

## Before you go

- Read more about sand driving on [qld.gov.au/DrivingOnSand](http://qld.gov.au/DrivingOnSand)
- Download the free Triple Zero (000) emergency app at [emergencyapp.triplezero.gov.au](http://emergencyapp.triplezero.gov.au)
- Check [qld.gov.au/ParkAlerts](http://qld.gov.au/ParkAlerts) for access, closures and conditions.



## Further information

- [qld.gov.au/NationalParks](http://qld.gov.au/NationalParks)
- [qld.gov.au/Camping](http://qld.gov.au/Camping)
- [qldnationalparks](https://www.facebook.com/qldnationalparks)
- [@QldParks; #QldParks](https://www.instagram.com/QldParks)



Avoid losing your life or your car.  
Take safety seriously!

## Getting yourself unstuck

Once you feel you have lost forward movement in soft sand—**STOP!**



- 1 Do not continue to spin your wheels.



- 2 Engine off.



- 3 Put your vehicle into gear, or PARK for automatics.



- 4 Handbrake on.



- 5 Dig the mounded sand from behind your tyres. Use a shovel, your hands, or traction mats.



- 6 Ensure the ends of the traction mats are wedged under your tyres.

- 7 Keep bystanders clear and reverse slowly until your vehicle is on solid sand.

## Be prepared!

- Check weather and tides: [bom.gov.au/qld](http://bom.gov.au/qld)
- Check roads: [QldTraffic.qld.gov.au](http://QldTraffic.qld.gov.au)
- Check the web page: [qld.gov.au/NationalParks](http://qld.gov.au/NationalParks)

**Note:** Beach and track conditions reports, if available for the park, and park alerts appear on the opening page of the park's website. Download and print them off for your trip.

## Did you know?

Vehicle access permits are required for the following parks:

- Cooloola
- Bribie Island
- Moreton Island
- K'gari (Fraser Island).



Permits can be obtained by visiting [qld.gov.au/Camping](http://qld.gov.au/Camping)

Permits are also required for North Stradbroke Island and can be obtained from [minjerribahcamping.com.au](http://minjerribahcamping.com.au)

## Dry sand makes driving difficult ... and slow

Drying sand loses compaction and becomes loose. Patches of soft sand develop after long dry spells, generally in high traffic areas like beach access tracks, barge landing areas, car parks and popular inland tracks. Roadworks cannot be carried out in dry conditions, so please be patient.



Drive slowly and steadily into and through deep, soft sand. Try not to 'over-rev' the engine. Drivers of manual vehicles generally select low range and 2<sup>nd</sup> gear, and never change gears midway as the vehicle loses power and gets stuck.

## Always bring:

- a tyre gauge that works
- portable air compressor or pump that works
- sufficient drinking water
- well stocked first-aid kit
- traction mats
- shovel.



## Vehicle Recovery

Snatch strap and tow rope type recoveries should only be attempted by trained operators using appropriate safety-rated recovery equipment and rated recovery points on both vehicles. If you are not trained, do not attempt this type of recovery yourself.

Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) rangers cannot assist with towing or snatch strap recovery due to the significant safety risks involved. They may provide some assistance or be able to suggest local towing services, but if safe, try getting your vehicle free by using traction mats rather than tow ropes or snatch straps.



### Did you know?

In remote areas medical assistance may be hours away.

Be well prepared for any contingency.

## In an emergency

Call Triple Zero (000).

## Please take safety seriously

### Beaches and day-use areas are busy places

Please concentrate and be considerate.

- Slow down around parked vehicles; children can run out unexpectedly.
- Give way to pedestrians and drive slowly around wildlife. They may not hear your vehicle over the sound of the surf and wind.
- Look out and up for planes landing; obey signs and ground crew directions if given.
- Only if safe, try to give way to heavy vehicles and vehicles with trailers on narrow tracks, especially if they're coming downhill towards you. It's often more difficult for them to safely manoeuvre their vehicle.

