

# Overlanding Essentials

What your rig actually needs before you leave the pavement

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Overlanding is self-supported travel off-road — not a day hike and not a campground. Your vehicle is your base camp. This guide covers the minimum kit, the critical safety gear, and how to not get your vehicle stuck where you can't get it out.

## The rig fundamentals

- Ground clearance matters more than 4WD. Most overlanding damage happens to the undercarriage.
- All-terrain (AT) tires are the most important upgrade: 10-15% oversized for your rim diameter.
- Full-size spare, mounted and accessible. Not a donut. Not under the chassis where mud will lock it.

## Recovery gear (non-negotiable)

- A proper recovery strap (not a tow strap): kinetic/nylon, 20-30ft, rated for 2x your vehicle weight.
- High-lift jack or air bladder jack — standard car jacks are useless on soft ground.
- Traction boards (MAXTRAX-style): drive-out recovery when you're buried in sand or mud.
- A rated D-ring or shackle on your front and rear bumper. Tie-off points save you.

## Communication and navigation

- A satellite communicator (Garmin inReach or SPOT) is mandatory on remote routes — no cell signal means no 911.
- Download Gaia GPS or OnX Offroad maps to your phone and a backup device before you leave.
- Paper maps of the area. Devices fail; paper doesn't.

## Insider glossary

**RTT** — Roof-top tent — sleeps on top of your vehicle, deploys in under 2 minutes.

**Articulation** — The degree to which suspension allows wheels to travel independently — more is better off-road.

**Diff lock** — Differential lock — forces equal power to both wheels on an axle, critical for technical terrain.

**Skid plate** — Armor plating under your engine/transfer case protecting against rock strikes.

## Starter checklist

- All-terrain tires
- Full-size spare
- Kinetic recovery strap
- High-lift or air jack
- Traction boards
- Satellite communicator
- Downloaded offline maps
- First aid + fire kit

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