

## TRAILER CHECKLIST

1. Is the trailer you're using big enough for the machine you're planning on transporting? The one you used for a "one-up" machine may not be large enough or strong enough for that new side by side you bought this winter.
2. Are there sufficient numbers of tie-downs for the numbers and sizes of machines you'll be trailering?
3. Did you check the license plate to see if it needs to be registered for this year? Trying to talk that Trooper out of a ticket isn't going to work if the last year it was registered was when Bush was president.
4. Do you have enough tow vehicle for the load you're planning on towing? The general rule of thumb is that the tow vehicle should weigh at least as much as what you're towing, preferably half again as much more.
5. Does the tow vehicle have enough braking power to stop both itself and the trailer and load in a panic stop? If the trailer has electric brakes, does the tow vehicle have a brake control unit and does it work. If not, you stay way out in front of me when we go in convoy!
6. Is this trailer made mostly of wood and nails? If it is, leave it at home and go buy a REAL trailer. It can have a plywood deck but should not be made mostly of 2x4's and an old door with your kid's wagon wheels nailed to the bottom.

So much for the formalities. On to the checklist.

1. Inspect the frame to cracks in the members, especially at the corners where flexing occurs.
2. If the deck is plywood, does it have soft spots or sagging areas. Replace it if it does.
3. If the deck is made of expanded steel (like open screen), are there broken strands that can puncture tires or trip or stick you?
4. Check the fenders (It has them, right?). Are they secure to the frame and are the areas where they attach to the frame free of cracks? If there are cracks either replace them or make friends with someone who has a welder.
5. Is the hitch coupler firmly attached to the tongue of the trailer? How snugly does the coupler fit on the hitch ball on the tow vehicle? It is adjustable, usually by a nut that is up underneath Is it the correct size for the ball on the tow vehicle? Too small a hitch ball for the coupler can let the trailer and tow vehicle part company on the road.

6. With the trailer attached to the tow vehicle, plug in the lights and check to see if they're working properly. If not it's time to replace burnt or damaged bulbs or to check for damaged wiring or bad connections. A hint: If replacing bulbs, put a little Vaseline on the contact areas of the bulbs and in the sockets. This will keep out moisture and prevent corrosion. The same can and should be done to the connector plugs
7. If this has a plug for the electric brake, now is a good time to hook it up and check out the brakes to see if they are still working. A little Vaseline in the connector area of the plug won't hurt either.
8. How's the condition of the safety chain? Is it long enough to cross under the tongue of the trailer and attach to the tow vehicle with enough slack to allow a tight turn without binding up or causing a strain on the chain. If you changed tow vehicles during the winter, this could be an issue.
9. A check of the wheels should be made looking for loose lug nuts, cracks, weather cracked tires. flat tires worn tires, or damaged tires.
10. Raise each wheel and check the free play in the bearings. A slight amount of movement in and out (1/16 inch or less) is normal. More than that means that they need to be adjusted. Which brings up the question of, when they were greased last? If the trailer is 5 years old or more, and has more than a few miles on it, it's probably due to be cleaned and re-packed. If you don't know how to do this, get someone who knows to help, or take it to a dealer, incorrect bearing adjustments can lead to one seizing up on the road which can cause the trailer to flip or break away from the tow vehicle.
11. If there are side rails on the trailer, are they secure, with no cracked welds or loose/missing hardware?
12. If equipped with a loading ramp, are the hinges secure to the frame and the ramp? Is the ramp sound enough to take the rigors of loading and unloading, or could it stand some repair?
13. How's the condition of your tie down straps or chains? If they're frayed or chaffed, now's the time to change them.
14. Finally, what's the condition of the hitch on the tow vehicle? Is it loose, bent, cracked, rusted out, or just plain broken? If so, please get it fixed or replaced. Having your trailer with your prized machine on it pass you on the road is both embarrassing as well as dangerous and expensive.

## ATV EQUIPMENT LIST

Here's a short list of items you might want to consider to keep on your wheeler in case of emergencies or in the event you have problems on the trail. Some are common sense, and some include suggestions not normally thought about.

