-home.

Advanced Comfort

The Grand California has a transverse bed with space for two adults, and an optional over-cab bed for two children. The extra space that this motorhome has to offer means there's also plenty of space for your furry friend to stretch out and relax.

Fully-fitted Kitchen, Living & Dining Space

The living area, with a large, stowable table and four seats, boasts plenty of room for eating and relaxing. Its pull-out 70-litre fridge with freezer compartment, twin-hob gas cooker and sink, and built-in storage for camping chairs and table means you can enjoy all your home comforts, without leaving your dog's side.

Built-in Wet Room & External Shower

Its fully-equipped wet room, which includes a shower and toilet, means you never have to leave your dog alone in the campervan to use campsite facilities.

For mucky pups, the Grand California's external shower is perfect for hosing sand or mud off after a long day of exploring, with a temperature control feature that allows your canine chum to leave the ice-cold hose offs behind.

Space For All the Essentials

With easily accessible storage under the rear bed, as well as two lower cabinets and one tall wardrobe, there's more than enough space for the family's essentials, meaning you can pack all your pooch's favourite toys and blankets for the journey.

California Dreamin'

Offering advanced comfort for a great night's sleep, the rear bed comes with plate springs, while integrated mosquito nets and blinds keep the light and critters out for nuisance-free exploring. And, for a truly epic stargazing experience, the Grand California's two skylights allow you to sleep under the stars, all from the comfort of your motorhome bed.

Stress-free Parking


When exploring new destinations with your furry friend, advanced parking assistance systems including Park Assist, Rear Traffic Alert and Trailer Assist, take the stress out of parking up in unfamiliar places.



The Canine Campervan Test



We teamed up with two of the UK's leading dog-fluencers, **@foxredpeggy** and **@hectorthechocolabo** to put the Volkswagen Grand California to the ultimate canine campervan test.

Here's how they got on... 



Safety Tips

For Any Canine Campervan Adventure

Make Sure Your Dog is Comfortable & Secure

Whenever you and your canine chum set off in the campervan, be careful to ensure that they are suitably secured, whether via a seatbelt harness or fixable crate, in case of any sudden stops.

Minimise Distractions While Driving

Ensuring your dog is safely secured will also help to minimise distractions, and allow you to focus on the road.

Encourage Frequent Pit Stops & Hydration Breaks

As always, keeping an eye on your dog and making sure that they are well-hydrated throughout the journey will help to keep your pup happy and healthy.

Avoid Leaving Your Dog in the Vehicle Unattended

If it's essential to leave your dog in the vehicle by themselves, make sure to open the windows to avoid them overheating – especially on a hot summer's day.

Check Your Insurance

Before setting off on your adventure, it is a good idea to check your vehicle's insurance details to find out if they cover travelling with pets inside the vehicle. If a pet is injured inside the vehicle, many will not pay out if lawful travel procedures have not been followed. It's worth taking out dedicated pet insurance to cover any potential incidents.

Consider a Practice Trip

If it's your first time taking your pup on a trip, it can be a good idea to work your way up to longer road trips – particularly if they can be a little nervous!





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