



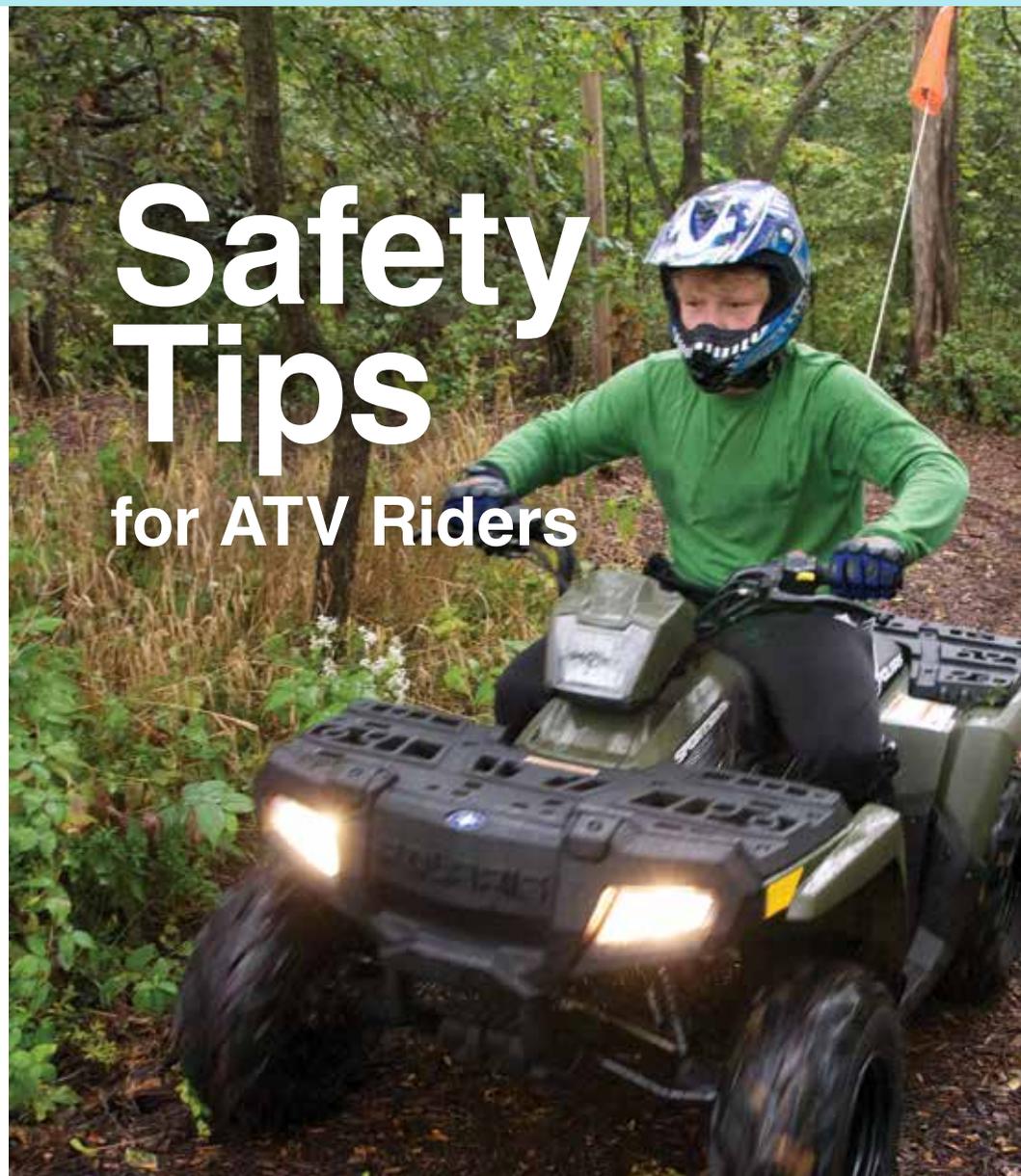
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# Safety Tips for ATV Riders



## In collaboration with:

Brain Injury Alliance of Iowa

Rural Health and Safety Clinic of Greater Johnson County

Safe Kids Johnson County

University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics

University of Iowa Injury Prevention Research Center

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

For more information, contact us  
at 319-384-6999 or [atvsafety@uiowa.edu](mailto:atvsafety@uiowa.edu)

Take the pledge to ride safe at [uichildrens.org/atv-safety](http://uichildrens.org/atv-safety)

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# Before we get started...

