

# 2019\_Jan\_Newsletter

## Off-Road Safety Academy

Mon 1/14/2019 6:12 PM

Inbox

To:bob.wohlers discoveroffroading.com <bob.wohlers@discoveroffroading.com>;





**Hello Newsletter Subscribers,**

Thank you for signing up to receive my training-centric newsletters. I hope you've found the previous editions informative and helpful for your vehicle-supported adventures. I trust you will enjoy this months newsletter. If you have comments, please email me: [Bob.Wohlers@discoveroffroading.com](mailto:Bob.Wohlers@discoveroffroading.com).

# ***Winch Maintenance – A Funny Thing Happened When I Went to Use My Winch***



**[Information from my new book: *The Total Approach to Getting Unstuck Off-Road*]**

For most vehicle-supported adventurers, use of their winch is a “sometimes” affair. A winch is a valuable self-recovery tool, but for most recreational off-roaders, it’s rarely used. When you do need it, it can be more valuable than gold. But, will it work when you call upon its abilities?



Here's the typical scenario: You purchase a winch, firmly connect it to your bumper, hook it up to power, and there it sits – month after month, year after year. It sits in the rain and snow. It endures freezing cold and sun bleaching temperatures. It can even get hit in a parking lot by remorseless shoppers. You may even cover

your winch to keep the rain off it. But how about the condensation that accumulates under a rainproof bonnet? The cover sits over the winch, attempting to corrode your winch even on a sunny day.

The question is this, “When you need your winch, will it work when you require its abilities?” The points are these: 1) Service your winch four times a year (once each quarter), and 2) Test your winch at home prior to every remote backcountry adventure. Run your winch for a few minutes. Put a load on it and check that the braking system can hold a load. Use the Pre and Post-Trip Checklist in the Appendix of this InfoBook to help remind you of this important mechanical check.

### **General Winch Maintenance**

- Clean and Dry Winch. Remove mud, debris, bugs, and road grime. Winch covers are great; just make sure there is no hidden moisture under the bonnet.
- Clean Terminals and Posts. If you have an electric winch, remove and clean both positive and negative terminals using a terminal brush. Also clean the battery posts with a wire brush. Do this even if they look clean. Next, check the motor cable connections on the winch itself. Make sure they are clean and tight (but don't over-tighten). Make sure the watertight boots are in good shape. Replace if they are torn or cracked.
- Check Fluid Level. If you have a hydraulic winch, check the power steering fluid in your reservoir; top off if necessary. Check all fluid connections and hoses to and from the winch.
- Test Winch Controller. Make sure the cable is in good shape and the controller



functions properly. Wireless controllers should be charged and functional.

- Test Clutch Control. Ensure the clutch engages and disengages easily and securely. When a winch is not used very often, a mechanical winch clutch can become difficult to turn. If your clutch is difficult to turn, have it cared for by a professional or learn how to do this yourself with guidance from the manufacturer.
- Examine Winch Line. Winch line should be clean, with no frays, kinks, broken strands, etc. More on this later in the chapter. Take all the line off the drum and examine, then respool properly.
- Winch Mounts. Check mounting bolts, assuring a secure winch.

## Off-Road Safety Academy to Partner With Four Wheel Campers to Lead Three Backcountry Tours in 2019

Off-Road Safety Academy and Four Wheel Campers have teamed up together to produce three backcountry tours specifically for Four Wheel Camper owners. The 2019 tour destinations are Mojave Road (this tour sold out in one day and now has a waiting list), Parashant National Monument (North Rim of the Grand Canyon), and Death Valley. These tours are for anyone with a Four Wheel Pop-Up Camper on their 4WD truck. All trucks must have 4-Lo gearing capability, reasonable ground clearance, plus front and rear frame-mounted recovery points. For more information, dates, tour payment, details, and terms and conditions, go to [discoveroffroading.com](http://discoveroffroading.com).



## ***Newly Revised Website Just Launched!***

In between trips to take new photos for my third book, I've been revising my website. See what happens when I come in from the dirt? I've added student testimonials, a gift certificate option, and of course I've updated my calendar to share with all of you Off-Road Safety Academy's 2019 courses, tours, and event attendance.

