

Driving Tips

The following pages contain practical tips on basic off-highway operation.

Check Out Your Vehicle

Driving off-highway can be hard on a vehicle. Before you leave the pavement, be sure all scheduled maintenance and service has been done, and that you have inspected your vehicle. Pay special attention to the condition of the tires, and use a gauge to check the tire pressures.

After you return to the pavement, carefully inspect your vehicle to make sure there is no damage that could make driving it unsafe. Check the tires for damage and for proper pressure.

Controlling Speed

Off-highway, the general rule is to keep your speed low. Of course, you'll need enough speed to keep moving forward. But at higher speeds, you have less time to assess conditions and make good decisions. There's also a greater chance of sliding if you brake or turn too quickly on wet soil, gravel, or ice. In any situation, never go faster than conditions allow.

Accelerating and Braking

For better traction on all surfaces, accelerate slowly and gradually build up speed. If you try to start too fast on wet soil, mud, snow, or ice, you might not have enough traction to get underway. You may even dig yourself into a hole.

Generally, the best off-pavement braking technique is to gently depress the brake pedal, then increase pressure as more braking is needed. Avoid hard braking. Keep in mind that you will usually need more time and distance to brake to a stop on unpaved surfaces.

Test your brakes from time to time to make sure they are operating properly. This will also give you a feel for how much traction you have on a given surface.

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