



Rock Crawling

“Rock Crawling” is a term that has become very popular over the last few years in the off-road community. It refers to slow speed maneuvering over rocks or obstacles. Most vehicles used for rock crawling are modified with upgraded suspensions that allow for high ground clearance and extreme articulation. Larger diameter tires (33+ inch diameter) help get over larger obstacles. These vehicles would also have had the gearing lowered so that the engine can almost idle over extreme terrain. Skid plates, rock rail and any other protection equipment can reduce damage to the vehicle while out playing in the rocks.

A few tips to driving in these conditions include having a spotter help you get through the tricky spots. Do not try to straddle larger obstacles as they can catch on the low points of the vehicle (usually the differentials). Let some air out of the tires so that they conform to the rocks and help with traction. This also helps keep the sharp rocks from cutting the tires. Look ahead on the trail, see what is coming up, and try to get the vehicle lined up with the obstacle before you get right on top of it. Make sure you air up your tires when getting back on the pavement.

Go out and try some trails. Most of the off-road trail guides have a rating system that will help you decide what your vehicle is capable of or equipped for and how extreme the trail is. Pick trails that are moderate at first and see how you and your vehicle tackle it. Bring a friend with another vehicle in case you become stuck. You can step up the difficulty level of the trails after you have had some experience out there and you start upgrading. At some point, you will need to purchase a winch and many other parts to keep you and your vehicle moving forward. Just remember that picking good lines and using finesse to get over obstacles is easier on your vehicle and your wallet.