

RIDERS

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Children, youth, and their parent or guardian* must have a safety training certificate by 2008 to ride an OHV. Most other riders need a certificate by 2012. Some riders are exempt.
See page → 4.

Courses are available for ATVs, snowmobiles, and off-road motorcycles. You need a certificate for each type of OHV you drive.

 If you supervise a child or youth as a parent or guardian* you must both pass a safety training course.

There are two ways to get a certificate:

1 Pass a safety training course.
The course combines practice and theory.

A safety training course teaches rules and ethics plus these skills:

- safe driving
 - starting and stopping
 - turning
 - riding over obstacles
 - reading the terrain
 - riding on hills
- supervising children and youth under age 16 as they drive an OHV
- using proper safety equipment
- knowing where to drive and what places to avoid
 - sensitive areas and your environmental responsibilities
 - highways and roads
 - public and private land
- recognizing how illegal driving can cause harm
- driving the class of OHV you plan to drive

2 Pass a safety training test.
The test is based on the information in this handbook. You can take the test if you are 16 or older and have a valid driver's licence*.



Schedule for Getting a Safety Training Certificate

Age group	OHV type	What you need		Deadline
		Safety Training Course	Test	
Under 14	ATV snowmobile off-road motorcycle	  		April 1, 2008 October 1, 2008 October 1, 2008
14–15	All OHVs	  		October 1, 2008
 Parents and guardians of children and youth	All OHVs	  		October 1, 2008
16+	All OHVs	  		April 1, 2012

There is a fee for taking the course or writing the test.

To find out when and where you can get a safety training certificate

OR if you can't find yourself on this chart

Call → **1-877-OHV-LINE** or **1-877-648-5463** Ask to speak to a law enforcement officer.

Click → **www.gov.ns.ca/natr/ohv/allterrainvehicle.asp**

Click → **www.gov.ns.ca/natr/ohv/offroadmotorcycle.asp**

Click → **www.gov.ns.ca/natr/ohv/snowvehicle.asp**

EXCEPTIONS for experienced riders

People who do NOT have to take a safety training course or pass a safety training test

- You were born before April 1, 1987.
AND
- You bought your OHV before April 1, 2006.
AND
- You registered your OHV before September 30, 2007.
AND
- You have a valid driver's licence*.
AND
- You are NOT a parent or guardian* supervising a child or youth.

* If you are exempt, your spouse* is also exempt if they were born before April 1, 1987, AND they have a valid driver's licence*.

EXCEPTIONS for work

- You must drive an OHV for your work.
AND
Your employer follows the Occupational Health and Safety Act
AND
provides OHV training.

OR

- You are a farmer, fishery or forestry worker, or any other self-employed person who drives an OHV for work.
- * These exceptions do NOT apply to guides.
- * These exceptions apply ONLY while you are driving for work.

OTHER EXCEPTIONS

- You can prove that you passed a Canada Safety Council OHV Course in 1991 or later for the class of OHV you drive.
- You drive a golf cart on a golf course.



You lose your exception if you violate the act or lose your driver's licence*. This means you will now need training.

☑ Children between the ages of 6 and 15 can drive any type of OHV when they are supervised* by a parent or guardian*. Children must drive in appropriate areas. See page → 7.

Both the adult and the child must have a safety training certificate

* There is no provision for a child under 6 to drive an OHV.

IS YOUR CHILD READY TO RIDE?

Can your child do these kinds of activities well?

physical ability

- skate
- skateboard
- ride a bicycle
- throw and catch a ball

mental ability

- make good decisions
- listen and follow instructions

tip! Your child needs good vision and good depth perception to drive an OHV.



ARE YOU READY TO SUPERVISE YOUR CHILD?

You are the teacher, coach, and safety supervisor. Here's what you need to do:

- Make sure your child's OHV is the right size.

Here are the size requirements for ATVs in Nova Scotia:



Age	ATV Engine Size
6–11	less than 70 cc
12–15	70–90 cc
16+	more than 90 cc

tip! 

For snowmobiles and off-road motorcycles, check with the manufacturer for their size recommendations.

 If your child is too big for the ATV recommended for their age group, put off having them drive the larger ATV until they are old enough.

