

Using ATV quad bikes safely

Purpose:

To promote the safe use of quad bikes and the importance of wearing a helmet when riding a quad bike.

Why:

To reduce risks when using a quad bike. Many quad bike fatalities in the UK have been caused by head injuries, and helmets would have prevented most.

TIAH Capability Framework area:

This aligns with the knowledge and skills in the Health and Safety area.

<https://tiah.org/tiah-capability-framework>

Talk leader instructions:

- Prepare to do the talk in a suitable/quiet location with no distractions
- Engage with participants, ask questions, and give everyday examples
- Conclude with a brief review
- Get everyone to sign the form. Make sure to write the name of the farm and the date. Keep a copy in your Health and Safety records
- Ensure all participants have access to a copy of this document to refer to once the session has finished. This could be electronic and emailed or printed

Background

More than half of all ATV quad riders have been thrown off at some time. There's no roll bar, so head protection is vital if you're to have any chance of reducing injury.

Head injuries are the most common cause of death in quad bike incidents due to the vehicle overturning and operators being thrown from or crushed by the vehicle. **According to the HSE approximately two people die, and another 1,000 are injured in ATV incidents each year in the UK.**

Research from the University of Aberdeen also shows that two-thirds of farmers don't wear a helmet when they ride ATVs.



Main learning points



Why safety precautions are important

Safety precautions, including wearing a helmet, are crucial when using a quad bike for several reasons:

Head protection:

A helmet provides essential protection for the head in case of accidents or falls. Head injuries can be severe and life-threatening, so wearing a helmet significantly reduces the risk of serious head trauma. Never use a sit-astride ATV quad bike in the workplace without wearing a helmet; it is illegal.

Compliance with regulations:

There are regulations and legal requirements regarding the use of safety gear. Compliance with these regulations is not only essential for the safety of the operator but also for legal reasons. There's a legal requirement to have formal training before using an ATV.

Uneven terrain:

Farms often have uneven terrain, and quad bikes are designed to navigate such landscapes. However, uneven ground increases the risk of accidents. Wearing a helmet can protect against head injuries in the event of a sudden jolt, a collision, or a rollover.

Risk of overturning:

Quad bikes can be prone to overturning, especially when navigating hills or rough terrain. In the event of a rollover, a helmet can prevent head injuries by providing a barrier between the head and the ground.

Speed and Control:

Quad bikes might be used to move quickly between different areas of the farm. Higher speeds increase the risk of accidents, so ensure you're driving at a safe speed. Wearing a helmet is crucial to mitigate the impact of a potential collision.

Protecting against debris:

Farming activities may involve kicking up dust, dirt, or debris. Wearing a helmet with a visor or face shield can protect the operator's eyes and face from such particles, ensuring better visibility and preventing injuries.

Modelling safe behaviour:

Farmers who wear helmets while operating quad bikes set a positive example for others, including employees and family members. Encouraging a culture of safety on the farm helps reduce the overall risk of accidents.

Notes:

Notes:

Suggestions/ ideas:

Emergency situations:

Accidents can happen unexpectedly, and having a helmet on provides immediate protection. It can be the difference between a minor injury and a severe one, especially in situations where emergency medical assistance may take some time to arrive.

Q. Is it okay to let a child be a passenger on a quad bike?

No, Never carry a child as a passenger; it's illegal and will reduce your ability to control the quad bike. *Note: Children under 16 years old are prohibited from using most adult-sized machines*

Q. What are the main causes of serious or fatal injury associated with quad bikes losing control?

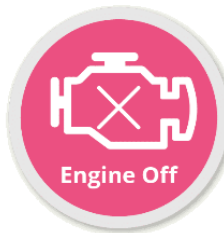
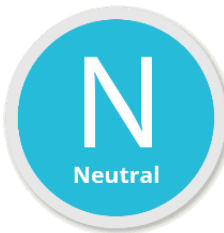
The main causes include:

- Being thrown off if the vehicle overturns or after the loss of control
- Collisions with structures, for example, hitting trees or other vehicles
- Being trapped under an overturned machine
- Being unable to breathe (asphyxiated) under an overturned machine
- Pedestrians being struck or run over by quad bikes

Q. What should you be doing to stay safe when using a quad bike?

Actions include:

- Wear a helmet with a visor or safety goggles
- Making sure you've received adequate training
- Carry out safety checks and maintenance in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations
- Check tyre pressures, brakes, and throttle before each use of the quad bike
- Secure loads on racks and make sure they're not overloaded and are evenly balanced
- ATV sit astride quad bikes should never be used to carry **any** passengers, including children. *The seat is for active riding. ATV sit-astride quad bikes are for use by one person only*
- Stick to planned routes, where possible, and walk new routes if necessary to check for hidden obstructions, hollows, or other hazards
- Take extra care with trailed or mounted equipment and understand how they affect the stability
- Take a mobile phone or radio with you in case of emergency
- Check local weather forecasts if you're going on a long ride, and tell someone when you expect to be back and where you're going
- Remember to do a 'SAFE STOP'



Discussion points



7 minutes

Q. If you don't always wear a helmet, what are the reasons why?

Some farmers report that the helmet design restricts hearing and vision, and helmets are uncomfortable to wear. Some don't like how they look in a helmet.

You could try different types of helmets that will protect your head, such as a horse-riding helmet. If looks are important, consider a snowboarder helmet that looks similar and will protect you. If you find motorbike helmets are too big and heavy, you can get farm helmets.

Keep forgetting, or are you in a rush?

Try these ideas:

1. Leave your helmet attached to the quad bike, or
2. Put your keys in the helmet

Q. Are there any other suggestions for staying safe when using a quad bike that we haven't covered?

Summary/Wrap up

 1 minute

‘Tomorrow is your reward for wearing a helmet today’

In summary, wearing a helmet and following safety precautions is essential when using a quad bike on a farm. It not only protects the individual operator and other people but also promotes a culture of safety within the farming community.

Resources:

Farm Safety Foundation: working with quads and all-terrain vehicles (ATVs):
<https://www.yellowwellies.org/working-quads-terrain-vehicles-atvs/>

ATV Safety Video (US example):
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rGFRjWGfHh0&t=112s>

HSE: Safe use of all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) in agriculture and forestry :
<https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/ais33.pdf>

HSE: Case study:
<https://www.hse.gov.uk/agriculture/experience/all-terrain-vehicles.htm>

ATV Safety Institute: ATV Pre-ride Inspection: <https://atvsafety.org/before-you-ride/>

Toolbox Talk participants

Toolbox Talk: **Using ATV quad bikes safely**

Name of farm Date

Talk leader name.....

Name	Signature	Date