

ATV Safety Tips You Can't Ignore

Gearing up for fun on an ATV? Before you hit the trail, make sure you're protected with the proper safety equipment.

According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, four of every ten people hospitalized with injuries from ATV misuse are under the age of sixteen. In fact, in 1993 the Department of Health estimated that fifty people were seriously wounded from utility ATV related accidents. This number includes recreational riding, and does not take into consideration the number of agriculture-related ATV accidents.

ATV riding looks like a lot of fun, but why are there so many ATV related accidents? While many use these off-road four-wheeled machines as utility vehicles, they have become quite popular as recreational vehicles. The lack of understanding of safety procedures and sheer misuse attributes to the large number of accidents. On the other hand, professionals who use sport ATVs report fewer accidents. These trained riders know the dangers, and play by the rules.

If you ride an ATV, you need to take precautions to ensure that you don't become another Department of Health statistic. Using common sense and riding responsibly is the best way to stay safe and have fun. Know the safety rules, and wear good quality protective gear.

Protecting Yourself on an ATV

Body ProtectionIt's always a good idea to wear full body protection while driving or riding on an ATV, even if you're only going a short distance. Full body gear protects you from head to toe. Make sure that you have a CSA-approved ATV helmet, plus goggles, gloves, boots and a body suit. Those who race ATVs need to give special consideration to their safety gear, as they'll be traveling through some pretty rough terrain and facing treacherous challenges. Even the tiniest stone or tree branch can cause blindness, and the right turn at the wrong time can lead to a rollover.

There are proper ATV suits available on the market, but any long sleeve jacket and long tight pants can provide sufficient body protection. Choose durable fabrics, and avoid those materials that can be easily snagged with twigs or debris. Wear boots and gloves at all times, and consider wearing shin guards or padded clothing for complete safety protection.

Head ProtectionHead injury lasts forever, and no one is immune from suffering this type of injury. A certified helmet is the single most important piece of safety equipment. Choose a helmet that is specifically designed for ATV use, as it will provide the proper amount of face protection. Aside from keeping you safe from injury in the event of a crash, face protectors shield you from being hurt by flying debris. This is a major concern, particularly for those who race ATVs. Again, a single fall can result in paralysis and even death. Do not ride an ATV without a proper helmet.

Eye ProtectionMost ATV helmets have clear plastic face shields designed to protect the eyes. If your helmet does not provide eye protection, be sure to invest in a pair of good quality goggles, or glasses with hard lenses. Do not wear glasses with regular lenses, as these can easily shatter when struck by a loose stone.

Proper ATV gear is available at specialty shops. Dicez.com has our own discount ATV gear store. If you'd like to view other options online, check ridegear.com. Ride Gear caters to the needs of all sorts of riders. From dirt bikes to watercrafts to snowmobiles, they have all the protection an extreme rider needs. There is a product section dedicated solely to the needs of ATV riders, including safety gear and machine upgrades.

Have fun on your ATV, but play it safe. Don't become another statistic in the rising number of ATV related accident. See a professional outfitter and protect yourself before you hit the trails.