

# 2007: A Vintage Year for DINGHY VEHICLES

MotorHome Magazine's *annual roundup of cars, trucks and SUVs certified for flat towing*



RICH COX/SLIDE ACTION

**T**his year, there truly is something for everyone with regard to dinghy vehicles. Whether you're looking for a full-size truck or SUV, a fuel-sipping economy car or even a hybrid, automakers are offering a wide array of new dinghy-suitable vehicles to meet your needs.

In fact, with a bumper crop of right around 100 new models certified for flat-towing —

from Toyota's new 2,293-pound Yaris to Chevrolet's 6,642-pound Avalanche 1500 4WD — 2007 truly is a vintage year for dinghies!

And, while many are limited to manual transmissions and front-wheel-drive (FWD), there are still several dozen models with an automatic transmission that can be flat-towed — making your travels outside the campground

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## ■ Chevrolet Silverado/GMC Sierra

General Motors' full-size trucks and SUVs are all-new for '07, with a more modern look, revised interiors, bigger brakes and stiffer frames. Buyers have a choice of several engines, including E85 and non-E85 compatible versions, which also employ GM's fuel-saving Active Fuel Management system. According to GM, both its old-style "Classic" versions of the Silverado and Sierra, as well as the all-new models, are towable in 4WD trim. That also holds true for Tahoe, Suburban and Yukon/Yukon XL.

## ■ Dodge Nitro



The all-new Dodge Nitro is designed to inject some life into the midsize SUV segment. The five-passenger SUV has interesting styling, as well as two available V-6 engines, 20-inch chrome-clad aluminum wheels, and performance suspension. A fold-flat first row passenger seat and second row seats, as well as a Load 'N Go slide-out cargo floor, offer a variety of stowage options.

Available in 2WD or 4WD, the 4WD SXT model is towable.

## ■ Jeep Wrangler

Just when you think the tried-and-true Wrangler can't get any better, Jeep ups the ante with even more capability and content. The '07 Wrangler and Wrangler Unlimited feature more interior room, a new 202-hp 3.8-L V-6, a 100-percent stiffer frame, increased ground clearance, bigger wheels and tires, stronger Dana axles, two different transfer cases, new electric locking differentials and an electronic-disconnect front sway bar. Both automatic and manual models are towable.



easier than ever.

As with previous years, we're only listing those vehicles that have been approved by their manufacturers for four-wheels-down towing at a minimum freeway speed of 55 MPH for no less than 200 miles at a time.

That isn't to say that this list documents all dinghy-suitable vehicles. Several companies

offer products designed to make flat-towing a non-certified vehicle possible, ranging from lube pumps for vehicles equipped with FWD and automatic transmissions, to simple driveshaft-disconnect devices for rear-wheel-drive applications. Keep in mind that installing one of these kits may void the vehicle's warranty; however, the manufacturer of the aftermarket product

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## ■ Saturn VUE Green Line Hybrid

After an impressive restyling for 2006, the VUE enters 2007 without significant change — except for the new Green Line hybrid. The first GM vehicle powered by a new, more affordable hybrid system, the Green Line is said to deliver 20-percent better fuel economy, yet the system adds less than \$2,000 to the VUE's base price. The 2.4-L hybrid powertrain is rated at 170 HP, which, according to Saturn, gives the model acceleration better than, or equal to, many non-hybrid SUVs.



## ■ Honda CR-V



The Honda CR-V is a favorite among towables, and this year it's all new. Gone is the squarish styling and swing-out rear door, replaced by contemporary curves and a top-hinged hatch devoid of a spare (now located under the floor). Available in FWD or AWD (both towable), the CR-V also benefits from a new interior and 10 more ponies from its 2.4-L engine. A five-speed automatic is the only transmission offered.