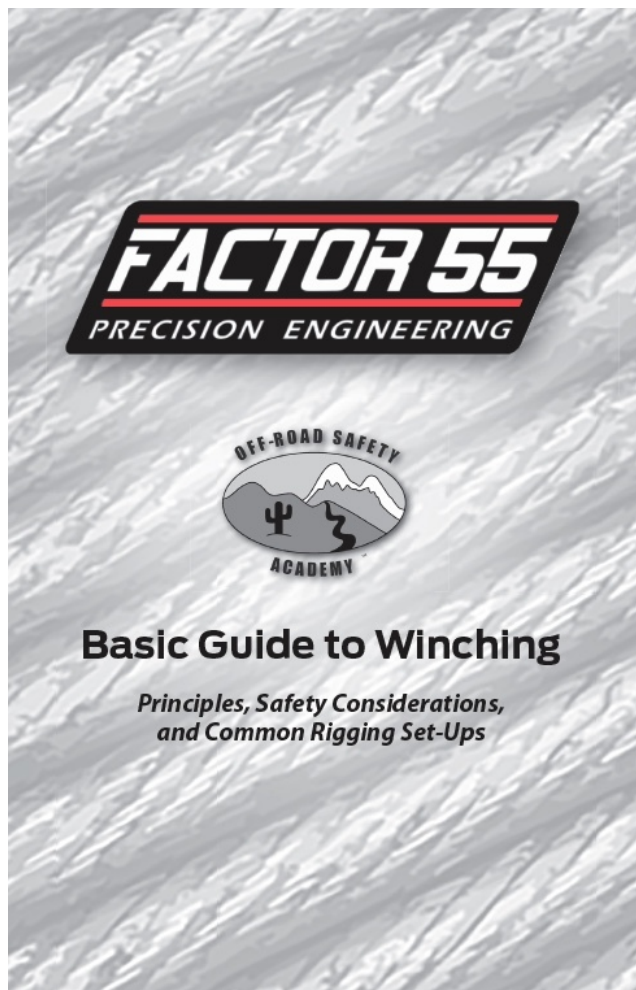


I couldn't sit on student testimonials any longer. I felt compelled to share what my students have been saying about my courses. At the conclusion of each course I give, I pass out a course questionnaire. On these questionnaires students offer their final thoughts on the course. I'm honored by their words and wanted to share with you on my website what they say about my training.

For the holidays and beyond, I've decided to add a new way to purchase my 2-day Discovery Course or one of my multi-day tours. Gift Certificates! Go the the website and purchase a 4WD course or tour Gift Certificate for a loved one, friend, or family member.

My 2019 calendar is up and running on the revised website. If you are thinking of attending a course, tour, or event... Take a look and plan ahead! Life is short, let's learn and take an adventure together.

# Factor 55 and Off-Road Safety Academy Team Up to Produce a Basic Guide to Winching



Factor 55 and Off-Road Safety Academy have partnered to produce a console-size basic guide to winching booklet. Released at the recent SEMA show, the guide is an instant hit.

This in-field reference will come in handy if you ever need to: 1) self-recover after getting stuck in low-traction terrain, 2) assist another stuck vehicle, 3) move an obstacle off of a trail, right a tipped-over vehicle, or 4) reduce environmental or tail damage caused by spinning wheels in low traction terrain.

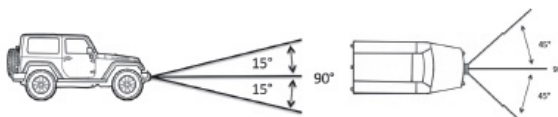
The guide is 39 pages long and packed with important winching information. The guide includes the all important **STOPA - Stuck Assessment and Recovery Plan Checklist™** that helps you decide what recovery method to use when stuck and how to determine approximate recovery resistance values based on the GVWR of the stuck vehicle, surface resistance, and slope resistance.

The guide also outlines **Closed System Winching** for greater rigging security, strength, and safety.

### **Don't Make Your Winch Work so Hard**

Besides removing as much winch line from the drum as possible, there are three other ways to keep your winch from working so hard during a recovery effort.

**Set Up Straight Line Pulls.** When setting up your winch rigging, avoid angled pulls. To maintain the rated line pull of your winch, the winch line should not exceed a 15-degree angle up and down from horizontal, or a 45-degree angle left or right from straight ahead.



**Use Pulley Blocks.** Introduce mechanical advantage in a winch-rigging set-up by using one or more pulley blocks. Mechanical advantage is "the ability to use a small force, moved through a long distance, to move a heavy resistance or object."

**Remove Obstructive Terrain from Around and Under Stuck Vehicles.** Another method of keeping your winch from working so hard during a recovery situation is to remove and level out obstructive terrain (gravel, mud, snow, rocks) around your tires and under your vehicle. Shovels are useful for obstructive terrain removal. Also, if your stuck vehicle is high-centered on a rock or terrain, try to remove or flatten the terrain prior to winching. You may also consider raising the vehicle off the rock or terrain prior to winching.

