

An aerial view of three Nissan Frontera SUVs driving on a narrow dirt track through a grassy, hilly landscape. The lead car is a teal Frontera with a roof rack and a spare tire mounted on the back. The second car is also a teal Frontera. The third car is a grey Frontera. The track is flanked by tall, dry grass and green patches. In the top right corner, there is a logo for 'FRONTERA OWNERS.CO.UK' with an orange swoosh.

FRONTERA

OWNERS.CO.UK

Frontera Owners Group

**Tips for the novice
Green Laner with FOG**

Personal preparation

Although you and your passengers will be in your vehicle for most of the time, there will be occasions when you'll want to get out (to take photographs, watch other vehicles attempt an obstacle, socialise, connect a tow rope, etc), so dress according to the weather. A pair of stout shoes/boots are recommended (so long as they do not hinder your driving) and an outdoor coat (it can get quite chilly on the top of a mountain).

Don't forget packed lunches, a flask of tea/coffee and some snacks.

Children are most welcome (in fact they can be most entertaining). Small children might be better off sitting on a bolster seat or cushion, so that they can better see out of the windows.

Vehicle preparation (Tips)

The weekend before, give the car a wash and a good coating of wax – this will make it easier to clean any mud off at a later date.

Remove tow ball covers and towing electrics socket covers as they're bound to come off and get lost, likewise remove any clip-on wheel embellishers (centre caps) as you don't want one to pop off and be either lost in the mud or driven over by the vehicle behind you.

Check washer bottle level (and additive) as there is a possibility you'll get muddy water on the windscreen during your day with us.

Familiarise yourself with the 4x4 mechanism for your particular vehicle, as you will need to use four-wheel-drive and even the low ratio box on occasions.

Also, know where your vehicle tow points are, both front and rear (it might save time and embarrassment on the day).

Ensure your spare tyre is at the correct pressure and that you carry all the tools needed to change a wheel (including locking wheel nut keys).

Whilst we're on the subject of tools, it might be useful to have a means of removing the spark or glow plugs - see "Fording Deep Water" later in this document. Those of you with petrol engines might like to consider bringing a can of WD40 with you (just in case).

You might like to think about protecting you carpet with aftermarket floor mats.

It would be sensible to keep luggage in the boot to a minimum, and any luggage you do carry would be better off tied down.

The tracks we will be using are public rights of way for motorised vehicles and as such, are subject to the rules of the Road Traffic Act as per a normal tarmac road. That includes the wearing of seatbelts, lighting, speeding ! tax, insurance and MOT etc.

When you arrive.

We normally arrange to meet at a specific meeting point (public or pub car park, camp site). This gives us time to meet and greet, and an opportunity for you to ask any questions. Before we set off, please make sure that you have engaged your manual free wheeling hubs (if fitted)

Communication

Not really necessary, but if you have a PMR (channel 4) or CB (channel 8) radio bring them along as it is desirable for the leader to talk to the last car in the convoy to advise on which gates need to be left open or closed. Radio can also provide a good craic with idle chit-chat.

Driving in convoy

We will be driving in a convoy of up to four vehicles. On the tarmac roads, please keep a sensible distance from the vehicle in front (as you would in normal circumstances). When off road, although travelling at much slower speeds, leave a few car lengths between you and the vehicle in front. This will allow the vehicle in front space to manoeuvre should they have difficulty and also allow you to see any obstacles ahead (giving you more time to plan your attack). Please note that as the group leader does not necessarily know the route by heart, they may stop suddenly (before turning into a field or other junction or to switch from 4H to 4L) – we don't want any shunts

Whilst there is little possibility in getting lost, always keep the vehicle in front in sight, and where possible keep an eye open for the vehicle behind. The last but one vehicle should especially keep an eye open for the last vehicle, as they will often get delayed when closing gates.

Etiquette

We will be sharing the roads with other users, whether they be farmers, cyclists, ramblers or other 4x4 drivers. There is a lot of bad press about so called off-roaders - let us be a gleaming example by being courteous, giving way and by making as little noise and damage as possible.

If we come across horse/pony riders, we will stop our vehicles and switch off the engines. Don't suddenly get out of the car as the opening door might startle the horse/pony.