### Help can be hours away

Be prepared to wait. Medical evacuations and vehicle recoveries can take several hours. Bad conditions can delay rescues even further.

### Hazards will test your good driving ability

They are part of the experience, but take up time. Exposed rocks, weed banks and those large holes left behind by keen sand castle builders can trick even the most experienced drivers.

### Take your time

Beach hazards like exposed rocks, large holes left by keen sand castle builders and, the almost impossible to see, 'seaweed banks' test even the most experienced drivers.

### Take it easy

Rest yourselves and your vehicle. Take a walk, sit in the shade or just take in the beauty of these special places.

## Happy travels!

# Driving on sand Safety guide



## All Queensland road rules apply



Drivers must have a valid licence.  
Vehicles must be registered.

Restrictions may apply to  
conditionally registered vehicles.  
Search for 'Road rules' on [qld.gov.au](http://qld.gov.au)



Everyone in the vehicle  
must wear a seatbelt when  
the car is moving.



Don't drink alcohol or use  
illegal drugs and drive.  
Police checks happen  
anytime, anywhere.



Never drive tired or hung-  
over. Get someone else  
to drive.



Never drive too fast!  
Obey speed limits. Look for  
signs and markers on the  
upper beach and roadsides.



Keep left on beaches.  
Traffic is two-way.



Travel a safe distance  
behind other vehicles;  
generally 3 vehicle  
lengths at least.



It is illegal to travel outside  
the vehicle. This includes  
hanging out of windows or  
riding in tray backs.



Never overload your vehicle  
and consider passengers'  
weights as part of the load.

Pack the load evenly, with  
heavier items packed low.

## Have a safe trip

### Preparing for a sand drive?

- Only take a 4WD that has high clearance with low range gear selection.
- Ensure your 4WD can cope with difficult conditions, including deep soft sand; steep, bumpy tracks.
- If hiring a 4WD, get good instructions, check their safety gear and ask about any restrictions.
- Get reliable information about the place you're visiting and its sand driving conditions.

### Are you new to sand driving?

- Take some lessons first.
- Have an experienced sand driver come along.

### Did you know?

- Sport Utility Vehicles (SUV) and all-wheel-drive (AWD) vehicles are not suitable for most tracks in Queensland's sand parks and coastal areas.
- SUVs or AWDs can get stuck for hours, suffer damage, hold up traffic and need expensive recovery.
- Trail bikes are not permitted on some sand parks; check websites first.
- Trail-bike riders and drivers of SUVs and AWDs can face serious difficulties in deep, soft sand and washouts, or on soft, slushy beaches.

### Towing a trailer or caravan?

- Only tow a high clearance trailer or caravan that suits your 4WD's coupling and towing ability.
- Unsuitable caravans or trailers get badly damaged and stuck for hours. Recovery is expensive!
- Caravans are not permitted in some camping areas; check first.

### Check everything works well

- Bring enough, good quality recovery gear and check that it works; it could save your life and your vehicle.
- Tyres, including spares, must be in good condition.
- Your transmission and differentials will work hard in sand; get these checked and serviced too.

## Critical safety issues



### Reducing tyre pressure.

Flatter tyres can roll off their rims if travelling too fast or swerving suddenly.



If you choose to reduce tyre pressure for better traction through deep soft sand, always refer to and stay within manufacturers' tyre pressure specifications.

Re-inflate your tyres when you reach harder or sealed surfaces.



### Dangerous driving

Driving too fast on uneven, rutted tracks has caused serious neck and back problems.



Tracks can be rough so allow plenty of travel time. Slower is safer.

Passengers! Speak up if your driver is driving recklessly or too fast.



### Faulty vehicles



Well maintained vehicles and equipment can save you expensive vehicle recovery costs.

## Key safety tips



Quick swerves can be catastrophic; your vehicle can tip over. Look ahead for extra-large waves. These wash up higher on the beach. Slow down and drive around them, if possible.