- Take a safety training course. Your child needs one too. See page → 3.
- Wear personal safety gear. See pages → 13–15.
- Make sure you're comfortable handling the OHV and using the proper riding techniques.
- Know the maintenance requirements for your child's OHV—check the owner's manual.
- Help your child put on their personal safety gear to make sure it fits.
- Drive close to your child so that you can always see them.
- Make sure your child knows the direction you are travelling.
- Drive slowly enough that your child can drive safely.
- Keep trips short.
- Tell your child to STOP, STAY, and WAIT with the OHV if they realize they are alone on the trail.
- Stop often to check on your child.

tip!  Read everything that comes with your child's OHV. That includes hang tags and labels. Read them with your child.

tip!  Teach your child about OHV laws and regulations in this handbook.

 If you are 13 or younger, the only place you can ride an ATV in Nova Scotia is on an approved closed course*.

Click → www.gov.ns.ca/natr/ohv/courses.asp

RIDING CONDITIONS

Children 13 and younger

Where can you drive?

			
Closed Course	✓	✓	✓
Private Land		✓	✓
Designated Trail			✓

EXCEPTION

You may drive outside a closed course* when supervised by your instructor during safety training.

The conditions

- Follow course rules when you drive on closed courses*.
- Make sure your parent or guardian* can see you.
- Show proof that you and the parent or guardian* who is supervising you have both passed the training course that is approved for your OHV.
- Drive the right size OHV for your age, size, and ability. See page → 6.
- Wear your personal safety gear. See pages → 13–15.



Youth aged 14 and 15

Where can you drive?

You can drive anywhere your parent or guardian* is allowed to ride as long as they can see you.

See pages → 46–58.

The conditions

- Follow course rules when you drive on closed courses*.
- Make sure your parent or guardian* can see you.
- Show proof that you and the parent or guardian* who is supervising you have both passed the training course that is approved for your OHV.
- Drive the right size OHV for your age, size, and ability.
See page → 6.
- Wear your personal safety gear.
See pages → 13–15.

There are fines for not following the safety rules for children and youth.



Drivers aged 16 and older

- You must complete the appropriate safety training program.
- You must not let anyone under 16 drive the OHV.
- You must follow the regulations.

There are two ways to get a safety training certificate:

- Pass a safety training course.
- Pass a safety training test.

The test is based on the information in this handbook. You can take the test if you are 16 or older and have a valid driver's licence*.

THE BEST FIT GIVES YOU THE BEST RIDE

Driving with a disability?

You can adapt your OHV.

Check with an occupational therapist to find how to make your OHV work better for you.

ATV Fit

knee to hip horizontal,
feet flat on footrests,
toes pointed forward

elbows just past
90 degrees with hands
on handlebars



- thumb can work throttle easily
- straighten your fingers—the first joint from the tip of your middle finger should reach past the brake lever
- thumb should reach the emergency stop switch
- * Use same position for left side clutch if you have one.



Off-road motorcycle Fit

knee to hip horizontal

elbows just past 90 degrees
with hands on handlebars
lets you keep your balance
when turning



- hand can work throttle easily
- straighten your fingers—the first joint from the tip of your middle finger should reach past the brake lever
- thumb should reach the emergency stop switch
- * Use same position for left side clutch if you have one.

