

# CONSUMER INFORMATION

US Department  
of Transportation  
National Highway  
Traffic Safety  
Administration  
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## UTILITY VEHICLES

Do you drive a Samuari, Jeep, Bronco, Pathfinder or Blazer? These vehicles and many others like them—popularly called utility vehicles—have many of the riding qualities of passenger cars, but they also have some special features for off-road operation.

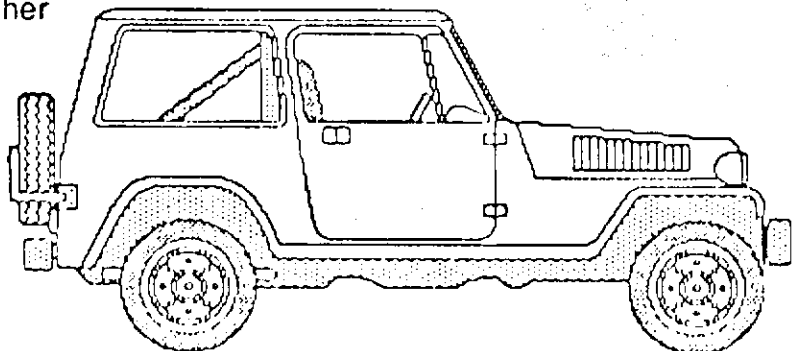
Because of this unique combination of features, utility vehicles must be driven differently than vehicles designed only for on-road operation.

### HOW ARE THEY DIFFERENT?

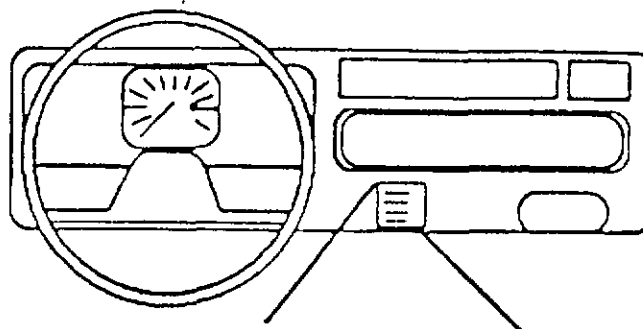
Utility vehicles typically have a higher ground clearance than passenger cars, and some have a shorter wheelbase or narrower tire track width. These features enable utility vehicles to pass through narrow clearances, travel over rugged terrain, and cross shallow streams. However, these same features give utility vehicles a higher center of gravity, making them more "top-heavy" than cars. This characteristic causes them to handle and maneuver differently. They are not designed for cornering at the same (top) speeds as passenger cars. Utility vehicles don't "hug" the road.

If you make sharp turns or abrupt maneuvers in a utility vehicle, the vehicle may roll over or may go out of control and crash. Accident studies have shown that utility vehicles roll over 2 to 3 times more frequently than passenger cars.

Because of the greater risk of rollover, it is important to wear safety belts (a good idea anytime!) to keep from being ejected. Ejection occurs more frequently in rollover crashes and also with open (bodied) vehicles. Features such as rollbars, rollcages, harness belt systems also provide additional crash protection both on- and off-road.



Manufacturers are required to place a special sticker in each utility vehicle near the driver to alert and advise drivers about the special handling characteristics of utility vehicles.



This is a multipurpose passenger vehicle which will handle and maneuver differently from an ordinary passenger car, in driving conditions which may occur on streets and highways and off road. As with other vehicles of this type, if you make sharp turns or abrupt maneuvers, the vehicle may roll over or may go out of control and crash. You should read driving guidelines and instructions in the Owner's Manual, and **wear your seat belt at all times.**

The Owner's Manual explains the special driving precautions that should be taken. Take the time to read and point out these precautions to others who may operate your vehicle.

Most utility vehicles are equipped with 4-wheel drive and can be driven in conditions in which passenger cars have difficulty operating—on snow or ice, in mud or sand, or up steep hills that require extra traction. Enjoy the benefits of this capability, on- and off-road. But be careful! Driving under such conditions is by its very nature more risky.

Want more information on traffic safety?  
 Think your car may have a defect?  
 Call the  
**AUTO SAFETY HOTLINE**  
 1-800-424-3393  
 (In DC Metro Area, Dial 366-0123)

