Off-Road Essentials Checklist

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Page with the live version:
https://offroadfreedom.com/guides/off-road-gear-checklist-for-beginners/

A framework, not a shopping list. Build the kit gradually and adjust for your vehicle and trip. Ratings and sizes come from each item's maker.

Off-Road Essentials Checklist

Done	Area	Must carry	Nice to have	Advanced
[ ]	Recovery	Traction boards or a rated recovery strap with rated shackles	Shovel, gloves, tree saver	Winch, damper, snatch block
[ ]	Tires	Tire pressure gauge, portable compressor, a matching spare	Plug kit, tire deflator, valve core tool	A second spare, bead-seating tools
[ ]	Tools	Owner's manual, basic hand tools, a headlamp	Multimeter, spare fuses, tie-downs	Welding or fabrication kit
[ ]	Safety	First aid kit, water, phone with an offline map	Fire extinguisher, whistle, reflective triangle	Satellite messenger, as the maker describes
[ ]	Navigation	Offline maps and a paper map of the area	Handheld GPS	Two-way radio; GMRS needs an FCC license
[ ]	Comfort	Food, layers, sun protection	Folding chairs, a small stove	Full camp kit

Share your route and expected return time with someone who is not coming along. Take a first aid course (Red Cross or NOLS) rather than relying on a kit alone.

Sources

American Red Cross: Anatomy of a first aid kit
https://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/anatomy-of-a-first-aid-kit.html
What a basic first aid kit holds. Checked November 12, 2026.

FCC: General Mobile Radio Service (GMRS)
https://www.fcc.gov/wireless/bureau-divisions/mobility-division/general-mobile-radio-service-gmrs
GMRS needs an FCC license. Checked November 12, 2026.

USTMA: Tire care essentials
https://www.ustires.org/tire-care-safety/tire-care-essentials
Recommended pressure is on the driver's door label or in the owner's manual; check when tires are cold. Checked November 12, 2026.

A general checklist, not advice for one vehicle. Check your own equipment against the maker's manual and ratings.