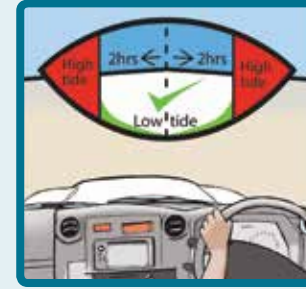
Driving on dunes is dangerous. It's prohibited and fines apply. Avoid damaging your vehicle and the environment. Not enough space to drive between the water and the dunes? Turn back and wait for the tide to go out.



Don't drive too fast in bad conditions. High tides, sea spray or sea foam can hide obstacles and washouts.



Avoid night driving. Hazards and people are extremely difficult to see at night.



Travel at low tide, or within 2 hours either side of low tide.



Park properly.

- Park well out of the traffic lanes.
- Park high up on the beach, but not on the dunes.
- Park at an angle so drivers on the beach can see that you've stopped.



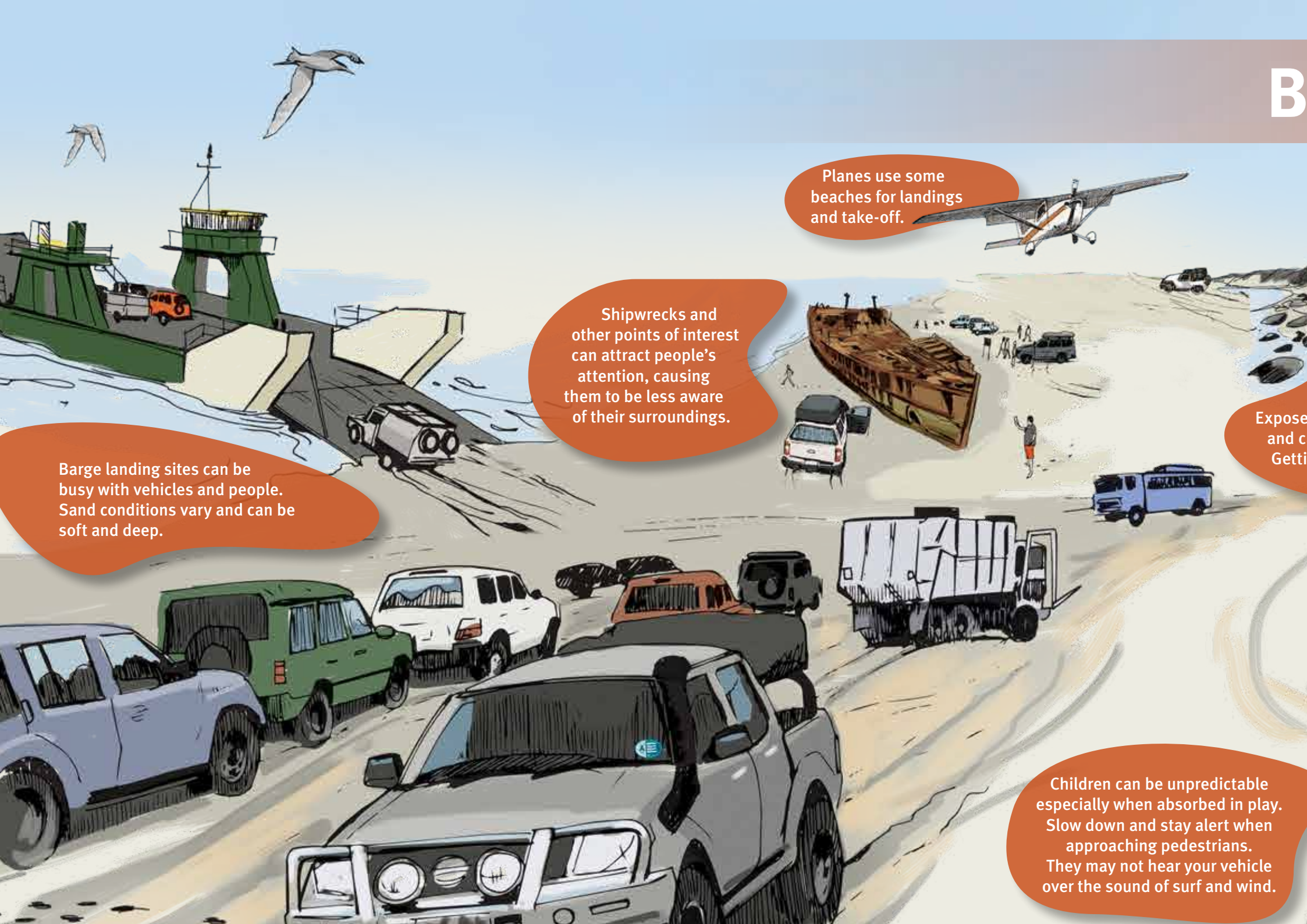
Use passing bays if possible.