### **Preparing for a Winch Pull**

#### **NOTE**

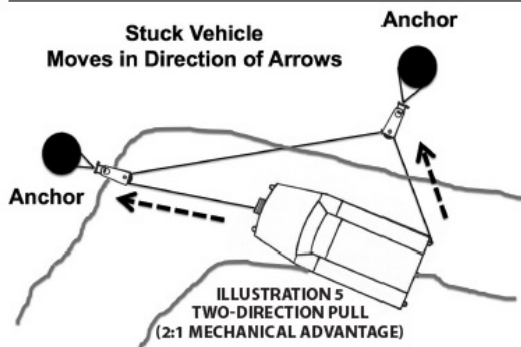
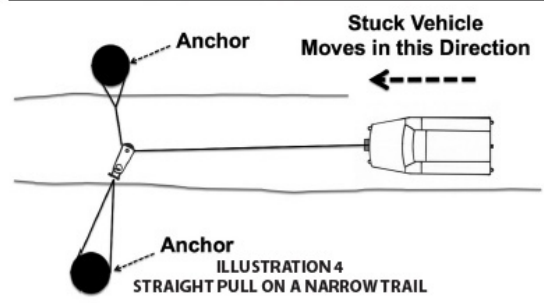
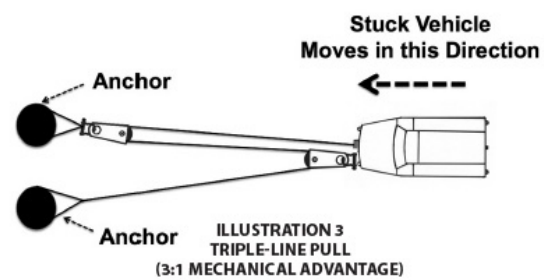
Practice these steps at home prior to using your winch in the field. Don't wait to practice under duress in the field in a real recovery situation.



#### **WARNING**

- Every winching situation has the potential for personal injury. To minimize that risk, read this entire guide carefully, familiarize yourself with all the steps, warnings, and equipment cautions in this section on making a resistance pull with your winch.
- Never operate your winch when under the influence of drugs, alcohol, or incapacitating personal medication.
- Only operate this winch when over the age of 16 years old.





Besides listing all the necessary safety considerations when winching, the guide also illustrates 14 of the most common winch rigging set-ups.

Factor 55 and Off-Road Safety Academy will soon be distributing this guide to the general public. In a future newsletter you can learn how you can obtain this great little winching guidebook.

If you wish to receive a copy of this guide, email Bob from his website.

# My Third Book Is On Its Way!

**If you get stuck when you are off-road, remote, and solo, do you know how to self-recover?**

**If you happen upon another vehicle stuck in the backcountry do you have the knowledge, skills, and kit to safely help this person on their way?**

## THE TOTAL APPROACH TO GETTING UNSTUCK OFF ROAD

### 4WD Self-Recovery & Vehicle-Assisted Recovery

You are bogged down in deep gumbo-like mud and very much stuck. Hisssss. You again hear a tire leaking. You've just had your second flat in one day. Your out of spare tires.

Your off-road trailer bounces off a large rock during a sharp turn and lands on its side. Your 4WD truck is high centered on a ridge perpendicular to the trail. Wheels on both axles are off the ground and spinning with no traction.

While driving an icy route, your vehicle slips down into a deep rut on the side of the trail and almost tips over. Snow from the middle of the trail has piled up under your vehicle and your forward motion is halted.


Smoke begins to bellow from under your engine hood. Your vehicle is on fire in the remote backcountry and you are alone. You are stuck in beach sand up to the vehicle's frame and the tide is coming in quickly.


You get the point. If you've never been stuck in the remote backcountry, then you've not been off-roading or overlanding enough. Someday, you will get stuck. It happens to everyone. Congratulations on purchasing this InfoBook in preparation for that day.

These examples only scratch the surface of the many ways vehicle-supported adventurers can get stuck off road – in the mountains, desert, or tropics. There are thousands of ways to have your progress terminated or hampered while driving off road. This InfoBook is about how to recover from being stuck off road.

**Topics include:**

- How to use the STOPA Stuck Assessment and Recovery Plan Checklist™
- Field Repair Recovery
- Traction Recovery
- Powered Winch Recovery – Self-Recovery & Vehicle-Assisted Recovery
- Hand Winch Recovery
- Kinetic Energy Recovery
- Towing Recovery

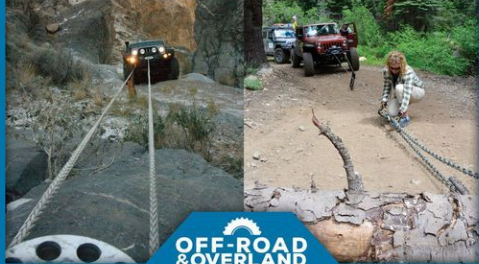




**THE TOTAL APPROACH TO GETTING UNSTUCK OFF ROAD**


**4WD Self-Recovery & Vehicle-Assisted Recovery**

**BOB WOHLERS**



**THE TOTAL APPROACH TO GETTING UNSTUCK OFF ROAD**

**BOB WOHLERS**



My third book in the series is coming! I'm shooting all the photos now for this work. There is NO other book like this on the market, anywhere on the planet. *The Total Approach to Getting Unstuck Off Road* will be the MOST complete treatise on the subject ever.

Topics will include:

- \* How to use the STOPA Stuck Assessment and Recovery Plan Checklist
- \* Field Repair Recovery
- \* Traction Recovery
- \* Powered Winch Recovery - Self-Recovery & Vehicle-Assisted Recovery
- \* Hand Winch Recovery
- \* Kinetic Energy Recovery
- \* Towing Recovery

**You NEED this book!**



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