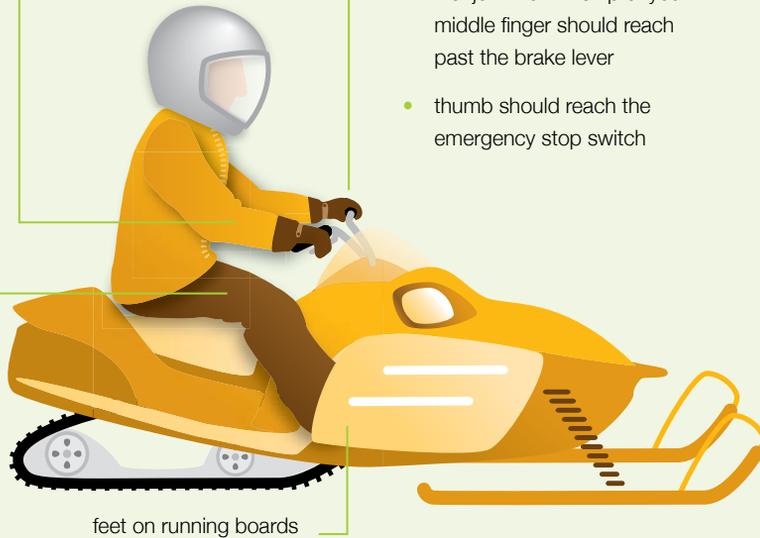
Snowmobile Fit

knee to hip horizontal,
feet flat on running boards,
toes pointed forward

elbows just past
90 degrees with hands
on handlebars



- thumb can work throttle easily
- straighten your fingers—the first joint from the tip of your middle finger should reach past the brake lever
- thumb should reach the emergency stop switch



feet on running boards

BE READY WHEN THE SEASON STARTS

- Read the owner's manual for your OHV.
- Have your OHV serviced by a qualified person if you can't do it yourself.
- Make sure you are in good physical condition.
- Make sure you have permission to ride where you want to ride. Check to make sure it has not been withdrawn.
- Contact your local OHV club or the provincial association for trail information.

Become a Trail Warden

Members of OHV clubs can volunteer to become Trail Wardens or Citizens on Patrol—Off Road. These volunteers are on the lookout for unsafe trail conditions and other problems, and will report them to a law enforcement officer.

To learn more about Trail Wardens or Citizens on Patrol—Off Road, contact the provincial association for your OHV.



**All Terrain Vehicle
Association
of Nova Scotia**
www.atvans.org
1-877-288-4244



**Snowmobilers
Association
of Nova Scotia**
www.snowmobilersns.com
902-425-5450 ext.324



**Nova Scotia Off Road
Riders Association**
www.offroadriders.ca

Why join an OHV club?

- Become part of a group that shares your interests and passions.
- Help drive public policy.
- Help educate the public.
- Raise money for charity.
- Build, maintain, and operate trails.

WHAT TO WEAR

The well-dressed rider

You need to be able to move easily in your gear.

Motorized vehicle **helmets** must have one of these labels

- DOT
- SNELL
- BSI
- CSA

and should be fastened and fit snugly.

Riders on closed courses* must wear whatever gear the course requires.





For **cold weather** you may need more gear

- insulated gloves or mitts that let you move your thumbs and fingers easily
- heated handgrips
- layers of clothing—wear something next to your skin that will wick away moisture
- neck protection
- an insulated jacket that is waterproof and wind resistant
- socks that still keep your feet warm if they get wet

Some snowsuits keep you afloat if you fall through ice. If you travel on ice, be cautious and be prepared to fall through.

See pages → 26 and 30.

Wear these for extra protection

- 1 shoulder pads
- 2 chest protector
- 3 elbow pads
- 4 shin guards
- 5 knee pads



Wear a mouth and chin protector if you use a three-quarter open face helmet.



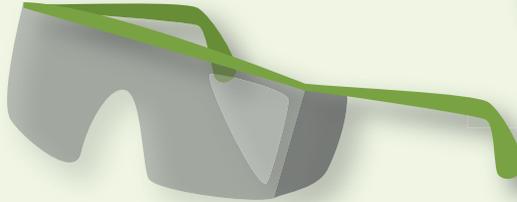
Good boots
keep your feet warm AND keep them on the footrests.

Eye protection

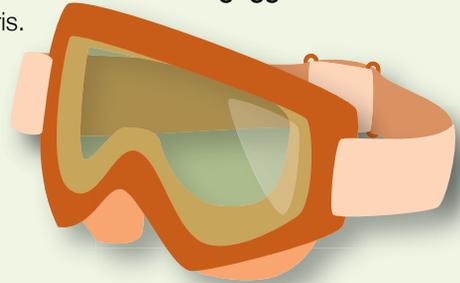
tip! Protect your eyes—you can get hit in the face with bugs, branches, stones, ice, and other objects or debris.