- Closest vehicle to the bay moves into the bay.
- Other vehicle completely stops and waits, and drives on once the track is clear.



Cross creeks carefully.

- Test for depth before crossing; conditions change daily.
- Never stop your vehicle midway; you'll get stuck.
- Look ahead for, and go slow over, high banks or deep washouts. They're hard to see, especially at night.



Barge landing sites can be busy with vehicles and people. Sand conditions vary and can be soft and deep.

Shipwrecks and other points of interest can attract people's attention, causing them to be less aware of their surroundings.

Planes use some beaches for landings and take-off.

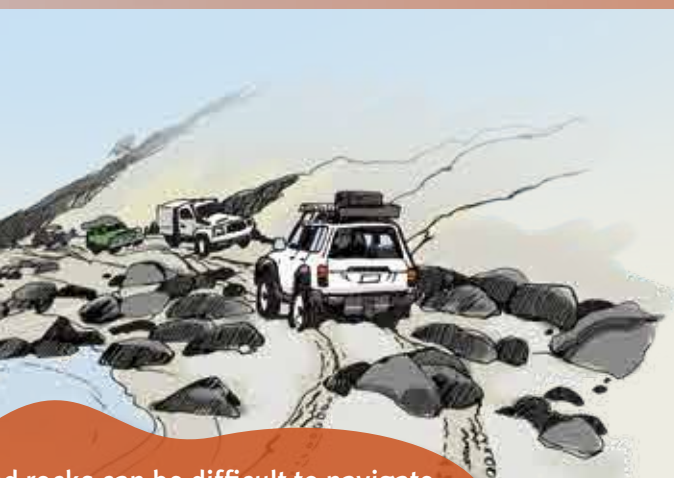
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Children can be unpredictable especially when absorbed in play. Slow down and stay alert when approaching pedestrians. They may not hear your vehicle over the sound of surf and wind.


# each hazards—what should I look out for?

**Drivers, please stay alert!**

Sand driving needs your total concentration. Be prepared for hazards. Don't be distracted by sight-seeing while driving, even though you might be on holidays.



Hard rocks can be difficult to navigate and can cause damage to your vehicle. Getting stuck here can be dangerous, especially at high tide.



High tides and large sea swells can wash away sections of the dunes, leaving steep cliffs that leave you nowhere to go when waves approach.






Partially submerged objects come in all shapes and sizes, from marine debris and vegetation through to deceased marine animals.

Wildlife can act erratically when approached—slow down and stay alert.

Creeks can be deeper than they appear and the bottom is soft and moving.

An illustration of a beach scene. In the top left, two people in blue shorts are using tools to dig in the sand. In the top right, a dark SUV is parked on a cracked, light-colored surface. In the center, a large green plant with long, thin leaves stands on a sandy path. To the right, a white SUV is parked. In the bottom left, a blue car is partially visible, appearing to be stuck in a shallow, dark area. The background shows a bright, hazy sky with long shadows cast across the sand.

Tides and creeks may cause steep washouts on ocean beaches. These washouts may be difficult to see, especially at night.

Do not drive through resting flocks of birds. They may be recovering from journeys thousands of kilometres long—please do not disturb them.

Access tracks onto or off the beach, or to beach camping areas may change quickly. Always use signposted access tracks and assess their condition prior to use.

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