

Safe driving

Consider undertaking 4WD training through a registered provider or joining an incorporated 4WD club.

Sun glare and mist may reduce visibility on beaches, and off-road tracks are full of blind corners and hill crests. Drive slowly, respect conditions on the day and avoid driving at night. Always drive slowly on coastal off-road tracks and keep speed on beaches to 20km/h. Enjoy your drive and the surroundings!

It is essential that tyre pressure is reduced to maximise the tyre footprint before entering sandy tracks and beaches. Your tyre should look like the example photo below. Make sure that your driving speed is also reduced to maintain control when the tyre pressure has been reduced. It is essential that tyres are reinflated whenever you encounter hard sand or surfaces and before driving on the road. Always carry an air compressor with a gauge for this purpose and check manufacturer's specifications for your vehicle.



Engage 4WD before entering sandy tracks or beaches. Generally, in sandy conditions engage second or third gear in low range and steer clear of sharp turns or sudden braking to avoid losing momentum.

When driving on the beach, aim to travel at, but not above the high tide mark. Check tidal and weather conditions on the day. Avoid driving over piles of seaweed, be especially careful on high-energy beaches and be aware of steep drops caused by normal beach processes or storms surges. Remember all beaches are different.

Passing points enable vehicles to pass without damaging vegetation. Please use them and resist the temptation to create new ones.

River and creek crossings can look deceptively shallow. Always stop and walk the crossing and if you can't walk across it don't attempt to drive. Wheel axle height is a good guide as to how deep you should go.

HELP!

Always tell someone where you are going and your expected return time and arrange to travel with another vehicle.

If you become bogged or break down you are generally safer staying with your vehicle until help arrives, but if you have to hike out avoid walking in the heat of the day and leave a note in your vehicle of your intentions. Survival situations cannot be anticipated and bush survival training is definitely beneficial to everyone using the Code Off Road series.

Ensure you have an approved Personal Locator Beacon (PLB) distress beacon or another form of reliable satellite-based communication equipment.

In an emergency

Contact emergency services by calling 000 or via your satellite communication device.

For more information

<https://www.lnt.org.au/resources/green-guides.html>

<https://www.dlgsc.wa.gov.au/department/publications/publication/off-road-vehicles-in-western-australia-management-of-off-road-vehicles>



www.trackcare.com.au

[facebook.com/trackcare](https://www.facebook.com/trackcare)



Department of Biodiversity,
Conservation and Attractions



CODE OFF ROAD

A guide to safe and responsible off-road driving on WA beaches and coastal national parks.

Everybody loves the stunning scenery, magnificent beaches and great outdoor activities on offer along the Western Australian coastline.

Coastal ecosystems are some of our most fragile and they need special care when we are visiting them, so it is vital you know how to drive safely and lightly to protect yourself and our fragile environment.

Responsible and skilled driving minimises degradation to coastal ecosystems, accidents and the spread of *Phytophthora dieback*.



You don't need to be a specialist mechanic to operate a 4WD, but you will need a few basics to ensure that you and your vehicle get home safely.

The beach is not a sandy desert!

The weight of a vehicle not only squashes the sand, but also many small marine creatures which are important to the beach ecosystem and are food for larger beach animals and fish species. Beach driving also impacts negatively on larger animals such as shorebirds, whose nests and young are difficult to see and who may be resting in wind-protected areas after long migration flights.

Stay on the track as there is no need to deviate when heading to the beach; damage to vegetation and soils can be irreversible and once a new track is made, other vehicles will follow which causes further damage.



Watch for wildlife

Most of us would rather watch wildlife behaving naturally than watch it disappear under the wheels of an off-road vehicle. Keep your eyes peeled for reptiles basking at the side of the track. Keep an eye out for birds, kangaroos and bring your binoculars as there's heaps to see! Dogs and other pets are not permitted at any time in National Parks and 1080 poison that is fatal to dogs is regularly laid.

Picnic in, pack it out

Ensure what goes in with you goes out again! It's not acceptable to bury or burn rubbish, or to throw food scraps, bait bags and plastic into the bush.

Toilet training

Practice good personal hygiene in the bush and prevent the spread of nasties such as Giardia and Gastroenteritis as well as stinky surprises for other travellers. Carry a trowel to bury solid waste and toilet paper at least 100m from any watercourse and at least 30cm deep.

Biosecurity

Many of our unique plant species including coastal heaths are susceptible to Phytophthora Dieback (*Phytophthora cinnamomi*) — plant death caused by a microscopic soil-borne water mould. The pathogen kills many coastal species and vegetation types. It is spread by the transportation of infested soil and plant material.

There are many areas that are free of Phytophthora Dieback and you can help stop its spread if you:

- Clean any mud and soil off your vehicle before and after your trip
- Avoid travelling in wet and muddy conditions
- Keep to established tracks and roads.



Trip preparation

In addition to carrying enough drinking water for your passengers, include these essential items in your vehicle:

- Air compressor with gauge
- Tow rope for attaching to load rated recovery towing points on your chassis
- Tyre repair kit and an inflated spare
- Jack and a jack plate
- Rated bow or 'D' shackles
- Recovery gear such as traction mats and shovel
- A well-stocked first aid kit
- Some form of communication - phone (mobile or sat), radio or EPIRB.