Eye wear should be marked with VESC8(V-8) OR z87.1

safety glasses



goggles



The colour of your eye protection depends on the time day and weather



Sunny Day

  grey or dark green



Cloudy Day or Late Afternoon

  yellow or amber



Night

 clear

face shield



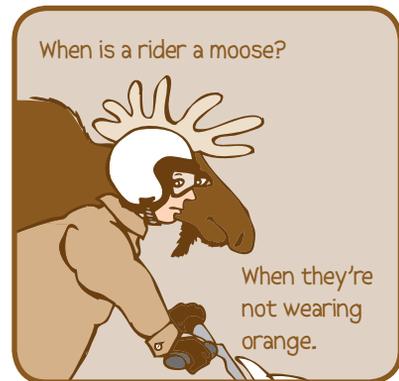
WHAT TO TAKE

- whistle
- water
- waterproof map or trail guide
- compass and GPS if you have one and know how to use it
- waterproof matches or lighter
- documents
 - personal identification
 - OHV permit
 - insurance card
 - OHV safety training wallet card
 - valid driver's licence*
 - written permission to drive on private property, see page → 48
 - trail permit, see page → 47
- food
- rain gear
- basic wilderness first aid kit
 - adhesive tape and gauze
 - antiseptic wipes
 - elastic roller bandage
 - tweezers
 - disposable gloves
 - triangular bandages
 - safety pins
 - very strong scissors
 - emergency blanket
 - resuscitation mask
- basic tool kit
 - wrenches for your OHV
 - tire irons
 - spare front tube
 - compressor or pump
 - tire patch and glue
 - small socket set
 - allen keys
 - knife, or multitool with pliers, screwdriver with various tips
 - galvanized wire
 - spark plug wrench and extra spark plugs
 - duct tape
 - fan belt
 - zip ties

tip! Carry any personal medications that you may need like an Epi-pen, pain medication, or anti-histamines. Make sure someone else in the group knows why you need it and how to give it to you. Look for words like these on any medicine you take. They tell you if it's risky to drive.

- drowsiness
- driving
- operating machinery
- performing tasks requiring mental alertness

* Wear hunter orange during hunting season, September through December, even if you are not hunting.



You may also want to carry these

- money
- signal flares in waterproof container
- cell phone, satellite phone, or VHF/UHF radio
- toilet paper in waterproof container
- bug repellent
- sunscreen
- tow strap or rope
- flashlight
- hatchet
- change of clothes
- water purification pump or tablets
- biodegradable marking tape in waterproof container
- jumper cables
- spare vehicle bulbs in crushproof container
- spare fuel
- small ice picks, see page → 30
- antifreeze

tip! Use saddle bags or a backpack, or a storage box for extra storage space. Carry breakables away from your body.

PRACTISE YOUR RIDING SKILLS

Go out with a buddy and ride. Find an easy trail—it's best if it has a small hill.

- Inspect your OHV.
See page → 37.
- Get on your OHV from the left.
- Test the brakes and other controls.
- Start the engine.
- Shift the gears.
- Play with your centre of gravity—lean, shift your weight, swerve.
- Try some turns—turn wide, turn sharp.
- Try parking.

Comfortable with these?

- See what you can do on the hill. Drive up, drive down, drive across.



- Drive over bumps and obstacles.

tip! When you're driving on a hill, lean uphill.

tip! Read your owner's manual for tips on driving.

DRIVING POSITIONS

ATVs

Sitting



sit on lowest part of ATV seat

keep knees against gas tank

✦ When you turn, lean in the direction of the turn and press down on the outer footrest. Straighten the handlebars if the wheel starts to lift. Shift your weight as needed to avoid tipping.

Standing



bend elbows and knees to help absorb bumps

spread weight evenly over both footrests. Footrests support most of your weight — keep body in centre of ATV

tip! When you drive up, down, or across hills, lean toward the top of the hill.

Traversing: steer slightly uphill to keep the ATV going straight.

Off-road motorcycles

Sitting



sit on lowest part of off-road motorcycle seat

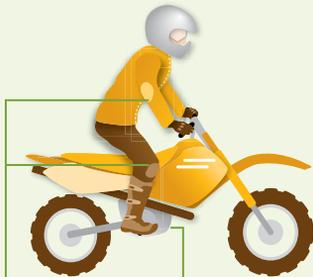
keep knees against gas tank

tip! When you go up, down, or across hills, stand and lean towards the top of the hill.