Driving All-Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) can be an enjoyable way to spend time with family and friends. They can even be helpful in doing work around a yard or farm. However, the fun in using an ATV can turn dangerous very quickly.

Did you know that ATV-related crashes result in about 150,000 emergency room visits per year? One in three victims is under 16 years of age!

Having the right safety equipment and information can help ensure your adventure doesn't turn into a trip to the hospital, or even worse.

You will learn important ATV safety tips in this booklet. We hope that you will use this ATV information and share it with your friends, family, and all those who may enjoy ATV adventures with you.

So take a seat and get ready to ride on the trail to safety!

## The 10 STARs "Safety Tips for ATV Riders"

- ★ Always wear your helmet
- ★ One person at a time
- ★ Ride the right size machine
- ★ Always wear your protective gear
- ★ Never ride on the road
- ★ Take an ATV safety course
- ★ Tell someone where you are going
- ★ Respect private property
- ★ Never use alcohol or drugs
- ★ Always obey the rules



## In the News

ATVs are made for people to ride and have fun. Unfortunately, some people end up in the newspaper after being hurt badly or even dying while riding an ATV because they did not ride safely. Here are RULES about how to ride in a SAFE way:

- ◆ ATVs should NOT be used on public roads! They have a high center of gravity that makes it easy to rollover on hard surfaces. The tires on an ATV are made differently than car tires so they don't grip and release the road surface. The tread on this type of tire is thicker and wider to grip off-road surfaces.
- ◆ You should NEVER take anyone for a ride. Riding double is very dangerous due to the inability to properly shift weight when two or more people are riding. The machine can roll over top of them or they can be thrown from the ATV because of rough terrain.
- ◆ Ride the correct size machine for your age. See chart on page 5.
- ◆ You should not go too fast.

Every driver should wear the right safety gear:

- Helmet
- Eye protection, such as goggles
- Long pants
- Long-sleeved shirt
- Gloves
- Boots

Records show that more than 200 serious ATV crashes occur each year in Iowa. The people injured in these crashes required treatment at a trauma center, and some children died due to their injuries.

When drivers DO NOT follow the rules, crashes can happen.

### THROTTLE REACH

Make sure you can operate while turning.

### GRIP REACH

Make sure your elbows are bent and you have a firm grip on the handlebars when turning.

### BRAKE REACH

Make sure you can comfortably reach the brake.

### STEP ONE

While standing on the footrests make sure there is 4 to 6 inches between you and the seat.

### STEP TWO

Check throttle and brake reach while seated.

### STEP THREE

You must have the strength and weight to operate the controls properly AND the ability to control the machine and yourself when riding over rough terrain.

### UPPER LEGS

Make sure they are parallel to the ground.

# Ride the right size ATV

## ATV Size DOES Matter

95% of youth deaths and injuries have occurred on adult-sized ATVs.

AGES IN YEARS	ATV YOUTH LABEL	TYPICAL ENGINE SIZE
Younger than 6	Youth should NOT be on adult-sized ATVs!	
6 and older	Y-6+	Less than 70cc
10 and older	Y-10+	≤ 90 cc
12 and older	Y-12+	≤110 cc
14 and older	T	>110 cc

## Fact or Fiction

- |      |         |   |
|------|---------|---|
| Fact | Fiction | 1. Carrying passengers on a single-person ATV increases the risk of crashing the vehicle.     |
| Fact | Fiction | 2. ATVs are designed to be ridden on public roads.  |
| Fact | Fiction | 3. In a crash, wearing a helmet reduces your chances of a head injury.                        |
| Fact | Fiction | 4. Children and teens 12-17 years must have a safety certificate to ride in Iowa's ATV parks. |
| Fact | Fiction | 5. Children and teens less than 16 years can safely handle an adult-sized ATV.                |

A helmet is the most important piece of safety gear for an ATV driver...not just any helmet, but the right helmet.

