

ATV Safety Training Course

ATV trail riding is a fun and exciting sport that can provide hours of entertainment for the whole family. There is nothing like a good day on the trails, out in the sun and wind, to bring the family together or to meet up with friends or to make new ones. But ATV trail riding isn't all fun and games; there is a large degree of safety precautions involved. While you're having fun you still have to remember that you are working with a motorized vehicle and, although it is designed for recreation, that vehicle needs to be treated with the same respect and caution that you would a car or a motorcycle. For this reason, before you hop on that brand new ATV and hit the trails, you might want to consider taking an ATV safety training course.

Unlike a car or motorcycle, no license is required to operate an ATV. Many people learn how to ride from older siblings, parents or friends. While learning from friends or family isn't a bad idea overall, there might be some finer points to driving ATV's that your family or friends might have left out.

While you might find some places that will offer an ATV safety training course not all courses have certified trainers. The ATV Safety Institute (ASI) was founded in 1988 with the intent to provide a course that would educate riders about the safe operation of their vehicles and the hopes that once the students completed the course that the numbers of accidents and injuries on the ATV trails would be reduced. The idea seems to have worked, since 1984 many of the accidents involving ATV riding have been greatly reduced. ASI is also a non-profit organization.

When you purchase your ATV most of the manufacturers such as Honda, Arctic Cat, Yamaha and others will offer you the opportunity to take the ATV safety course free of charge. If you don't own an ATV and might be considering buying one for yourself or a family member, you may still take the course for a small fee. As with the Motorcycle Safety Foundation where the course provides the motorcycle, some ASI courses might include the use of ATV's donated either by manufacturers, local motor sports shops or private donors. Check with your instructors first to find out if you need your own ATV or not.

An ASI course will take you through all the basics of operating and riding an ATV and only takes half a day to complete. Certified instructors will teach you step by step each required skill in a controlled environment. You will begin with the use of proper safety equipment and how to start and stop your vehicle properly. Later on you'll move up to going up and down hills and over and around obstacles on a closed course. Each lesson builds on the previous one, becoming more of a challenge as the course goes on.

Children as young as 6 years old can take the course. There are special classes for the age group between 6 and 16 and parents are required to be present during the classes. All ASI instructors complete a broad training program and must meet all of ASI's requirements before they are allowed to call themselves a certified instructor. ASI reports that they have more than 1000 active certified instructors in more than 12000 locations across the United States. For more information or to locate a course near you, visit the ASI website at <http://www.atvsafety.org/>

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