Traversing: lean your off-road motorcycle into the hill putting your weight on the downhill footpeg.

Standing

tip! Standing is the most stable position.



bend elbows and knees to help absorb bumps

spread weight evenly over both footpegs—keep body in the centre of the off-road motorcycle

tip! You can turn in a sitting or standing position.

Press your outside knee against the gas tank. Press down on the inside footpeg. Lean in the direction of the turn. For tighter turns, shift your body weight to the outside peg.

Snowmobiles**Sitting**

feet flat on running boards keeps them safe, body low makes it easier to shift from side to side

Standing

knees bent helps you absorb bumps

Posting

feet flat on running boards, body just above the seat helps you ride over bumpy land and helps you see better

Kneeling

knees under you lets your body rest and helps you see better—go slow, it's hard to keep your balance

Semi-kneeling

one knee under you helps you ride in deep, powder snow and helps you control the snowmobile and see better

HEADING OUT?

Here are some questions to consider:

What's it like out?

See page → 14.

Remember, your speed adds to the wind chill factor.

What have you got for gear?

Not sure? See pages → 13–15.

Got a plan?

Who's coming? Can they handle the ride you want to take?

Leave a Trip Plan with someone who cares about you

Date and time: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone number: _____

Cell phone: _____

Where you're going: _____

Emergency routes to shelter for extreme weather: _____

When you're coming back: _____

What you're driving: _____

What colour is it? _____

What safety supplies you have (GPS, First Aid, Tool Kit, ...)

What colours are you wearing? _____

OHV plate number: _____

Who you're riding with: _____

Their phone numbers: _____

SAFE RIDING PRACTICES

- Drive with others.
- Drive in single file.
- Keep a safe distance between OHVs.
- Carry passengers only if your OHV is designed for it.
- If available, use a helmet intercom system to talk to other drivers.
- Keep track of each other to make sure everyone is OK.
- Follow your trip plan. See page → 20.
- Carry safety supplies. See page → 16.
- Stay to the right on two-way trails.
- Follow the OHV Code of Conduct. See page → ii.



USE CLEAR HAND SIGNALS  

Stopping



Slowing



Turning left



Turning right



Traffic ahead



Traffic behind



Last OHV in group



HAZARDS

Day-to-day



Remember, your children are watching you.

Speed

What's the problem?

- You can lose control.
- You have less time to react to unexpected obstacles and situations.
- You may intimidate others, especially on a shared-use trail.

What to do?

Obey posted speed limits. Drive at a speed that lets you stop quickly and safely. That speed will change depending on trail conditions, weather conditions, who else is on the trail, and how well you can handle your OHV.

tip! Look for words like these on any **medicine** you take. They tell you if it's risky to drive.

- drowsiness
- driving operating machinery
- performing tasks requiring mental alertness

tip! **Ride smart. Ride sober.**
 It's against the law to drive when you are impaired.

Traffic

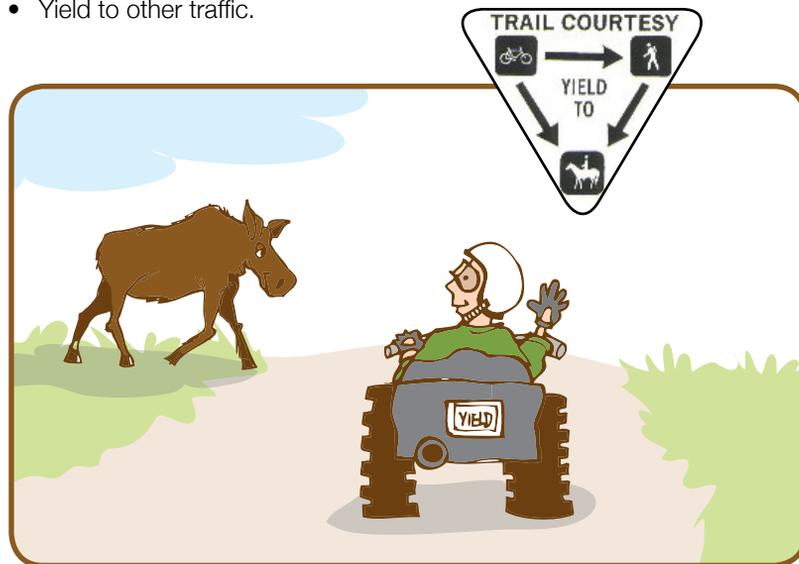
What's the problem?

