

Reducing The Risk Of An ATV Accident

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They can be fun to ride, as long as it's done safely.

All-terrain vehicles (ATVs) are often seen in two places:

1. A big backyard, where they're fun to drive around and get a little muddy.
2. A farm, where they're used to haul small loads and get people from place to place quickly.

Of course, they're found many other places too, like forests, parks, and construction sites. No matter where an ATV is used, the guidelines for using it safely remain the same.

A lot of the time, an ATV isn't too expensive for the amount of use it will ultimately get. But it needs to be used correctly and safely. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) reports that about 650 deaths and 100,000 injuries happen each year in the U.S. related to ATVs.



With powerful engines and lightweight frames, ATVs can easily flip or go out of control without a skilled driver. The CPSC has guidelines in place to safely use an ATV, whether it's for fun or for work.

Engine size

An ATV engine's size helps determine who should be allowed to control the vehicle — a bigger size needs a firmer hand.

- The driver should be at least 12 years old on an ATV with an engine size of 70cc to 90cc.
- The driver should be at least 16 years old on an ATV with a larger engine size.

Safety equipment

PPE, or personal protective equipment, is essential to riding safely. Helmets and eye protection are recommended, as is wearing a long-sleeve shirt and long pants. It may seem like a lot of extra effort for a few

brief rides, but using a vehicle without appropriate protection can cause injury or even death.

Off-road

If an ATV is used to travel back and forth over the same path, keep that path clear. Move away any obstacle the ATV might drive over, and make it as straight a path as possible, to avoid potentially flipping when making a turn. Despite the name, an all-terrain vehicle isn't really designed for traveling on paved roads, or for keeping up with other kinds of traffic.

Carrying a load

Like any other vehicle, ATVs have a weight limit for hauling and towing. Make sure you're not exceeding that limit. That includes passengers — and you should never let someone ride along on an ATV unless the manufacturer built a second seat on the vehicle.

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