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SELECTING THE RIGHT ATV: A GUIDE FOR FIRST-TIME PURCHASERS

Irvine, Calif. – All-terrain vehicles (ATVs) are multipurpose vehicles that have rapidly gained popularity among new and longtime owners throughout the United States for recreational use, such as camping and fishing, and utility use either on the job or around the house.

Sales of four-wheel ATVs have increased significantly in recent years primarily because of the ATV's maneuverability, versatility and efficiency. ATVs easily traverse various off-highway trails, reach rugged locations that other vehicles cannot, and offer business operators the opportunity to accomplish work in the field at significant financial savings when compared to using a truck or tractor. ATVs operate in all climates and are the most versatile vehicle in operation today.

The ATV Safety Institute (ASI) recommends that all individuals, whether outdoor explorers or business owners, begin their search for a new ATV by conducting thorough research. In addition to visiting dealers, ASI suggests that first-time buyers visit the manufacturer Web sites and browse through the various enthusiast publications.

"It's also important to know how a new owner plans to use an ATV," said Elisabeth Piper, Director of Corporate Affairs for ASI. She explained that work-related uses include many applications, such as in oil production, vineyard management, ranching, farming, field maintenance, and facilities management at sporting events.

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Selecting the Right ATV – 2

Recreational uses include a variety of options, such as transporting gear to a fishing spot, campsite or hunting grounds, hauling firewood from the backwoods to the homestead, or simply exploring the great outdoors.

Piper said once shoppers become owners, whether for recreation or work, they have available to them a number of accessories to increase the versatility and effectiveness of the ATV. Some of these accessories include snow blades, front-mounted forklifts, sprayers, timber haulers, utility trailers, and many more. Piper added that there can be as many as 20-30 different accessories for ATVs for their myriad applications.

Buy an ATV Within Size Limitations

There are different sizes and styles of ATVs for all ages and abilities. Different models are available for specific age groups:

Rider Age	ATV Size
6 years and older	Under 70cc
12 years and older	70cc – 90cc
16 years and older	Over 90cc

Parents or guardians should not permit youngsters to ride an ATV that is not recommended for their age group. Additionally, while a youth may be of the recommended age to ride a particular size ATV, not all youngsters have the strength, skill, or judgment necessary to operate an ATV.

Parents should supervise their youngster's operation of the ATV at all times and should permit continued use only if they determine that their youngster has the ability and judgment to safely operate the ATV.

Proper Riding Gear

Proper riding gear when operating an ATV includes:

- Approved helmet (helmets should have stickers on the inside or outside confirming compliance with the standards from the U.S. Department of Transportation [DOT])
- Gloves
- Long-sleeved shirt/jacket
- Over-the-ankle boots
- Goggles/face shield
- Long pants

The All-Terrain Vehicle Safety Institute® (ASI), a not-for-profit division of the Specialty Vehicle Institute of America® (SVIA), was formed in 1988 to implement an expanded national program of all-terrain vehicle (ATV) safety education and awareness. ASI's primary goal is to promote the safe and responsible use of ATVs, thereby reducing accidents and injuries that may result from improper ATV operation by the rider.

The Specialty Vehicle Institute of America is an information source about the all-terrain vehicle industry. SVIA provides information on ATV standards as well as promoting model state legislation on ATV riding. It also serves as a liaison with state and federal agencies on ATV training and their influence upon the environment. Membership is open to all corporations regularly engaged in the business of manufacturing, importing or wholesale distribution of ATVs in the United States. SVIA was formed in 1983 as a national not-for-profit trade association and is based in Irvine, California. Its members include AlphaSports, Arctic Cat, Bombardier, Honda, John Deere, Kawasaki, Suzuki and Yamaha.

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