The helmet is NOT:

- A bicycle helmet
- A skateboarding helmet
- A rollerblading helmet

The helmet must be able to:

- take a blow from a sharp object
- absorb energy on impact
- stay in place
- let you see to the sides

It should fit fairly snug and not wobble around when you move your head. The chin strap should fasten securely.

The label should state that it has been safety approved by the 1) Department of Transportation (DOT), 2) American National Standards Institute (ANSI), or 3) Snell Memorial Foundation (Snell).

## Questions to answer when buying an ATV helmet

- Does the helmet fit tight enough that it does not wobble around when you move your head?
- Can you see to the left and to the right?
- Has it been safety approved by DOT, ANSI, or Snell for use on an ATV?

Answers  
1. Fact 2. Fiction 3. Fact 4. Fact 5. Fiction

## How to say “No.”

Here are some statements that people might say about riding an ATV that are not safe. These replies were provided by teens at the Iowa State Fair ATV safety booth.

### It’s OK, you don’t really need to wear a helmet!

OK, don’t wear one, but I’ll miss you while you are in the hospital recovering from your brain injury.

Well, it only takes one accident and, if you don’t have a helmet, you may not survive.

No, I love my brain.

### Come on, just hop on and go for a quick ride. It fits us both!

No thanks, I’m smarter this way.

I would prefer to ride by myself.

True, but how will we shift around to prevent a rollover?

I think I’ll walk.

### Let’s just go on the road for a little bit, there are not a lot of cars here anyway.

No, it’s illegal.

No way! ATVs are made to be driven off-road and not on hard surfaces.

Cars are much bigger than ATVs, I don’t think a chicken match is a good idea!

How do you think you would reply? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## How many things can you find WRONG in these pictures?



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Top: 2 riders, no helmets, no gloves, no goggles, no shoes, no long pants, no long sleeves, riding on road  
Bottom: 2 riders, no helmets, no gloves, no goggles, no shoes, no long pants, no long sleeves, no gloves

## Rider Profile: Amy

One beautiful spring day, 11-year-old Amy and her two best friends decided to take a trip on her family's ATV. All three of the girls had ridden on the ATV before, but this time things started to go wrong. While riding up a hill at 25 mph, the two front wheels started to come off the ground. With passengers on the ATV, the three girls could not shift their combined weight quickly enough to maintain a proper center of gravity. The ATV started to roll over.

All three girls were thrown from the ATV. None of the girls were wearing helmets or other protective gear. Although two of the girls escaped with only minor injuries, Amy was not so lucky. As the ATV rolled, she first hit the ground with her face and then the ATV landed on top of her. Her family responded immediately, but Amy was so confused they had to call an ambulance to take her to the hospital.

Amy had bleeding inside her head causing pressure on her brain and she slowly slipped into a coma. Amy needed emergency brain surgery to save her life. A large incision was made from ear to ear, part of her skull was cut away with a bone saw, a large blood clot was removed, and her cut bone was placed back on her head.

She also had multiple broken bones in her face and skull, an injury to her right eye, and many severe cuts on her face which required extensive stitches. After 6 days at University of Iowa Children's Hospital, Amy was discharged to her home.

Prior to the crash, Amy loved to ride horses and being in rodeos. Those activities are much harder now with hearing loss in her right ear and loss of vision in her right eye. She has also had to deal with permanent scars on her face that have changed her appearance forever — a constant reminder of an event that could have been prevented.

**What could have Amy and her friends have done differently that might have changed this story?** \_\_\_\_\_

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## Rider Profile: Trent

On a crisp autumn day in Iowa, Trent and three of his friends decided they wanted to enjoy the weather and go on an adventure. They each had an ATV and decided they would take them out on some trails. All three had taken an ATV driver safety certification course the summer before.

