

Group Ride Protocol

Sharing your riding adventures with friends can turn a great ride into something epic; an experience that will be laughed at and reminisced over for years to come. And while riding together can mean increased safety for all participants, it also comes with increased risks if proper Group Riding Protocol is not followed.

Understand, follow and share the recommendations below with your group to help ensure everyone you go out with comes home safely together.

1. Always drive with **headlights** on for increased visibility.
2. Impairment of any kind (drugs, alcohol or fatigue) means **you don't participate**. Save the ride for when you are sober and suitably rested.
3. In groups, **each rider is responsible for the rider behind them**:
 - **See & Acknowledge**: Before making a turn or if the trail is unclear, wait. Ensure the rider directly behind you sees and acknowledges you before continuing.
 - **Check**: Periodically check behind you to ensure they are still there.
 - **Pause**: If they are not there, pause on the side of the trail to see if they catch up.
 - **Turn Around**: If they don't catch up in a reasonable time, turn around and find them. If every rider is doing the same, the riders ahead of you will notice they are no longer being followed and will also pause and/or turn around.
 - **Don't Chase**: Do not chase the person in front to try to reach them.
 - **Leave some space** between you and the person in front of you; they may need to slow down quickly to avoid a hazard you can't see and being too close won't give you time to avoid hitting them from behind.
 - **Inform your fellow riders**: If you decide to quit the ride or go on your own.
4. **Don't drive beyond your skills**, if you come across a section of trail you are not sure how to handle, ask a more experienced rider for assistance or advice.
5. **Ride your own Ride**: a group ride should be planned to accommodate the skill levels of the least experienced rider; don't feel pressured to go faster than you are comfortable with riding. Accidents happen when people ride beyond their skill level.

6. **Speeds** on roadways are 20km (posted 50km -), 50km (posted 60km +)
7. **Crossing Roads:** ORVs do not have the right of way when crossing a road, even as a large group, so watch for traffic and ensure the person behind crossed before continuing down the trail. Ensure you follow all rules of the road (e.g., stop sign, traffic lights etc.)
8. **Use proper hand signals:** communicate with your own riding group by using hand signals (left turn, right turn, etc.) but also communicate with approaching traffic by signaling how many riders are following you. The last rider should indicate there is no one else in your group after them. Refer to Hand Signals to ensure everyone knows the correct and recognized signals.

https://ofatv.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Posters-HandSignals_updated.pdf

9. Stopping for **breaks**

- When stopping for a break, stop on a straight portion of the trail/route with enough space for all the riders in your group to stop safely in line.
- Park on the far-right side to allow other riders or groups to pass safely
- Watch out for other riders as they pass your group

Tools for an enjoyable group ride:

If riding on OFATV trails, use QuadON to plan your route. Note if trails are closed, if they have cautions listed and what the difficulty rating of each trail is. QuadON Pro version allows you to share your location with other riders; although group protocol should always be followed, this provides an additional layer of safety as others in your group can see where you are, should something happen.