

Are you big enough to operate an ATV?

Most ATVs manufactured today are considered "adult" size. This means they are intended for operation by people 16 years and older. The guidelines below will help you determine if you are physical large enough to operate a specific machine.

How to "Fit" and ATV to a Rider

It is important that your ATV fits you. As with many things, if your ATV fits, it will not only make you a safer rider; but you will be a better rider and it will be more enjoyable. You should be a good match with your ATV not only in size, but in strength. This will allow you to control it better, especially when you ride in more difficult terrain. Use these guidelines to help determine if your ATV is the right size for you.

1. **Clearance between ATV seat and inseam while standing up on footpegs** — The intent for requiring a clearance is twofold: the first is to permit the rider to stand up and absorb shocks through the legs while traversing rough terrain; the second is to minimize the possibility of the rider being struck by the seat and catapulted over the handlebars. Three to six inches should be the minimum clearance. The maximum will be controlled by the reference point below. Proper clearance will also improve the visibility and comfort of the operator.
2. **Upper Legs** — The upper portion of the leg, roughly from the top of the knee to the hip (or the lap if sitting in a chair) should be approximately horizontal. A little above or below the horizontal should not be troublesome but gross departures (knees significantly below or above the hips) should be viewed as a case for further inquiry. If the knees are significantly above the hips, turn the handlebars in both directions and check for contact with the knees or legs.
3. **Foot Length** — With the heel of the right shoe locked against the footpeg or in the proper position on the running board, the toe should be able to depress the foot brake with a simple downward rotation of the foot. Contact with engine or exhaust protrusions should be examined. The rider should be able to operate the brakes consistently without hesitation. The same principle applies to the left side of the ATV where the gearshift is located.

4. **Grip Reach** — With the rider in the normal seated position and the hands on the handlebars, the elbows should have a distinct angle between the upper arm and forearm. If the elbows are straight out, the rider has no ability to turn the handlebars. Also, check if the rider is leaning forward to compensate for a short reach. If the elbows are at less than right angles, the rider is too large for the ATV and steering is difficult possibly throwing the rider off balance.
 5. **Throttle Reach** — With the right hand in the normal operating position, check to see if the thumb can easily operate the throttle. Have the rider turn the handlebars to both the extreme left and extreme right position and check again for any interference with easy operation.
 6. **Brake Reach** — With the hands in the normal operating position and the fingers straight out, check to see if the first joint (from the tip) of the middle finger extends beyond the brake lever. If not, the hand is too small to effectively grasp the lever in an emergency. Make sure the thumb also reaches the emergency switch. Try squeezing the brake lever a few times to be sure the rider can comfortably operate the controls.
- NOTE:** Physical size is **not** the only important factor. The operator must also have the physical strength, stamina and skills necessary to safely operate the ATV.