If we meet another 4x4 convoy, usually the shortest group will drive off the track leaving it clear enough for the other vehicles to pass without them having to leave the track - this prevents wear to the edges of the track (preventing making it artificially wider)

There is a very remote possibility we might come upon some unpleasant response to us being on some lanes. Never enter into an argument and never raise your voice. You are under no obligation to give your name and address or any vehicle details (other than the visible registration mark) unless requested to do so by a uniformed police officer. If the situation does get nasty, stay in your vehicle and let the group leader take any initiative.

Tread Lightly

There is the remote possibility that you expect to get mud up the side of your vehicle so you can prove in the office car park that you went off-road. Don't worry, there is a chance you will be going home with a dirty car (especially if it rained the night before) so there is no need to purposely spin your wheels at every opportunity.

As Lawrence has certain responsibilities being a GLASS member and Ste being a CRAG member, you will get a quiet warning off us if we feel your over exuberance could bring laning into disrepute. If you don't heed that quiet warning, we would expect you to leave quietly (your vehicle details and actions might then be reported to GLASS/CRAG who in turn may forward them to the local Highways Authority or even the police). We make no apologies if that sounds harsh, but public rights of way are not pay-and-play sites.

If you get stuck or into difficulty

If you get stuck it will probably be obvious to the rest of the group, but if you do need assistance, use the CB/PMR, flash your headlights or politely use your horn to get attention. Don't panic, there will be plenty of volunteers with 4x4's near at hand who will come to your aid.



Don't forget !

- Warm, waterproof clothing.
 - Sturdy shoes/boots (wellies for the kids?).
 - Flask of tea/coffee + snacks + packed lunch.
 - Stills/video Camera.
 - If you have them; a tow rope, CB or PMR radio.
 - Sense of adventure & a sense of humour.
- IF IN ANY DOUBT, ASK.

Off Road Driving Tips

General

When driving off road, your vehicle will try and steer itself, in so much that the front wheels will try and find the path of least resistance. Therefore, it is important not to grasp the steering wheel with your thumbs inside the spokes, as a jolt to the tyres could (worst case scenario) break your thumb.

Fording a stream

Make sure your doors are shut properly - The door seals are designed to prevent the ingress of water.

Switch off lights (unless it is so dark you cannot see) - as cold water hitting a hot bulb will "blow" the bulb. Also, low fitted lamps might possibly let in water and the short circuit will blow a fuse.

Wait for the vehicle in front to clear the ford before you make your attempt. You want to aim to get to dry land and not have to stop on a possibly slippery exit ramp.



The preferred method of fording deep water is to travel at the same speed as the bow wave that forms in front of your vehicle. This phenomena creates a lower water level in the engine bay thus assisting in keeping it running.

Tip - use 4x4, low, 2nd gear. Enter the ford slowly without making a splash and then pick up a little speed to push against the resistance of the water.

Important - if the engine stalls in deep water, do not attempt to restart it unless you are absolutely sure the exhaust is not under water.

If you do stall the engine when fording deep water, there is the strong possibility that with the lack of exhaust pressure, water will travel back up the exhaust pipe and siphon into the engine. If you try to then start the engine, the pistons will not be able to compress the water so something will bend or break - normally the con rods - which means a new engine.

If you are unfortunate enough to stall whilst fording a river, switch off the engine and all electrics. Summon help and get towed to dry land. Remove all the spark/glow plugs and then turn the engine over a few times to expel any water that might have gotten into the engine. When all is dry, refit the plugs and all going well you'll be back on your way.

Up hill

There is no real trick to this. If you can't find the right normal gear that will get you up without the engine struggling (labouring), try a low ratio gear. Your journey to the top will be slower but your engine will thank you for it. Note that in low ratio mode, it is difficult to make smooth gear changes - don't be too aggressive so as to break something by snatching through the gears. It is often desirable to select the required gear for a climb and start off in that gear on a more level track.



Failed hill climb (i.e., you stalled or got stuck) - don't panic. Ensure engine is switched off. Take your feet off the pedals, leaving it in gear. Relax and breathe. So you can't go up, better to reverse down. Handbrake on, clutch, into reverse, off clutch handbrake off. Check steering wheel is straight. Check behind is clear. Ignition off, then to on, then start engine and immediately we are driving backwards under control.

Down hill

The trick here is "engine braking". Engage the low box and 1st gear. Take all feet off the pedals and let your vehicle descend the hill at its own speed. If you feel that the speed is too dramatic, lightly apply the brake, but only enough to slow down the engine (not the wheels).