- You have less room to react when there is more traffic.
- You could collide with other trail users or objects on the trail.

What to do?

- Stay to the right.
- Leave room to pass.
- Slow down.
- Yield to other users.
- Yield to other traffic.

tip! Wave to let others know you see them. Take off your helmet when you talk with other people. Friendly actions like these help protect OHV riding as one of the uses on shared-use trails.



Terrain

What's the problem?

Things like these can cause you to lose control, flip over, and get hurt:

- large ruts
- stumps, roots, logs, rocks
- steep slopes and ledges
- slippery leaves and needles
- bumps and holes
- puddles, mud, ice, snow, gravel, sand

What to do?

Scan. Read the terrain and drive for the conditions. Apply the brakes gradually if you need to slow down.

SIPDE

SIPDE helps you make good decisions

- S** scan around you and look in your mirrors
- I** identify hazards, possible problems, and other trail users in your path
- P** predict what may happen and imagine the consequences
- D** decide what to do based on your driving ability and what your OHV can do
- E** execute your decision



tip! When the sun is high in the sky, sandy hills, holes, and cliffs look the same. Wear tinted grey or dark green eye protection to help you see the difference. Slow down. See page → 15.

tip!   Starting and stopping in sand is tricky. Find a safe place and practise.

tip! What to do if your OHV gets stuck:

- Go forward, backward, forward, backward, until you rock free.
- Use a tow rope or winch.
- Ask for help to lift your OHV.

Winter terrain

What's the problem?

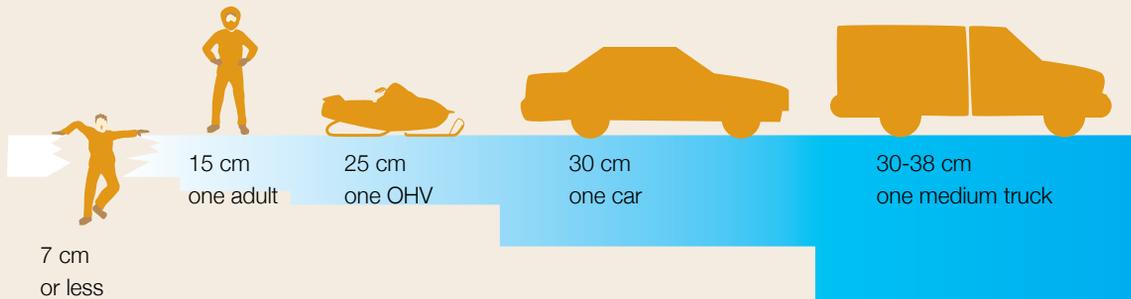
Snow conditions can change without warning.

- Deep snow means it's harder to control your OHV.
- Snowdrifts over the trail mean uneven driving conditions.
- Ice often means you have less traction.

What to do?

- deep snow
Deep snow makes your OHV harder to handle. You need more power and more room to turn. Look for harder packed snow. Ease up on your throttle when you hit hard pack snow.
- snowdrifts over the trail
Be prepared for bumps and dips that you can't see.
- ice
Ease up on your throttle. To stop, release the throttle and let your OHV coast to a stop in a safe location.

Minimum Ice Thickness



tip! Stay off frozen lakes and rivers whenever possible. Currents in the water mean that there can be thin ice where you don't expect it. If you must travel on ice, check the thickness. If you don't know, don't go!

Stunts and showing off

What's the problem?

You could lose control, run into someone or something, hurt yourself or others, or damage your OHV.

What to do?

- Check the terrain before you practise new skills.
- Practise new skills away from other people with an experienced rider to supervise you.
- Drive the right size OHV for your age, size, and ability. See page 6.

Passengers

What's the problem?

- They can throw you off balance.
- They can make your OHV harder to handle.
- They can fall off.

What to do?

Carry a passenger only on machines originally manufactured to do so.

Extreme Hazards

Mechanical failure

What's the problem?

You may get stranded. Mechanical failure can lead to injury and death.

