

ATV Operation is EASI

All-terrain vehicles (ATVs) come in two main design configurations Sit astride (often referred to as a Quadbike) and sit In SbS ATV's (Side by Side seated vehicles) both configurations are multipurpose vehicles that have rapidly gained popularity among new and longtime owners throughout the UK for recreational use as well as utility use either in the workplace or around the garden.

Sales of four-wheel ATVs and SbS have increased significantly in recent years primarily because of their maneuverability, versatility and efficiency. ATVs easily traverse various tracks, reach rugged locations that other vehicles cannot, and offer business operators the opportunity to accomplish work in the field at significant financial savings when compared to using a truck or tractor. ATVs operate in all climates and weather conditions and are one of the most versatile vehicles in operation today.

The European ATV Safety Institute (EASI) recommends that all individuals, whether outdoor explorers, business owners or purchaser's of ATV's for their children, begin their search for a new ATV by conducting thorough research. In addition to visiting dealers, EASI suggests that first-time buyers visit the manufacturer web sites and browse through the various enthusiast publications and forums.

It's also important to know how a new owner plans to use their ATV. Work-related uses include many applications, in the main farming, field ,livestock and estate management. As well as in coastal surveying, vineyard management and a whole host of diverse commercial applications.

Recreational uses include a variety of options, trail riding, fishing, hunting and children's activities.

Once purchasers become owners, whether for work or recreation, they have available to them a number of accessories to increase the versatility and effectiveness of the ATV. Some of these accessories include snow blades, front-mounted forklifts, slurry pushers, sprayers, utility trailers, and many more. There can be as many as 20-30 different accessories for ATVs for their myriad applications.

Buy an ATV that is correct for you.

There are different sizes and styles of ATVs for all ages and abilities. Different models are available for specific age groups.

Parents or guardians should not permit youngsters to ride an ATV that is not recommended for their age group. Additionally, while a youth may be of the recommended age to ride a particular size ATV, not all youngsters have the strength, skill, or judgment necessary to operate an ATV.

Parents should supervise their youngster's operation of the ATV at all times and should permit continued use only if they determine that their youngster has the ability and judgment to safely operate the ATV.

If you consider that a Roll Over Protection system (ROPS) is required or would be beneficial, you should consider opting for a SbS (Sit in ATV) vehicle, rather than retrospectively fitting a ROPS to your sit astride ATV (Quadbike).

Is the ATV offered with Operator training?

Learn from the experts - There is no doubt that quality training combined with continued practice is the best way to develop riding skills and minimise risk. The more skills you learn and the more understanding you have, the more you will enjoy riding your ATV and the safer you will become, whether you use it for recreation or work.

Training is a LEGAL REQUIREMENT - In the work environment the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER) require employers to provide adequate training and to ensure that ATVs are used only by employees who have received appropriate training in their safe use, including towed equipment and attachments. If you are self-employed, the regulations still apply.

Operator Training – is now widely available for all ATV owners and operators throughout the UK. A number of manufacturers have also invested in the EASI Rider/Driver Course so that anyone now purchasing a Honda, Kawasaki, Polaris, Suzuki, BRP or Yamaha ATV, new or used, through an authorised dealer is entitled to either free or highly subsidised training. For more information contact EASI on 01273 494128 or visit the website at www.quadsafety.org.

Specialist training – More specialist training for those using attachments, including trailers, sprayers and spreaders, is available from LANTRA AWARDS. Contact them on 0276 696996 go to www.lantra-awards.co.uk.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

It is vital that anyone operating an ATV ensures their own safety and the safety of others around them, to that end you must make sure that you are properly protected. If you are the person operating the equipment it is a joint responsibility for you and any passenger (in the case of a SbS ATV) to make sure your passenger is also suitably protected. Passengers must wear PPE and both Operator and Passenger must utilise seatbelts/restraints.

PPE when operating an ATV includes suitable:

- Correctly sized suitable for the usage Head Protection
- Gloves
- Long-sleeved shirt/jacket
- Over-the-ankle boots
- Goggles/visor
- Long trousers

In particular special attention should be made to head protection, in this day and age there are no excuses for not utilising robust appropriate protection, and there are many specialist products on the market to suit all specific usage categories. If you require more advice on PPE, please do not hesitate to contact EASI for more advice 01273 494128.

You must ensure that the safety equipment is suitable for your type of usage. .

Getting Started.

All of the following points will be covered when you take your chosen training course. Remember, ***Training is not just for beginners.***

- Read and fully understand the Owner's manual supplied with your vehicle. Pay particular attention to the Warning Labels.
- Carry out the Pre Operation Checks as described in the Owner's manual before each operation. Any abnormalities/faults found when checking the vehicle must result in the vehicle being removed from service, rectification work should only be carried out by a suitably qualified person. Your Dealer is the best source of information and expertise.
- Identify the load capacities for the vehicle Warning labels will advise rack load capacities, never exceed the loading and make sure that all items carried are fully secured.
A loaded ATV handles very differently to an ATV that has no load.

- Understand how handling will be affected by trailed or mounted equipment, familiarise yourself in a safe learning environment i.e. flat open land free of obstacles and hazards.
- Understand the area and routes in which you will be operating, unfamiliar routes should be assessed at slow speed or on foot.
Familiar routes will literally change with the weather, wild life burrow under track ways, fallen trees/branches and floods will require you to change your operating techniques or choose an alternative route..
- Be respectful of your own circumstances, tiredness, illness, medication and personal pressures any condition that can cause a lack of concentration should make you question whether you should be operating the equipment.
- **Take training as quickly as possible after the purchase of an ATV, SbS that is new to you.**

The European All-Terrain Vehicle Safety Institute (EASI), a not-for-profit organisation. EASI's primary goal is to promote the safe and responsible use of ATVs, thereby reducing accidents and injuries that may result from improper ATV operation by the rider.

EASI UK Regional Operation is supported by:

HONDA Motor Europe,
SUZUKI GB PLC,
POLARIS Britain
YAMAHA Motor Europe
KAWASAKI Motor UK
BRP Ltd