## ■ Hyundai Santa Fe

After seven years in production, the Santa Fe finally gets a makeover. All-new for '07, the Santa Fe boasts a longer wheelbase and is almost seven inches longer than its predecessor — which bumps it up to the midsize class. That translates into more interior room and a full 34 cubic feet of storage space behind the rear seats. Two engines are available, but only the 183-HP 2.7-L, five-speed, 2WD model is towable.



may offer its own warranty to cover potential losses, thereby ensuring peace of mind. Employing a tow dolly is also a viable alternative.

Bear in mind that because much of the information from the manufacturers is preliminary at press time, some of the facts and figures presented here are subject to change. It's important, therefore, that you do some additional research *before* buying any of the vehicles listed in this

guide. Visit the dealer, ask to see a copy of the owner's manual and look in the index under "flat towing" or "recreational towing" to find instructions for towing the vehicle in question. This will not only tell you if the vehicle is, in fact, towable, but what is involved. Some vehicles are very easy to tow, while others may require very specific procedures be followed before/during towing to prevent damage.

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## PASSENGER CARS

Model	Base Curb Weight	Speed/Distance Limits	Towable with Manual Trans.	Towable with Auto Trans.	Mileage City/Hwy.	Approx. Retail Price Range
<b>CHEVROLET</b>						
<b>Cobalt Sedan/Coupe</b>	2,780	65 MPH/None	Yes	Yes	25/34	\$12,975-\$20,695
<b>HHR</b>	3,155	None	Yes	Yes	22/27	\$15,800-\$16,820
<b>Malibu/Malibu Maxx</b>	3,175	65 MPH/None	N/A	Yes	24/35	\$19,800-\$25,200
<b>CHRYSLER</b>						
<b>PT Cruiser</b>	3,058	None	Yes	No	22/29	\$14,485-\$23,645
<b>FORD/MERCURY</b>						
<b>Focus</b>	2,605	None	Yes	No	27/37	\$13,480
<b>Fusion/Milan</b>	3,101	None	Yes	No	23/31	\$17,295
<b>HYUNDAI</b>						
<b>Accent</b>	2,467	None	Yes	No	32/35	\$10,400-\$15,000
<b>Elantra</b>	2,721	None	Yes	No	28/36	\$13,600-\$15,500
<b>Sonata</b>	3,253	None	Yes	No	24/34	\$17,800-\$22,900
<b>Tiburon</b>	2,898	None	Yes	No	24/30	\$16,300-\$20,300
<b>INFINITI</b>						
<b>G35 Sport Sedan</b>	3,497	60 MPH/500 MI <sup>(1)</sup>	Yes	No	18/25	\$31,000-\$33,000
<b>G35 Sport Coupe</b>	3,415	60 MPH/500 MI <sup>(1)</sup>	Yes	No	18/26	\$33,000-\$33,700
<sup>(1)</sup> Idle engine in NEUTRAL for several minutes every 500 miles.						
<b>NISSAN</b>						
<b>350Z</b>	3,215	60 MPH/500 MI <sup>(1)</sup>	Yes	No	20/26	\$27,000-\$39,700
<b>Altima</b>	3,000	60 MPH/500 MI <sup>(1)</sup>	Yes	No	23/29	\$17,700-\$29,700
<b>Maxima</b>	3,450	60 MPH/500 MI <sup>(1)</sup>	Yes	No	20/29	\$27,800-\$30,500
<b>Sentra</b>	2,515	60 MPH/500 MI <sup>(1)</sup>	Yes	No	28/35	\$13,000-\$18,200
<b>Versa</b>	2,722	60 MPH/500 MI <sup>(1)</sup>	Yes	No	30/35	\$12,500-\$17,000
<sup>(1)</sup> Idle engine in NEUTRAL for several minutes every 500 miles.						
<b>PONTIAC</b>						
<b>G6</b>	3,380	65 MPH/None	Yes	Yes	23/33	\$17,710-\$29,215
<b>Vibe</b>	2,700	None	Yes	No	30/36	\$17,215-\$21,000

## ■ Suzuki SX4



Another popular choice with RVers, Suzuki has added a new model to its 2007 lineup: the SX4. Designed for battle in the subcompact market, the SX4 comes standard with six air bags and all-wheel-drive for a base price of \$15,000. A 143-hp 2.0-L engine and five-speed transmission (the automatic isn't towable) deliver 24 mpg city, and 29 mpg highway.

