

Before you go

Learn more about sand driving on qld.gov.au/DrivingOnSand

Download the free Triple Zero (000) emergency plus app at www.emergencyplus.com.au

Check qld.gov.au/ParkAlerts for access, closures and conditions.



Further information

qld.gov.au/NationalParks

qld.gov.au/Camping

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

[@QldParks; #QldParks](https://www.instagram.com/QldParks)



Avoid losing your life or your car.

Take safety seriously!

Have a safe trip

Preparing for a sand drive?

- Only take a 4WD that has high clearance with low range gear selection.
- Ensure your 4WD can cope with difficult conditions, including deep soft sand; steep, bumpy tracks.
- If hiring a 4WD, get good instructions, check their safety gear and ask about any restrictions.
- Get reliable information about the place you're visiting and its sand driving conditions.

Are you new to sand driving?

- Take some lessons first.
- Have an experienced sand driver come along.

Do you have a SUV or AWD?

- Sport Utility Vehicles (SUV) and all-wheel-drive (AWD) vehicles are not suitable in Queensland's sand parks and coastal areas. They may get stuck, resulting in vehicle damage and expensive recovery.
- Trail-bikes are not permitted on some sand parks; check park details before you visit at desi.qld.gov.au
- Trail-bike riders and SUV and AWD drivers can face serious difficulties in deep, soft sand and washouts.

Towing a trailer or caravan?

- Only tow a high clearance trailer or caravan that suits your 4WD's coupling and towing ability.
- Unsuitable caravans or trailers get badly damaged and stuck for hours. Recovery costs are expensive!
- Caravans are not permitted in some camping areas; check first.

Check everything works well

- Bring enough, reliable recovery gear and check it works; it could save you and your vehicle.
- Tyres, including spares, must be in good condition.
- Have your transmission and differentials checked and serviced, as they will work hard in sand.

Always bring:

- a functional tyre gauge
- a working portable air compressor or pump
- enough drinking water
- a well stocked first-aid kit
- traction mats
- a shovel.



Vehicle recovery

Only trained operators should perform snatch strap and tow rope recoveries, using proper safety-rated equipment and rated recovery points on both vehicles. If you are not trained, do not attempt these recoveries.

Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) rangers cannot assist with towing or snatch strap recovery due to the significant safety risks. If it is safe, consider using traction mats, instead of tow ropes and snatch straps, to free your vehicle or contact a local towing service.

Travelling in remote areas

Medical evacuations and vehicle recoveries can take several hours. Adverse conditions may cause additional delays to rescues.

- Be well prepared for any contingency.
- Travel with at least one other vehicle to assist in case you get in trouble.
- Let a responsible person know where you are going and when you expect to return.
- Consider packing a personal locator beacon (PLB) or satellite phone in case of life-threatening emergencies. Mobile phone coverage can be unreliable.





Driving on sand Safety guide

Be prepared!

- Check weather and tides: bom.gov.au/qld
- Check roads: QLDTraffic.qld.gov.au
- Check the web page: qld.gov.au/NationalParks

Note: Beach and track conditions reports if available as well as parks alerts, can be found on the opening page of the park's website. Download and print them prior to your trip.

Where to get your permits

Vehicle access permits are required for the following parks:

- Cooloola, Bribie Island and K'gari (Fraser Island) obtained from qld.gov.au/Camping
- Mulgumpin (Moreton Island) from mulgumpincamping.net.au
- Minjerribah (North Stradbroke Island) from minjerribahcamping.com.au

Dry sand makes driving difficult ... and slow

Drying sand loses compaction and becomes loose. Patches of soft sand develop after long dry spells, generally in high traffic areas like beach access tracks, barge landing areas, car parks and popular inland tracks. Roadworks cannot be carried out in dry conditions, so please be patient.



Drive slowly and steadily into and through deep, soft sand. Try not to 'over-rev' the engine. Drivers of manual vehicles generally select low range and 2nd gear, and never change gears midway as the vehicle loses power and gets stuck.

Please take safety seriously

Pedestrians and wildlife share our beaches

Concentrate and be considerate.

- Reduce speed around parked vehicles as children can run out unexpectedly.
- Give way to pedestrians and drive slowly around wildlife. They may not hear your vehicle over the sound of the surf and wind.
- Look out and up for planes landing; obey signs and ground crew directions if given.
- If it is safe, give way to heavy vehicles and vehicles with trailers on narrow tracks, especially if they're coming downhill. It's often more difficult for them to manoeuvre their vehicle safely.