What to do?

Read your owner's manual. It tells you

- what needs to be done for proper maintenance
- how to do it
- when to do it—this changes depending on where, how often, and how you drive
- what to check and replace on regular service checks—have this done by a qualified person.

Use TCLOC. See page → 37.

tip! Wet brakes don't work well. To dry them, apply gentle pressure to the brake levers while you drive slowly.

Trains

Always expect a train on any track, in either direction, at any time.

What's the problem?

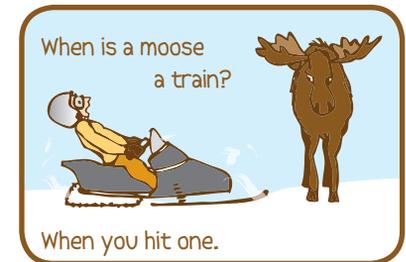
- Make sure you can see far enough—once the driver sees you, it's too late to stop.
- A train is hard to see through fog, rain, dust, and snow.
- Your helmet and engine make it hard to hear a train coming.
- A train is wider than the tracks.

What to do?

If you need to cross

- Find a marked crossing.
- Stop, look, and listen.
- Drive directly across.

 Trespassing on railway property is illegal.



Threatening weather

What's the problem?

Don't wait until the weather changes.

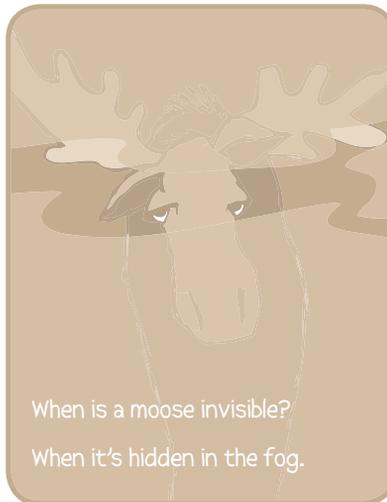
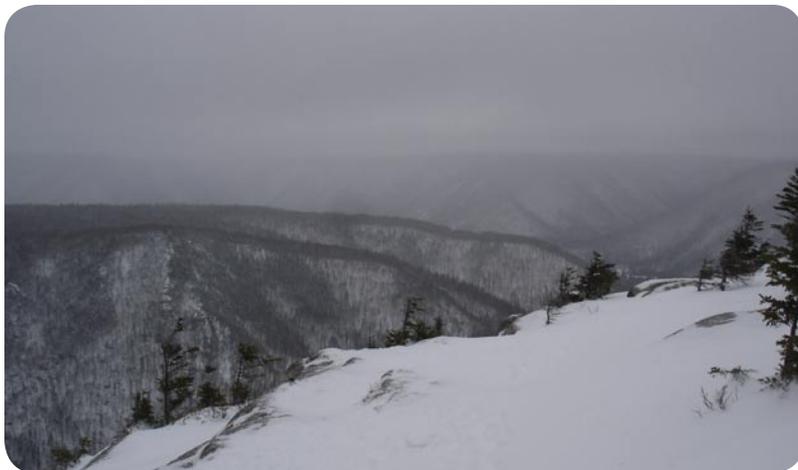
- You could be stranded in the dark or extreme conditions.
- It takes longer to travel the same distance.
- Your OHV may get stuck or break down.
- It can be harder to deal with an emergency.

What to do?

Check the forecast before you leave. Know how to get to a safe place quickly if you need to. Signs of dangerous weather:

- poor visibility
- darkening skies
- extreme change in temperature
- any thunder and lightening
- heavy wind, rain, or snow
- hail

Find shelter as soon as you start to worry about the weather conditions.



tip! Take a training course from the Nova Scotia Outdoor Leadership Development Program.

Click → www.gov.ns.ca/hpp/physicalactivity/nsold.asp

Freezing

What's the problem?

- frostbite
- hypothermia
- falling through the ice

What to do?

- Get out of the weather.
- Get to a warm place right away.
- Change into dry, warm clothes
 - best if they are in layers.
- Drink warm liquids.

Frostbite

The water in your skin freezes.

Check your nose, cheeks, ears, chin, fingers, and toes.

