

Driving Guidelines

Surface Considerations

The kind of surface you drive on can have important effects on how your vehicle handles. For example, on loose or soft surfaces you'll need more time and distance to accelerate, turn, or brake to a stop.

Avoid any sudden sharp turn, particularly on pavement and other hard surfaces. And always slow down after moving from one type of surface to another until you get accustomed to how your vehicle handles.

Reading the Terrain

Because visual information comes in unpredictable ways off-road, you need to stay alert, constantly survey the terrain, and go slow enough to analyze situations and make good decisions.

As your eyes search the terrain ahead, watch for changes in surface conditions. One minute you can be on firm soil and the next in soft sand or deep mud. A path can quickly change from level to bumpy, slope at a dangerous angle, or disappear in a drop-off. Always keep your eyes open for holes, washouts, or obstacles that could upset or damage the vehicle.

Of course if you cannot see clearly, due to tall grass for example, stop safely, get out of the vehicle, and survey the area for a safe route.

Controlling Speed

Whether you travel off-road or on pavement, the general rule is to keep your speed low. Of course, you'll need enough speed to keep moving forward, but too much speed leads to problems.

When driving off-road at higher speeds, you have less time to read the terrain and make good decisions. The drive can also be more bumpy, and there's a greater chance of the vehicle sliding if you brake or turn quickly on wet soil, gravel, or another slippery surface. Never go faster than conditions allow.