1. **Extra water**
2. **Candy** of some sort or fruit juice for diabetics.
3. **First aid kits** Not those little ones that have only band-aides and some tape. You can get a good one at Wal- Mart or Sam's club that has gauze pads and large dressings in-case there is a bad accident
4. **Flash light** A large one is much better than a small one, but even a small one is better than nothing. Be sure that the last battery you put in it is inserted backward so that in case the switch gets turned on accidentally the batteries won't go dead.
5. **Folding saw** Sears has some good ones as does Home Depot and Wal Mart.
7. **Small air compressor and Slime for tires.** They even have a kit with everything you'll need to get you rolling.
8. **Plastic rain poncho** Just in case you forget your regular rain gear. Can also act as a tarp in an emergency.
9. **Butane cigarette lighter**, short piece of candle and/ or a piece of fireplace starter log.
10. **Extra batteries**
11. **Folding camp shovel** This optional but can be gotten at Wal Mart for about \$15 and comes in handy if you're buried.
12. **Toilet paper** Much better than a hand full of poison ivy.
13. **2000 lb. snatch block** Optional, but handy if you need to tow at an angle and can be used to double the power of your winch.
14. **GPS unit with extra batteries** Optional, but handy to track where you've been so you can get back, or in the event you need to call help and need good location coordinates.
15. **Compass and maps**
16. **Safety vest** Use in case of a break down while you're walking out to get help to keep from getting run over and during the hunting season to keep from getting shot.
17. **A good sense of humor** for when you think you're lost, but really aren't. If you ride with this crowd, you'll see what I mean.
18. **Tool kit** with wrenches and sockets, electrical tape, and of course, duct tape.
19. **Medications** These should include Epi-pens if you or someone with you are allergic to stings or bites, aspirin in the event of heart trouble, and insulin for diabetics.

You can add anything you want to this list, but don't forget the BIGGIE, a good helmet with a face shield or goggles. Don't forget bug spray!

## SPRING TIME WHEELER CHECKLIST

While the spring riding season may still be a way off, now is a good time to take a look at the machine that you hide in the far back corner of the hay barn or garage. By doing so, you might stand a chance of getting it in the shop for any necessary repairs and back out before next September. A few things to look at include:

- **Tires.** Are they still round on all sides, or very flat on the bottom? Is that piece of wood still sticking out of the side wall? Have they got more cracks in them than a broken mirror? Might be a good idea to get them replaced.
- **Rims.** Are there any cracks, especially in the spokes around the hubs? Are there any dents or gouges in the edge of the bead areas. These will cause those slow leaks that can drive you nuts.
- **Ball joints.** Are they still tight without a lot of movement up and down. If there are grease fittings, when was the last time they were greased?
- **Tie rod ends.** Are they still fairly tight without a lot of movement? Or are they still held together with that piece of wire you used to get it out of the woods last year?
- **Shocks.** Are they still firmly attached to the machine and axle? Are there any fluid leaks, or do they just bottom out with a hard thud. New ones might just improve your ride and control.
- **Lights.** Do they all work? Or do you have to bang on the housing to get them to come on?
- **Brake lines.** Are they intact without and cuts or splits? Is there any fluid in the reservoir on the handle bar?
- **Brakes and rotors.** Are the discs still there, or have they worn away and dropped off? Are the calipers still in good shape and not leaking? If you spent last season "coasting" to a stop, maybe now would be a good time to pay some attention to them.
- **Skid plates.** Most machines have a steel plate mounted to the underbody to prevent damage to un-important things like engines, gear boxes, gas tanks, etc. Some also act as mounts for that snow plow on the front that seems to be there more than half the year. These are normally held in place with "U" bolts that go over the frame and down through the plate. They take a real beating going over logs and rocks and might need replacement.
- **Body work.** Are the fenders still intact? Or do they kind of flap in the breeze? Do all of the equipment racks still have all their bolts, and are they tight?
- **Mirrors.** You do have them, right? If you don't, or if they're broken, now's a good time to take care of them. Let's you see how close that bear is!

# ATV HAND SIGNALS

**STOP**



**SLOW DOWN**



**LEFT TURN**



**RIGHT TURN**



**HAZARD LEFT**



**HAZARD RIGHT**



**ONCOMING TRAFFIC**

