

# Club Sponsored Trail Leader Checklist

## The Trail Leader

The Trail Leader (TL) is a key role to enjoying an off-road trip as a group.

There is a big difference between a Trail Leader and just being the "lead dog."

The TL acts as a host, guide, foreman, and supervisor for the event.

The TL's prime responsibility is always personal safety. Nobody can completely protect a vehicle in the elements we subject them to, but we must collectively do everything we can to prevent any person from getting hurt or worse.

The TL is also responsible for checking with the MWJT Director of Trails to ensure that the trails selected for the run are opened and available.

Here is a checklist/planning tool to help future Trail Leaders organize group events. This is just the basics. There is no substitute for a detailed plan

### Trail Difficulty:

1-2 Mild trails, may not require 4WD

(Unpaved roads, fire breaks)

3-4 Moderate trails, 4WD required - Potential for getting stuck

(Rutted trails, undulating terrain, shallow stream crossings, mud holes, sand or snow)

5-6 Challenging trails, 4WDLo necessary - Potential for vehicle damage

(Loose and or rocky terrain, off-camber trails, large mud holes, creek crossings)

7-8 Difficult Trails, Heavy Duty vehicle components needed - Potential for serious vehicle damage

(Very rocky or steep terrain, mud bogs, deep stream crossings)

9-10 Extremely Difficult, Heavy Duty vehicle components required

(Most of trail is rocky and off-camber obstacles. High rollover or component damage potential)

### Site Considerations:

#### Land: Public/Private :

- Owner's Permission (if private land)
- Use Fees
- Liability waivers
- Point of Contact (name & phone)

#### Site:

- Meeting area location

- Nearest gas station, convenience store
- Nearest air source (if tires need to be aired down)
- Directions to meeting location from major surrounding areas

**Trail:**

- Directions from meeting area
- Overall trail difficulty (1-10)
- Highest obstacle difficulty
- Bypass routes for difficult obstacles
- Obstacles requiring spotters
- Total trail length
- Estimated time required to negotiate trail or section
- Trail maps (if available)
- Logistics (if needed):
- Local service stations and repair facilities
- Local restaurants
- Local lodging (locations, phone numbers)
- Camping facilities (locations, fees)
- Parking areas for breaks (lunch, etc.)

**Event Planning:**

**Date of event:**

- Conflicts with local events or holidays
- Start time must include reasonable arrival time (to include travel to meeting location and trail preparation (airing down, securing of tow straps, last minute details, etc.))

**Publishing the event:**

- Work with the MWJT Promotions/Events Chairman
- Internet/ mailing list postings
- Non-internet 4-wheelers notification
- Include this info at a minimum: Date/Time, Location of Meeting place/directions, General trail rating, Minimum vehicle requirements, and point of contact.

**Group list or manifest:**

- Number of vehicles in party
- Amount and type of special/ recovery equipment

**Event Day:**

**Designate Tail Gunner:**

- Confirms convoy group past obstacles
- Alerts group of rear approaching traffic
- Assists Trail Leader

**Safety inspection:** (This is for the safety of the entire group, and does not constitute animosity towards anyone deemed unable to participate due to safety violations.)

- Tow points
- Undercarriage clearance (appropriate for the trail at hand)
- Condition/type of tires (appropriate for the trail at hand)
- Spare tire(s), jack, lug wrench
- Vehicles in good running order (brakes, clutch, fuel system, electrical system, etc.)
- Trail Preparation:
- Air down (if needed)
- Hook up tow straps to rear tow point
- Line up vehicles in trail order (Trail boss first (unless using a guide), tail gunner last)
- Driver's meeting:
- General scheme of the event
- Overview of trail(s) covered
- Special times or events
- Significant obstacles

Primary and alternate CB channels

**Safety advisory:**

1. Do NOT walk or stand directly downhill of any vehicles
2. Use safe winching/ tow strap procedures
3. Travel in convoy with lights on
4. Always keep an eye on the vehicle behind you

**Tread Lightly Advisory:**

- Pack out more than you packed in
- Don't blaze new trails
- Don't harass the wildlife
- Share the trail (backpackers, motorcycles, horse riders, etc.)
- Identify Trail Leader, Tail Gunner (Name, vehicle type, location while traveling)
- Communicate any significant actions or obstacles along the trail
- Alert the group of oncoming trail-users
- Designate spotters as needed
- Control the travel speed

**Tips to remember:**

1. Don't get frustrated when things don't go as planned. Have a backup plan.
2. Be flexible, but keep in mind you're in charge.
3. Be clear when explaining start times... differentiate between meet time and depart time.
4. Spread out the winch equipped vehicles
5. Use CBs for direction and organization... keep chatter to minimum
6. Designate areas to stop for "restroom breaks"
7. Slow down around obstacles... let people enjoy the challenges (pictures, cheering, etc.)
8. Enjoy yourself... don't be uptight, angry, or bossy.
9. Keep it safe.