They knew they needed to pick a trail that was safe, told their parents where they were going, and got geared up. Each one had a helmet that had been properly fitted for their head, as well as gloves, boots, a jacket, and long pants.

The boys headed out on the trail and spent the day enjoying the beautiful fall scenery and wildlife. Mid-ride, they encountered another group of riders on the trail. They pulled off the trail for a while to chat with the group and learned that they were from a school in another town a few miles away. Plans were made to try and meet up for more rides before the weather got too cold.

The time passed quickly and because it was fall, the boys knew the sun would be setting soon. They turned around and got back home well before dark. The friends were able to have a safe and great ride that fall day and plan to have many more!

**Why was this adventure safe for Trent and his friends?** \_\_\_\_\_

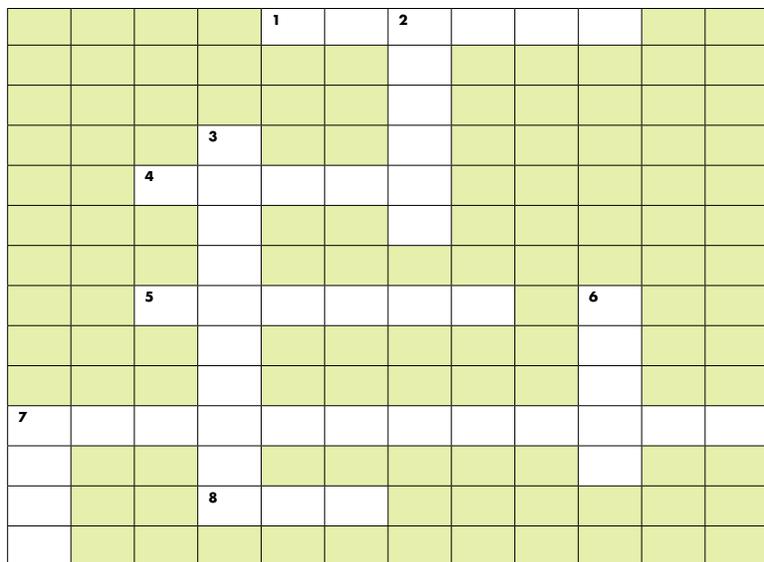
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## ATV Safety Crossword Puzzle



### Across:

1. If I was riding an ATV and it went out of control, I would feel \_\_\_\_\_.
4. If everyone rode ATVs in a safe way, I would be \_\_\_\_\_.
5. The most important piece of safety equipment is my \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Before riding ATVs, it is important to take a \_\_\_\_\_ (2 words).
8. If a friend were hurt in an ATV crash, I would feel \_\_\_\_\_.

### Down:

2. I should \_\_\_\_\_ stay OFF roadways while riding an ATV.
3. I should never ride with other \_\_\_\_\_ on my ATV.
6. I should always follow the 10 \_\_\_\_\_ when riding an ATV.
7. Riding an ATV that is not the right \_\_\_\_\_ can lead to a serious crash.

Answers  
 Across: 1. Scared 4. Happy 5. Helmet  
 7. Safety Course 8. Sad  
 Down: 2. Always 3. Passengers 6. STARS 7. Size

Dear Parent/Guardian,

All-terrain vehicle (ATV) use has grown dramatically in the past decade. Unfortunately, so has the rate at which injuries and deaths are occurring including to our children. In fact, one in three injuries involves children and adolescents less than 16 years of age. This material is intended to provide public awareness and injury prevention resources for ATV safety. Young people should know how to ride safely and have the confidence to say “no” when being pressured into an unsafe situation.

We hope you will do the following:

- ◆ Take a moment to read through this short booklet
- ◆ Remind your adolescent of the 10 STARS (Safety Tips for ATV Riders)
- ◆ Make sure your child wears a properly fitted helmet
- ◆ Always emphasize the importance of ATV safety
- ◆ **Most importantly, remember that YOU are your child’s role model. Make sure that you are also following the 10 STARS!**