Warning signs: skin turns red then white or greyish yellow, and you may get blisters.

There can be pain, intense cold, and then you go numb.

Hypothermia

Your body loses heat faster than it can make heat.

It takes away your energy so that you can't function.

Warning signs: You shiver more than normal, feel confused, can't make a decision, feel giddy, and go numb.

Wind Chill Chart

- Risk of frostbite if prolonged exposure: windchill below -25
- Frostbite possible in 10 minutes at -35
- Frostbite possible in less than 2 minutes at -60

air C°	5	0	-5	-10	-15	-20	-25	-30	-35	-40	-45	-50
5	4	-2	-7	-13	-19	-24	-30	-36	-41	-47	-53	-58
10	3	-3	-9	-15	-21	-27	-33	-39	-45	-51	-57	-63
15	2	-4	-11	-17	-23	-29	-35	-41	-48	-54	-60	-66
20	1	-5	-12	-18	-24	-31	-37	-43	-49	-56	-62	-68
25	1	-6	-12	-19	-25	-32	-38	-45	-51	-57	-64	-70
30	0	-7	-13	-20	-26	-33	-39	-46	-52	-59	-65	-72
35	0	-7	-14	-20	-27	-33	-40	-47	-53	-60	-66	-73
40	-1	-7	-14	-21	-27	-34	-41	-48	-54	-61	-68	-74
45	-1	-8	-15	-21	-28	-35	-42	-48	-55	-62	-69	-75
50	-1	-8	-15	-22	-29	-35	-42	-49	-56	-63	-70	-76
55	-2	-9	-15	-22	-29	-36	-43	-50	-57	-63	-70	-77
60	-2	-9	-16	-23	-30	-37	-43	-50	-57	-64	-71	-78
65	-2	-9	-16	-23	-30	-37	-44	-51	-58	-65	-72	-79
70	-2	-9	-16	-23	-30	-37	-44	-51	-59	-66	-73	-80
75	-3	-10	-17	-24	-31	-38	-45	-52	-59	-66	-73	-80
80	-3	-10	-17	-24	-31	-36	-45	-52	-60	-67	-74	-81

Falling through the ice

- Stay calm.
- Control your breathing.
- Keep your head above water.
- Get to a solid edge of the ice.
- Lay your hands and arms over the unbroken ice and kick hard.
- Get your body up on the ice like a seal.
- Roll away from the hole.
- Get to a safe spot.
- Change into dry, warm clothes — best if they are in layers.
- Keep moving until you find shelter.

If you can't get out of the water, keep yourself from slipping back in by letting your body freeze to the ice.

Useful gear:
buoyant suit



ice picks



Ice Safety

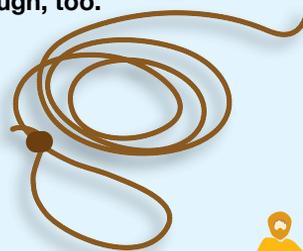
Most ice-related fatalities are from drowning and not hypothermia.

If someone in your group falls through the ice ...
The ice is thin. **You could fall through, too.**

Throw a weighted rope.

If possible, have the person loop the rope around their chest.

If you throw something shorter, the person will not be able to hold on for very long.



If you go on the ice, crawl or lie down to spread your weight.



To learn more about **ice rescue**, contact your local fire department or search and rescue team.

Heat

What's the problem?

- dehydration
- heat exhaustion

What to do?

- Drink lots, especially water.
- Limit coffee, tea, and pop that have caffeine in them—they dry you out.
- Take many breaks from riding and find shade under a tree.
- Wear light clothing.

Dehydration

Warning signs: It's hard to quench your thirst. Your mouth feels dry. You may have muscle cramps. You may have a headache, or feel dizzy or sick to your stomach.

Heat Exhaustion

Warning signs: You sweat more than usual. You may have muscle cramps or headaches. You may feel weak or dizzy or sick to your stomach.

Hunters

If you use your OHV for hunting, follow all hunting laws.
Please remember to wear your helmet.
Take a hunter education course.

For Hunting and Furharvesting regulations

Click → www.gov.ns.ca/natr/hunt/regulations/default.htm

To report a poacher

Call → **1-800-565-2224**

24 hours, 7 days a week