Quick Tips: Dirt Roads

Kit

- Tyre repair kit.
- Tyres suitable for 4WD conditions e.g. All-terrain (A/T)

Preparation

- Lower tyre pressure (30 psi for medium/large sized 4WD wagons on dirt roads). For bush tracks 20-26 psi is a good tyre pressure.

Driving

- Reduce speed to match tyre pressure
- Expect the unexpected
- Engage 4WD on part-time systems, and stability control for those cars that have it
- Use a slightly lower gear than normal
- Headlights on for visibility
- Don't swerve for animals; slow down
- Slow down for oncoming vehicles, especially those with dust clouds
- When following another vehicle keep well back to avoid dust
- Expect vehicles anywhere on the road
- Keep away from loose, gravelly parts of the road, follow defined wheel tracks

Quick Tips: Sand

Kit

- Take a shovel and flat plate so the jack doesn't sink in, plus a compressor and tyre pressure gauge.
- Full tank of fuel as consumption is high.
- Long pole and red flag for visibility when approaching dunes (compulsory in the Simpson Desert).
- 'Maxx Tracks' (placed under wheels if stuck) are good insurance.

Preparation

- Lower tyre pressures (15 psi for medium/large sized 4WD wagons).
- Remove weight from the vehicle.
- Know the high and low tide times for beach driving.
- Fit pole and red flag for dune driving.

Driving

- Stick to any existing wheel tracks. It's a lot easier.
- Use steady momentum, but not aggressive driving.
- High range for higher speed, low range for tight tracks.
- Keep the speed down even when it's flat.
- Disable stability control, engage 4WD. Cross-axle lockers aren't often

useful.

- If the wheels spin, immediately stop. Try and rock the vehicle backwards or forwards, building up a small stretch of hard-pack sand that you can accelerate off from. Don't spin your vehicle's wheels into a hole.
- Lights on for visibility.
- Accelerate gently, brake by just coming off the accelerator.
- If salt water driving rinse the vehicle thoroughly after your trip, especially underneath.

Quick Tips: **Rocks**

Kit

- Jacks, gloves and winches
- Rocksliders and bash plates are worth it

Preparation

- Lower tyre pressure (20 psi for medium/large sized 4WD wagons)

Driving

- Low range. Use cross-axle lockers.
- Slow and steady.
- Move rocks if required.
- Beware wet or dusty rocks; much less traction.
- Beware loose rocks; especially on uphills.
- Try to keep all four wheels on the ground with equal amounts of weight.
- Generally put wheels up on top of rocks rather than straddle.

Quick Tips: **Mud**

Kit

- Take a shovel, plate so the jack doesn't sink in, compressor and tyre pressure gauge.
- Snatch strap often used, winches are an advantage.
- Expect to get muddy.

Preparation

- Lower tyre pressures (20 psi for medium/large sized 4WD wagons.

Driving

- For shallow mud be very gentle with the controls, using as high a gear as possible.
- Use the engine to brake.
- Fit mud-terrain tyres if possible.
- Usually low range, but avoid wheel spin – keep a steady pace.
- Disable stability control.
- Stay in ruts.
- For deep bogs use a lower gear and power, but check entry, bottom and exit first.
- Ensure you wash your vehicle carefully afterwards.
- If you become stuck, rock the vehicle backwards and forwards by

alternating between 1st and reverse.
- Moving the steering wheel from side to side rapidly may improve traction.

Quick Tips: **Snow**

Kit

- Cold and wet weather gear for everyone.
- Chains (practice putting them on at home), mud tyres
- Long Handle Shovel
- Winch

Preparation

- Lower tyre pressures (20 psi for medium/large 4WD wagons).
- Fit chains if required, or if snow is deep. If only one set of chains, fit to front wheels. Steep uphill, fit chains to rear wheels.
- Special precautions required for staying overnight in low temperatures, especially for diesels i.e. make sure you are using Alpine Diesel and coolant for the radiator.

Driving

- Usually low range because of low speed, but minimum power for minimum wheel spin.
- Use gears to slow down, even in autos i.e. drive as if you have no brakes.
- Beware of ice, especially black ice (hard to see).
- Follow ruts, but be careful of ice forming in them.
- Remember, vehicles travelling uphill have right of way.
- Park with the vehicle in gear; and handbrake off (can freeze up and wheels will not rotate).
- When parked overnight lift wiper blades off the windscreen otherwise they freeze on.
- Navigation is more difficult as you can't easy see the track.
- When the snow is too deep to drive across and you have to drive through it either stop, or deflate tyres further and float over the top.

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