



Snowmobile Safety Guidelines

Introduction

While riding a snowmobile can be fun and exciting, it does not come without risks. To reduce the hazards associated with using a snowmobile, follow these simple safety tips each and every time you ride.

Before Heading Out:

- **Know the law.** Regulations regarding snowmobile registration and use are different in various parts of the country. Check with the local DMV, law enforcement agencies, dealers and clubs in the area to make sure you're following all the rules and staying out of restricted areas.
- **Wear the proper gear** every time you ride in case of an accident. To maintain warmth, wear layers of clothing that can be added or removed depending on the weather conditions. A safety certified helmet, warm gloves or mittens, a windproof outer layer and warm boots are your best bet for optimum protection. Wear heavy waterproof boots. Don't forget sun goggles to protect your eyes.
- **Plan ahead** and consider what could happen. Carry the owner's manual, an extra belt, extra spark plugs, a tow rope, a small tool kit, spare parts, a flashlight, a first-aid kit and a few survival items such as a space blanket, waterproof matches and a compass.
- **Know the area** where you'll be traveling. Obtain a map and ask other snowmobilers about the conditions and terrain. Check for weather warnings and potential avalanche terrain and adjust your route accordingly.
- **Check out** the snowmobile to ensure it is running properly before leaving for the field. Be sure all recommended service is up to date and that all repairs were made by an

authorized service provider. Records should be maintained so this information can be easily confirmed by the snowmobile operators.

In the Field:

- **Tread lightly.** Ride only in permitted areas and respect nature. Be sure there is enough snow to cover vegetation so you don't destroy it. Avoid running over trees and shrubs and do not disturb any wildlife that you might come across.
- **Maintain control.** Maintaining the correct speed for the conditions and your experience is critical. Be aware of the terrain, visibility and weather conditions. Always be alert and scan your surroundings for potential hazards or obstacles.
- **Do not snowmobile alone.** It is more fun - and safer - to take a colleague along.
- **Take care** when crossing roads of any kind. Make sure that you stop completely and that no traffic is approaching from any direction. Remember basic hand signals to indicate to other drivers that you are turning. Be extra careful at night or in low-light conditions. Use your headlight. Slow down and yield right of way to other persons (skiers, pedestrians, etc.), wildlife and equipment operating in the area of travel.
- **Beware of water** and never to cross over a frozen lake, pond or stream as you may run the risk of breaking through the ice. Starting, stopping and turning on ice are more difficult due to reduced traction. Drowning is a leading cause of snowmobile fatalities, so if you have to operate a snowmobile on ice, make absolutely sure the ice is thick enough to hold the weight and frozen solid. Consider buying a buoyant snowmobile suit.

Ride Safe

- **Be aware** of situations that can impair the ability to reason and make sound judgments. Ride only when you are not overly fatigued or cold. Never drink or take medications or other drugs, then drive.
- **Improve your riding skills** by taking a training course. Know the capabilities of your machine and don't push it beyond them. Know your driving abilities and equipment limitations and stay within them.

Contact UNLV Risk Management & Safety (702-895-4226) if you have additional questions or concerns about the safe operation of snowmobiles.