

ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEMS

In today's modern RV there are many different types of entertainment systems offered. Trying to run them can be like trying to program an old-style VCR. In this article we will try to explain how they are set up and the basic operation of select systems. In addition, we will provide you with some information on how they are wired, where the wires go, and what the wires do. We will then finish with a section on installing your satellite dish receiver.

In this day and age all of our motor homes in some way, shape or form have the ability to receive signals from an antenna, VCR, cable TV connection or satellite dish. These signals can and will go through a number of different paths to get to the ultimate destination, the television.

The most commonly used signal, which comes from the antenna, will always go to the booster before going out to the TV or switching box. The cable signal, if one is hooked up to cable TV, will also go to the booster or switching box before it reaches the TV. The satellite signal is a little different in that it must go through the satellite dish receiver before going to either the booster or switching box.

The most basic system is going to have an antenna, booster, cable input and TV. These systems are very simple to run and only require one to turn the booster and the television. In addition, you may also have to rotate the antenna to get a good signal. Remember that if you are using the cable supplied by the park you are staying in, you will want to keep the booster turned off.

As vehicles get larger and the number of different options for the entertainment system grows, so does the complexity of their operation. The Video Control Center, otherwise known as the switching box, may look somewhat intimidating but is very easy to use. There are three different sets of buttons that control which signal goes to the front TV, VCR or rear TV and exterior entertainment center. Remember you can select a different source for each TV or VCR and not have to worry about disrupting the signal for another item. For example: if one wanted to watch a taped movie in the bedroom, while another watched a baseball game which is coming through the dish, you simply push the VCR button in the series of buttons for the rear TV and your movie will be playing on Channel 3 or 4 depending on how the VCR is set. To receive the ballgame, push the sat. button for the front TV and tune to the dish channel that is carrying the game.

Now, just how does all of this happen? Throughout the coach there are many different coaxial cables that take the signal to and from the various components. Winnebago uses a series of coded wires to identify their function. Each wire is either gray or cream in color and will have a colored band around it near the connector. We are currently using 5 different colored bands for the following functions:

- Blue-Input from TV antenna
- Red-Input from cable TV hook up
- Orange-Input from satellite
- Green-Output from splitter to rear TV hook up
- Yellow-Output from splitter to Exterior Ent. Center

The final topic that we would like to address is the connection of a satellite dish receiver. If you are using a dish that is mounted on a tripod, the easiest way to hook into the system is to connect the cable TV input that is normally located in the service center. Once you have connected your dish, you will unhook the coax with the red band, at either the booster or switching box if so equipped. Then connect this wire to the satellite-input port on the back of the satellite dish receiver. The final step is to route a cable from the satellite output port back to where you originally disconnect the red-banded coax.

If your vehicle has been equipped with a factory installed dish or you have had one installed on the roof, you will need to locate and utilize the orange-banded cable. Connect this cable to satellite input port on the back of your receiver. You will then need to run a cable from the satellite output port to either the satellite or aux. connection on the back of your switching box. If you do not have a switching box you will have to unhook the coax with the red band at your booster and connect it to the secondary input on the back of the satellite dish receiver. Then, simply run a cable from the receiver output port back to the booster.

Remember that when using any type of satellite dish you will have to adjust it to obtain the maximum signal strength available. If all of this seems a little confusing, consult the following diagrams.