Mud

Different types of mud need different types of technique. For some, normal 4x4 will do. Others need a bit more commitment (or power). Similar to fording a river, wait for the vehicle in front to clear the mud before you make your attempt

Rutted Tracks

Our route will take us across a few fields where the passage of 4x4's and farm machinery have created ruts (please drive in the existing ruts and don't make any new ones). On some sections, the ruts will get deeper in so much that your vehicles under protection will rub and scrape, which will naturally slow you down therefore requiring a little more power.

Legal stuff

This event has been organised by members of the Frontera Owners Group, which is run and maintained by Pete Ryder ("Frontera Administrator").

Neither Pete, nor the group leaders will take any responsibility for any damage you may cause to your vehicle whilst out laning with us on this event. You take part purely at your own risk.

You may be asked to sign a similar disclaimer at the start of the event on the day.

Lawrence Fowler "Trugga"
Frontera Owners Group
Discussion Forum Administrator
GLASS Members



The Countryside Code has been revised and re-launched to reflect the introduction of new open access rights (Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000) and changes in society over the last 20 years.

Countryside Code - advice for the public

- Be safe - plan ahead and follow any signs.
- Leave gates and property as you find them.
- Protect plants and animals, and take your litter home.
- Keep dogs under close control.
- Consider other people.

<http://www.countryside.gov.uk>



The Green Lane Association is a national user group, dedicated to researching and protecting the UK's unique heritage of ancient vehicular rights of way and promoting sensible driving in the countryside.

<http://www.glass-uk.org/>



CRAG seeks to develop close partnerships with highways authorities to assist them in managing their networks and to provide voluntary support in updating records, repairing routes and undertaking general maintenance.

<http://www.crag-uk.org>



Ordnance Survey has been providing accurate, reliable and detailed geographic information for more than 200 years.

<http://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk>



Memory-Map's mission is to bring easy to use, powerful and affordable navigation software and accessories to the outdoor recreation and marine markets.

<http://www.memory-map.co.uk>



The Frontera group was formed in February, 2003. Initially the group started with just the Yahoo site and has now expanded to this site as well.

<http://www.fronteraowners.co.uk>



DRIVERS CODE OF CONDUCT

- Use only rights of way with known, proven or provable vehicular rights. If challenged, discuss; if not resolved, then leave as requested until status is rechecked.
- Keep to the defined track. Detour only to pass immovable obstructions. Report any obstructions (including low branches) to the highway authority and the local GLASS Area Representative. Be critical of your own abilities and equipment when assessing an obstruction; it is your right to abate a non-lawful obstruction, but do not commit yourself to a bigger task than you are equipped for.
- If the route is not obvious on the ground, ask locally, or check on the maps held at the highway authority offices or consult the local GLASS Area Representative.
- Travel at a quiet and unobtrusive pace and as slowly as practicable; we recommend a maximum of 12 mph when in a 4x4 and on an Un-surfaced Right of Way (URoW). Ensure your vehicle is fully road-legal, URoW are subject to the same laws as surfaced roads.
- When travelling in groups, keep to a small number - four or less. Split larger parties up and either use a different route or allow a good interval to elapse before following.
- Do not travel on URoW when they risk being affected beyond a point of natural recovery once the weather improves. If need be, walk some or all of the route first to determine its suitability. Do not use URoW that maybe damaged by the wheel pressure applied by your vehicle.
- Avoid damage to trees, hedgerows and boundaries. Some roads carry vehicular rights but are physically too narrow for 4x4s.
- Do not practice recovery techniques on any URoW. Use a winch only with extreme caution, and use only the correct equipment and techniques.
- Be courteous to other road users - pull over and stop your vehicle for walkers, but pull over, stop your vehicle and switch off the engine for passing horses. Thank those who move over for you.
- After consultations with Country Landowners Association and National Farmers Union HQ's, "best practice" dictates that gates if they were found to be secured in an open position should be left open, and those which are found shut or swinging should be shut behind you; the landowner might appreciate being told about a gate insecurely propped open if you see them.
- Keep dogs and children under supervision. Watch out for injured or trapped animals, and report all suspicious events to the landholder.
- Guard against all risks of fire.
- Take your litter home and that left by others if you see it, wherever practicable. Plastic bags can suffocate stock if swallowed.
- Help to keep all water clean.
- Remember that wildlife faces many threats and URoW are valuable habitats, take special care in spring and early summer.
- Follow the Country Code, but be aware that it is for your guidance only.