

ATV Safety

Leader's Guide

Protective Gear

Complete protection is not possible, but the appropriate protective clothing can reduce the chance of injury while riding an ATV. A helmet is the most important piece of safety gear, because it can prevent serious head injuries by resisting penetration and absorbing shock. When you buy a helmet you should look for a sticker from one or more of these agencies: Department of Transportation (DOT), Snell Memorial Foundation, or American National Standards Institute (ANSI). These groups have developed testing procedures to evaluate helmets for their protective qualities. Athletic headgear is not adequate for ATV riding.

Other types of safety gear can offer extra protection while you are riding an ATV. Eye protection, such as goggles or a face shield, can prevent you from getting hit in the eyes, dirt in the eyes, and blinding sun or reflections. Off-road style gloves offer your hands more comfort and can keep them from getting sore or cold. Boots should be low-heeled to prevent your feet from slipping off the footrests and over-the-calf for extra protection. Long sleeved shirts and long pants can protect your skin from scratches while riding an ATV.

Pre start up inspections

Always do a pre-ride inspection. This can prevent an injury and can keep you from being stranded. It also ensures that you will get better performance from your ATV. Off-road riding is hard on an ATV, so it is especially important that you do routine maintenance. You should check the tires and wheels, the controls, the lights and switches and the chain/driveshaft and chassis. Also be sure you have an adequate tool kit in case you encounter any mechanical problems out in the field.

Starting the ATV (follow the BONE-C Startup)

- **B**- Brake on
- **O**- Fuel valve on & Ignition on
- **N**- Shift lever in Neutral
- **E**- Engine stop switch on
- **C**- Choke on

Turning

- Turn handle bars while looking in the direction of the turn
- Move body weight forward and to the inside of the turn

Riding Uphill

- Body weight forward
- Feet on foot rests
- Low enough gear to maintain forward momentum

Riding Downhill

- Pick the straight path down
- Shift to low enough gear to engage engine braking
- Clutch out
- Gradual braking
- Look ahead, but not too far

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Traversing

- Feet on footrest
- Lean upper body uphill
- Turn front wheels uphill slightly to maintain track on soft terrain
- If ATV starts to tip, turn wheels downhill slightly if possible

How to Ride Over Obstacles

Approach to obstacles

- As close to 90 degrees to the object as possible
- Adjust speed to maintain momentum
- Weight on footrest not handlebars

On contact to obstacle

- Body weight slightly back
- Elbows and knees slightly bent
- Apply small amount of throttle

As front wheels clear

- Lean forward
- Release throttle

As rear wheels clear

- Maintain forward posture
- Allow rear wheel to roll over obstacle

Proper training and continued practice are the best way to develop the skills you need to ride safely under all conditions. The more skilled you become, the more you will enjoy using your ATV whether you use it for work or recreation.

Remember!!!

- **Never ride beyond your own capabilities or that of your ATV**
- **Don't go up a steep hill your not willing to come back down**
- **If you cannot avoid a tip, dismount on the uphill side**