



Green Guide to Four Wheel Driving

Leave No Trace Australia

www.lnt.org.au

**This guide promotes the seven principles of LEAVE NO TRACE ethics for minimal impact travel while 4-Wheel Driving.*

**This guide is intended to help individual recreational and commercial drivers; tour operators and their clients improve their environmental management and reduce their environmental impact on the land.*

***IMPORTANCE: Minimal Impact techniques are not only important to environmental protection and future of the wilderness but also to the satisfaction and positive experience of the outdoor enthusiast.*

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Plan Ahead and Prepare

- Research the your destination before you leave home.
- Know the regulations for the area in which you wish to travel.
- Obtain permission from the landholder or the land management agency.
- Keep group sizes small. Avoid times of high use.
- Plan your trip within the capabilities of your vehicles and drivers.
- If necessary, do a 4WD course before travelling.
- Obtain and know how to read maps before you start.
- Prepare for extreme isolation, weather hazards and emergencies. Check these ahead of time.
- Take plenty of drinking water and emergency equipment. (Sat. phone, First Aid Kit, EPI RB, GPS, fire extinguisher)
- In an emergency don't leave your vehicle.
- Notify someone of return time from isolated trips.
- Check that your vehicle is in good working condition.
- Check your vehicle for basic recovery tools. Make sure they are 4WD compatible.
- Repackage food to minimise waste, take some rubbish bags or sealable plastic tubs.
- Carry a fuel-stove and basic shelter.
- Carry a strong trowel for bush toileting.

Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces

- Stay on established tracks
- Do not create new tracks.
- Durable surfaces include established tracks and campsites, rock, gravel and dry grasses. Take care where you step and/or drive.
- Slow down to reduce impact on soft surfaces like mud.
- Avoid driving in muddy conditions.

- Do not take short-cuts.
- To avoid creating new impacts, cross creeks only at existing fords and use caution on depth and current. Do not cross otherwise.
- Protect water sources by camping at least 100 metres from rivers and billabongs.
- Park your vehicle at least 100m away from water on durable ground.
- Good campsites are found, not made. Altering a site is not necessary.
- Clean-up, naturalise and disguise your campsite upon breaking camp.

In popular areas:

- Concentrate use on existing tracks and campsites.
- Avoid driving on muddy tracks. Go back if need be.
- Keep campsites small. Focus activity in areas where vegetation is absent.
- Help regenerate sites which show beginnings of impact.

In natural areas:

- Do not drive. Walk.
- Disperse use to prevent the creation of campsites and footpaths.
- Avoid places where impacts are just beginning.
- Stay only one night.



Travel on muddy tracks increases erosion and widens tracks!

Dispose of Waste Properly

- Inspect and clean up your campsite and rest areas for rubbish and spilled food. Do not bury food waste. Pack and carry out all rubbish and leftover food. This includes organics.
- Do not burn rubbish.
- Carry a sealable personal ashtray if you smoke. Do not leave butts on the ground.
- Use developed toilets where available.
- In un-developed areas, use a strong trowel to deposit solid human waste in cat-holes dug in the ground, 10-15cm deep at least 100m from water, camp and tracks. Cover and disguise the hole when finished.
- If 4Wdriving, consider carrying a portable toilet.
- Pack out all hygiene products in a suitable container. (These include toilet paper, feminine hygiene products and nappies.)
- To wash yourself or your dishes, carry water 100 meters from streams and pools and use small amounts of biodegradable soap. Scatter strained dishwater.

Leave What You Find

- Respect Indigenous art and other sites of cultural significance.
- Do not touch rock art. Always get appropriate permission from Traditional Owners to visit sites of cultural significance.
- Preserve the past: observe but do not touch cultural or historic structures and artifacts.
- Leave rocks, plants and other natural objects as you find them.
- Avoid introducing or transporting non-native species – do not transport firewood and check for stowaway animals before you leave an area.
- Know non-native species and report sightings of them to appropriate sources.
- Do not travel through Quarantine Areas.
- Clean your vehicle (including tyres), boots and camping gear of mud which may contain dieback fungus or invasive weed seeds.
- Check clothing and all gear and burn or dispose of all hitchhiker type seeds.

Minimise the Impact of Fire

- Fires can cause devastating and lasting impacts to the bush.
- Check area regulations for fire bans.
- Use a lightweight fuel stove for cooking and enjoy a candle or gas lantern for light.
- Where fires are permitted, use established fire rings, fire pans, or mound fires. Do not create new fire-pits.
- Keep fires small. Wood is a habitat for fauna and birds. Use only small sticks that can be broken by hand.
- Burn all wood and coals to ash. Put the fire out completely. Clean out campfires rings after use.
- Consider carrying a fire pan and wood from a local sustainable yield in the back of your vehicle.
- Consider using candles for light instead of fire. Don't leave wax residue.
- Be careful of improper cigarette butt disposal. Take butts with you.

Respect Wildlife

- Observe wildlife from a distance. Do not follow or approach them.
- Know about local animal habitats and behaviour to avoid disturbance.
- Never feed animals or birds. Feeding wildlife damages their health, alters natural behaviours, and exposes them to predators and other dangers.
- Control pets at all times or leave them at home. They are not allowed in National Parks.
- Avoid wildlife during sensitive times: mating, nesting, and raising young.
- Drive slowly and quietly. Avoid revving the engine.
- Take note of all wildlife-warning road signs and be alert.
- Avoid driving at night, dawn or dusk, as this is when animals are most active.
- Slow down and let animals move off the track.
- If you hit an animal stop to check if it is alive. Some local vets will treat injured wildlife and turn them over trained wildlife carers.

Be Considerate of Your Hosts and Other Visitors

- Respect all Indigenous people and their country.
- Respect the wishes and regulations of all Hosts. (e.g. Indigenous, pastoral, land managers and locals)
- Check with land-owners for permission to travel across their land.
- Read and obey signage. Leave gates as found.
- Many people will follow after you – help to keep the country healthy.
- Respect other visitors and protect the quality of their experience.
- Be courteous. Give way to others on tracks and roads.
- Enjoy nature's sounds. Keep noise levels down.