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Model	Base Curb Weight	Speed/Distance Limits	Towable with Manual Trans.	Towable with Auto Trans.	Mileage City/Hwy.	Approx. Retail Price Range
<b>SATURN</b>						
<b>Aura</b>	3,529	65 MPH/None	N/A	Yes	20/30	\$20,595–\$24,595
<b>ION Coupe/Sedan</b>	2,743	65 MPH/None	Yes	Yes	26/35	\$12,000–\$21,500
<b>SCION</b>						
<b>xA</b>	2,340	None	Yes	No	22/29	\$12,730
<b>xB</b>	2,415	None	Yes	No	31/34	\$14,030
<b>tC</b>	2,905	None	Yes	No	32/37	\$15,000–\$16,400
<b>SUBARU</b>						
<b>Impreza 2.5i Sedan/ Sport Wagon/ Outback Sport</b>	3,016	None	Yes	No	22/29	\$18,200–\$32,500
<b>Legacy Sedan/ Wagon</b>	3,200	None	Yes	No	23/28	\$20,495–\$30,895
<b>Outback Sedan/ Wagon</b>	3,320	None	Yes	No	23/28	\$26,395–\$33,495
<b>SUZUKI</b>						
<b>Aerio Sedan</b> <sup>(1)</sup>	2,660	55 MPH/200 MI	Yes	No	25/31	\$14,299
<b>SX4</b> <sup>(2)</sup>	2,849	55 MPH/200 MI	Yes	No	23/28	\$14,999
<sup>(1)</sup> Only the FWD model can be towed.						
<sup>(2)</sup> Console-mounted selector must be in the 2WD position.						
<b>TOYOTA</b>						
<b>Camry</b>	3,285	None	Yes	No	24/34	\$18,270–\$20,790
<b>Camry Solara</b>	3,175	None	Yes	No	24/33	\$19,930–\$22,220
<b>Corolla</b>	2,530	None	Yes	No	32/41	\$14,005–\$15,215
<b>Corolla Matrix</b>	2,679	None	Yes	No	30/36	\$15,100–\$16,590
<b>Yaris</b>	2,293	None	Yes	No	34/40	\$10,950–\$13,325

### ■ Nissan Versa

Subcompacts are hot — and Nissan's entry into the market for '07 is its new Versa. Nissan claims that the five-door hatchback Versa is not only the most powerful subcompact (122-hp four-cylinder engine), but the roomiest in class. The base 1.8S model comes with air conditioning, 60/40 split-folding rear seatback, AM/FM/CD audio system and side/side curtain air bags — all for a base price of \$12,450. It's towable with a manual transmission only.



### ■ Toyota Yaris

Toyota's small car with a funny name is a cuter replacement for the Echo, which suffered from slow sales. Powered by a 1.5-L four-cylinder engine, the Yaris is one of the most economical, non-hybrid alternatives, delivering an EPA estimated 34 MPG city, 40 MPG highway. It's available in two models and three trim levels; manual transmission versions are dinghy-certified.

