

# Desert Driving for Beginners



# Desert Driving for Beginners

**A BEGINNERS' GUIDE to DRIVING OFF ROAD,  
GETTING STUCK, GETTING UNSTUCK  
and the TOOLS AND SKILLS YOU'LL NEED**

A presentation by Fraser M Martin and Alix Capper Murdoch

# Introductions and Format

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# Desert Driving for Beginners

**SAFETY: ESSENTIALS, LIQUIDS and COMMUNICATIONS**

**PREPARATION: TYRES and EQUIPMENT**

**THEORY: BASICS, PRACTICE and CONTROLS**

**THEORY 2: DRIVING and CONDITIONS**

**RECOVERY**

# Desert Driving for Beginners

**SAFETY**



# Essentials

ADD TO A STANDARD KIT WITH OTHER ESSENTIALS:



FIRE EXTINGUISHER



SUNSCREEN



INSECT REPELLANT



EVERY CAR SHOULD HAVE ONE



IDEALLY WITHIN REACH OF DRIVER & OCCUPANTS

# Liquids



WATER AND ISOTONIC DRINKS



DOUBLE WHAT YOU THINK YOU NEED



PER  
DAY

X3L PER PERSON, PER DAY MINIMUM

# Communications



**CHARGE  
YOUR PHONE**



**BRING A  
CHARGER**

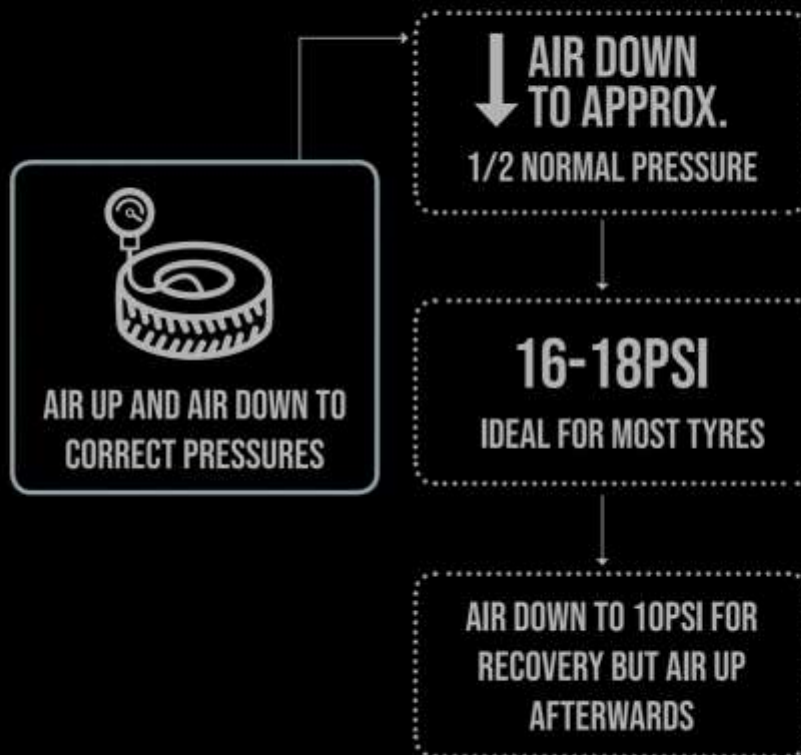


# Desert Driving for Beginners

## **PREPARATION**



# Tyres 1



# Tyres 2



**AUTO DEFLATORS**



**STICK/STONE**



**DEFLATOR WITH  
PRESSURE GAUGE**



**TYRE VALVE  
REMOVER**



**KEEP AIR  
COMPRESSOR  
ONBOARD**

# Equipment 1



WHEEL NUTS, ENGINE  
HOODS AND OTHER  
PARTS GET HOT



ESSENTIAL WHEN  
HANDLING WINCH  
CABLE OR ROPE

# Equipment 2



**SECURE/STOW LOOSE  
ITEMS PROPERLY**



**HEAVY OBJECTS CAN  
BECOME MISSILES IN  
CASE OF AN ACCIDENT**



**TIE DOWN  
STRAPS/ROPE**



**KEEP RECOVERY  
EQUIPMENT ACCESSIBLE**

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A wide-angle photograph of a desert landscape. In the foreground, there are rolling sand dunes with some sparse, low-lying green and brown vegetation. The middle ground shows a flat expanse of orange-brown sand leading to several prominent, light-colored rock formations or mesas. The sky is filled with scattered, white and grey clouds, suggesting a bright but slightly overcast day. The overall scene is a vast, open desert environment.