Be wildlife aware

Stay off the dunes and be wildlife aware.

Many shorebirds, including young chicks are killed every year due to beach traffic. Resident shorebirds build simple nests, just above the high-tide line of beaches, making them vulnerable to vehicles driving above the high-tide line and on dunes.



Hazards will test your good driving ability

They are part of the experience, but take up time. Exposed rocks, deceased marine animals, weed banks and large holes left behind by keen sand castle builders can trick even the most experienced drivers.

Safe travels!



In an emergency

Call Triple Zero (000) or text 106 if you are speech or hearing impaired.



All Queensland road rules apply

Drivers must have a valid licence.
Vehicles must be registered.

Restrictions may apply to
conditionally registered vehicles.

Queensland road rules apply on
beaches. Search for 'Road rules' on
qld.gov.au



Hooning and reckless driving on our
beaches is illegal and will not be tolerated.

Report anti-social behaviour online.

[https://forms.police.qld.gov.au/
launch/Hooning](https://forms.police.qld.gov.au/launch/Hooning)



Everyone in the vehicle
must wear a seatbelt when
the car is moving.



Don't drink alcohol or use
illegal drugs and drive.
Police checks happen
anytime, anywhere.



Never drive tired or hung-
over. Get someone else
to drive.



Obey speed limits.
Look for signs and markers
on the upper beach and
roadsides.



Keep left on beaches.
Traffic is two-way.



Travel a safe distance
behind other vehicles;
generally 3 vehicle
lengths at least.



It is illegal to travel outside
the vehicle. This includes
hanging out of windows or
riding in tray backs.



Never overload your
vehicle and consider
passengers' weights as
part of the load.

Pack the load evenly, with
heavier items packed low.

Critical safety issues

! Reducing tyre pressure.

Flatter tyres can roll off their rims if travelling too fast
or swerving suddenly.



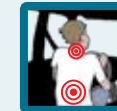
If you choose to reduce tyre
pressure for better traction
through deep soft sand,
always refer to and stay
within manufacturers' tyre
pressure specifications.



Re-inflate your tyres when
you reach harder or
sealed surfaces.

! Dangerous driving

Driving too fast on uneven, rutted tracks has caused
serious neck and back problems.



Tracks can be rough so
allow plenty of travel time.
Slower is safer.



Passengers!
Speak up if your driver is
driving recklessly or too fast.

! Faulty vehicles



Well maintained vehicles
and equipment can save
you expensive vehicle
recovery costs.

Getting yourself unstuck

Once you feel you have lost forward movement in soft sand—**STOP!**



1

Do not continue to spin your wheels.



2

Engine off.



3

Put your vehicle into gear, or PARK for automatics.



4

Handbrake on.



5

Dig the mounded sand from behind your tyres. Use a shovel, your hands, or traction mats.



6

Ensure the ends of the traction mats are wedged under your tyres.

7



Keep bystanders clear and reverse slowly until your vehicle is on solid sand.

Key safety tips



Driving on dunes is dangerous. It's prohibited and fines apply. Avoid damaging your vehicle and the environment. Not enough space to drive between the water and the dunes? Turn back and wait for the tide to go out.



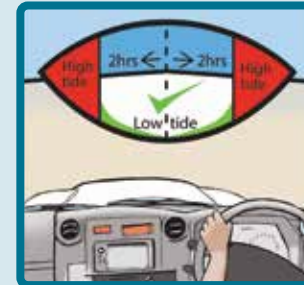
Quick swerves can be catastrophic; your vehicle can tip over. Look ahead for extra-large waves. These wash up higher on the beach. Slow down and drive around them, if possible.



Drive slowly in poor conditions. High tides, sea spray or foam can hide obstacles and washouts.



Avoid night driving. Hazards, people and wildlife are extremely difficult to see at night. Look out for turtles and emerging hatchlings crossing the beach between November to April.



Travel at low tide, or within 2 hours either side of low tide.



Park properly.

- Park well out of the traffic lanes.
- Park high up on the beach, but not on the dunes.
- Park at an angle so drivers on the beach can see that you've stopped.



Use passing bays if possible.

- Closest vehicle to the bay moves into the bay.
- Other vehicle completely stops and waits, and drives on once the track is clear.



Cross creeks carefully.

- Test for depth before crossing; conditions change daily.
- Never stop your vehicle midway; you'll get stuck.
- Look ahead for, and go slow over high banks or deep washouts. They're hard to see, especially at night.