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## Trucks/SUVs

Model	Base Curb Weight	Speed/Distance Limits	Towable with Manual Trans.	Towable with Auto Trans.	Mileage City/Hwy.	Approx. Retail Price Range
<b>CHEVROLET/GMC</b>						
<b>Avalanche 1500 2WD</b>	5,678	None	N/A	Yes	13/17	\$32,690
<b>Avalanche 1500 4WD</b>	6,642	None	N/A	Yes	NR	\$40,125
<b>Colorado/Canyon 4WD</b>	3,375	None	Yes	Yes	20/26	\$13,810–\$24,900
<b>Silverado/Sierra Classic 1500 4WD</b>	4,508	None	Yes	Yes	15/18	\$21,400–\$39,500
<b>Silverado/Sierra Classic 2500 4WD</b>	5,398	None	Yes	Yes	NR	\$28,900–\$40,300
<b>Suburban/Yukon XL 1500 4WD</b>	5,219	None	N/A	Yes	15/21	\$37,365–\$41,600
<b>Suburban/Yukon XL 2500 4WD</b>	5,796	None	N/A	Yes	NR	\$42,800
<b>Tahoe/Yukon 4WD</b>	4,594	None	N/A	Yes	16/22	\$34,320–\$44,480
<b>TrailBlazer/Envoy 4WD</b>	4,594	None	N/A	Yes	16/21	\$25,440–\$35,280
<b>DODGE</b>						
<b>Dakota 4WD</b>	4,518	None	Yes	Yes	15/19	\$23,855–\$28,425
<b>Durango 4WD</b>	5,133	None	N/A	Yes	13/18	\$29,855–\$36,545
<b>Nitro SXT 4WD</b>	4,105	None	Yes	Yes	17/23	\$19,885–\$27,630
<b>Ram 4WD</b>	5,450	None	Yes	Yes	14/18	\$26,315–\$28,825
<b>FORD/MAZDA/MERCURY</b>						
<b>Escape I-4/Tribute</b>	3,156	70 MPH/None	Yes	No	24/29	\$19,780–\$20,705
<b>Escape/Mariner Hybrid</b>	3,594	75 MPH/None	N/A	Yes	36/31	\$25,655
<b>Explorer/Mountaineer 4WD V-6</b>	4,615	None	N/A	Yes <sup>(e)</sup>	15/20	\$27,595–\$33,695
<b>Explorer/Mountaineer 4WD V-8</b>	4,706	None	N/A	Yes <sup>(f)</sup>	14/20	\$28,795–\$34,895
<b>F-150 V-6</b>	4,615	None	Yes <sup>(c)</sup>	No	16/21	\$18,220
<b>F-150 4WD <sup>(g)</sup></b>	5,004	55 MPH/None	N/A	Yes <sup>(b,h)</sup>	15/19	\$23,065
<b>F250/F350</b>	5,504	None	Yes <sup>(a,b,c)</sup>	Yes <sup>(b,h)</sup>	N/A	\$22,530
<b>Ranger/B2300</b>	3,012	55 MPH/None	Yes <sup>(a,b,c)</sup>	Yes <sup>(d)</sup>	24/29	\$13,860–\$21,430
<b>Sport Trac 4WD V-6</b>	4,687	None	N/A	Yes <sup>(e)</sup>	15/20	\$26,780
<b>Sport Trac 4WD V-8</b>	4,793	None	N/A	Yes <sup>(f)</sup>	14/20	\$27,980
<sup>(a)</sup> Electronic shift-on-the-fly rotary control in 2-high position and transmission in NEUTRAL (4x4 only).						
<sup>(b)</sup> Manual transfer case shifted into NEUTRAL (4x4 only).						
<sup>(c)</sup> Manual transmission in NEUTRAL (4x2 or 4x4).						
<sup>(d)</sup> Only 4x4 with dealer-installed neutral tow kit, part # 3L2Z-7H332-AA.						
<sup>(e)</sup> Only 4x4 with dealer-installed neutral tow kit, part # 1L2Z-7H332-AB.						
<sup>(f)</sup> Only 4x4 with dealer-installed neutral tow kit, part # 6L2Z-7H332-A.						
<sup>(g)</sup> Excludes Harley-Davidson model.						
<sup>(h)</sup> 4x4 with manual transfer case only (not electronic shift-on-the-fly).						
<b>HONDA</b>						
<b>CR-V FWD/AWD</b>	3,400	65 MPH/None	N/A	Yes <sup>(1)</sup>	23/29	\$20,400–\$25,400
<sup>(1)</sup> Recirculate transmission fluid every eight towing hours following the procedure in the vehicle owner's manual.						
<b>HUMMER</b>						
<b>H2</b>	6,400	None	N/A	Yes	NR	\$53,000
<b>H2 SUT</b>	6,400	None	N/A	Yes	NR	\$53,000
<b>H3</b>	4,700	None	Yes	Yes	15/20	\$29,500