**THEORY**

# Basics 1

4X4 / PART-TIME / FULL-TIME / AUTO

HIGH RANGE

LOW RANGE



FRONT/REAR LOCKERS

# Basics 2



LEAVE PLENTY OF  
ROOM TO THE  
CAR IN FRONT



BEWARE OF DUST  
CLOUDS AND STONES



ALLOW VEHICLE AHEAD TO  
CLEAR OBSTACLES FIRST  
AND HANG BACK



ON SOFT TRACKS, POSITION  
WHEELS TO RIGHT OR LEFT  
OF CAR AHEAD



# Practice 1



**DRIVING ON SAND IS ALL ABOUT MOMENTUM**



**TYRES NEED TO BE ON TOP OF THE SURFACE**



**BE IN THE HIGHEST POSSIBLE GEAR FOR THE CONDITIONS**

**IF YOUR VEHICLE HAS A TRANSFER CASE, STAY IN HIGH RANGE**

**LOW RANGE IS GOOD WHEN NEEDING MORE TORQUE**

# Practice 2

BE SENSITIVE WITH THE THROTTLE,  
BRAKES AND STEERING

TAKE CARE NOT  
TO DIG IN WITH  
SHARP TURNS

TAKE WIDE  
TURNS - NOT  
TOO FAST!

ON WELL-USED TRACKS, DON'T  
FIGHT THE STEERING WHEEL

# Controls



**DRIVING POSITION:  
WRIST ON TOP OF WHEEL**



**THUMBS OUT OF THE  
STEERING WHEEL**



**SWITCH OFF THE RADIO,  
STEREO AND AIR-CON - LISTEN**

**NOTE: AIR-CON USES APPROX.  
9% OF YOUR POWER**

# Desert Driving for Beginners

## **THEORY 2**



# Driving 1



DON'T CHANGE GEAR WHEN  
HEADING UPSLOPE



CHOOSE A GEAR  
AND COMMIT



LIFT OFF IF YOU CAN'T  
MAKE IT AND THEN  
REVERSE... SLOWLY!



DON'T TRY TO TURN  
ON STEEP DUNES

# Driving 2



LOW GEAR, WHEELS STRAIGHT, USE ENGINE-BRAKING



DO NOT DEPRESS  
THE CLUTCH



DON'T CHANGE GEAR  
GOING DOWNHILL

# Driving 3



**DON'T CROSS SLOPES  
AT AN ANGLE**

**GO STRAIGHT UP OR  
STRAIGHT DOWN**



**BACK THE WAY YOU CAME**

# Conditions



PLAN ROUTE AHEAD



STOP AND LOOK  
BEFORE COMMITTING



DON'T DRIVE WHERE  
YOU CAN'T SEE



# Desert Driving for Beginners

## **TOOLS & EQUIPMENT**



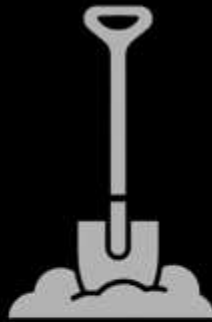
# Desert Driving for Beginners

**RECOVERY**



# Practical 1

THE OLDEST RECOVERY TECHNIQUE:



DIGGING!



TIME

# Practical 2



ALWAYS PULL DOWNHILL  
FOR MOMENTUM

TOWING VEHICLE  
ALSO NEEDS  
CLEAR SPACE



USE RECOMMENDED TOW POINTS



CLEAR PEOPLE AWAY  
FROM THE SCENE



ATTACH STRAP SECURELY WITH SHACKLES

# Practical 3



**RATED FOR RECOVERY  
(NOT TOW ROPE)**



**KERR /  
POLYPROPYLENE**



**ONLY AS GOOD AS SHACKLES  
AND RECOVERY POINTS**



**KEEP  
HANDY**

# Desert Driving for Beginners

**THANK YOU**