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## Trucks/SUVs

Model	Base Curb Weight	Speed/Distance Limits	Towable with Manual Trans.	Towable with Auto Trans.	Mileage City/Hwy.	Approx. Retail Price Range
<b>HYUNDAI</b>						
<b>Tucson 2WD</b>	3,240	Legal/None	Yes	No	22/27	\$17,500–\$19,000
<b>Santa Fe 2WD</b>	3,727	Legal/None	Yes	No	21/26	\$21,000–\$28,000
<b>ISUZU</b>						
<b>Ascender 4WD</b>	4,594	None	N/A	Yes	15/21	\$27,959–\$30,754
<b>i370 4WD</b>	4,093	None	N/A	Yes	16/22	\$27,358–\$29,362
<b>JEEP</b>						
<b>Commander Sport</b> <sup>(1)</sup>	4,986	None	N/A	Yes	15/19	\$27,540–\$43,850
<b>Grand Cherokee</b>						
<b>Laredo 4WD</b> <sup>(1)</sup>	4,630	None	N/A	Yes	15/20	\$27,540–\$42,565
<b>Liberty Sport 4WD</b>	4,044	None	Yes	Yes	20/24	\$21,290–\$26,385
<b>Wrangler/</b>						
<b>Wrangler Unlimited</b>	3,760	None	Yes	Yes	17/19	\$18,765–\$22,410
<sup>(1)</sup> With 4.7-L engine and NV245 transfer case (Quadra-Trac II/Quadra-Drive II option).						
<b>NISSAN</b>						
<b>Frontier 2WD</b>	3,675	60 MPH/500 MI <sup>(1)</sup>	Yes	No	22/25	\$15,600–\$18,500
<b>Frontier 4WD</b>	4,307	60 MPH/500 MI <sup>(1)</sup>	Yes	No	15/20	\$21,200–\$24,800
<b>Xterra 2WD</b>	4,081	60 MPH/500 MI <sup>(1)</sup>	Yes	No	17/22	\$20,800–\$23,200
<b>Xterra 4WD</b>	4,290	60 MPH/500 MI <sup>(1)</sup>	Yes	No	16/21	\$22,900–\$25,500
<sup>(1)</sup> Idle engine in NEUTRAL for several minutes every 500 miles.						
<b>SATURN</b>						
<b>VUE</b>	3,207	65 MPH/None	Yes	Yes	20/28	\$17,995–\$22,995
<b>VUE HYBRID</b>	3,466	65 MPH/None	N/A	Yes	27/32	\$22,995
<b>SUBARU</b>						
<b>Baja</b>	3,610	None	Yes	No	21/27	\$22,200–\$24,400
<b>Forester 2.5X</b>	3,090	None	Yes	No	22/29	\$21,195–\$27,895
<b>SUZUKI</b>						
<b>Grand Vitara 4WD</b> <sup>(3)</sup>	3,582	55 MPH/None	Yes	Yes	19/23	\$20,899–\$24,799

<sup>(3)</sup> Only Grand Vitara models fitted with 4WD are recommended for flat-towing.

Automatic transmission 4WD models: flat tow with transfer case in NEUTRAL and transmission in PARK.

Manual transmission 4WD models: flat-tow with transfer case in NEUTRAL and transmission in SECOND GEAR and the steering wheel lock must be in the unlocked position.

## ■ Ford Escape Hybrid



**Y**ou've probably known for years that Ford's Escape is towable — but this year the options get even more interesting with the addition of the Escape Hybrid. Powered by a 133-HP 2.3-L four-cylinder engine and a 70 kW electric motor (equivalent to 94 HP, according to Ford), the Escape Hybrid is a "full" hybrid, meaning it can run on the engine, electric battery power, or both. Claimed to be the cleanest, most efficient small SUV in the world, the Escape Hybrid can travel 400-to-500 miles in city driving conditions on one tank of gas. \*