

NEXTerra Spotting Guide

Forward:

There are no universally recognized hand signals or spotting techniques on the trail, but everyone should know some basics. A bunch of guys waving their hands and shouting directions is confusing. It is best to have one spotter that you, the driver, knows and/or trusts. The rest of the spectators need the watch, learn and be quiet so that the operator is not confused by erroneous direction. There are very few things worse for me, as a driver, than a bunch of know-it-alls shouting their opinions while I'm in it doing my thing. You are doing nothing for me but getting in my way and screwing with my good time.

Spotting

As a driver; remember, it's your truck, you are responsible for it and your well-being therefore you are the final word. You can ask for, accept or decline being spotted, by any individual. If you accept you are the puppet and the spotter is the puppeteer. You are still the only one to blame if your truck gets damaged, but you are giving up control of your truck and yourself to the spotter and must follow their instructions. Don't ask for help and then ignore instructions.

As a spotter you can offer, accept or decline the role and responsibility of spotting. If you accept; you are accepting the responsibility of the driver's truck and safety...not legally but in essence and in the eyes of the driver, spectators and attendees. It would be best if you know the driver and his vehicle; ability, modifications or lack of ether. If you don't know, ask. The driver is putting their faith in you to get them and their truck out of any predicament they happen to find themselves in. Sometimes things go wrong when we play this game even with the best spotter. This is where trust comes in; I've damaged my truck up plenty of times even with the best of spotters...what can you do? That part of it.

There is no shame in saying you don't know what you're doing; the driver can then tell you to get out of the way or can tell you what he wants you to do for him...i.e. "put my passenger side tire on that rock and let me know if I'm clearing that one"...etc. Then it's all on the driver and you're good. There is shame in damaging someone's truck up because you did not inform them of your ignorance. Ask or wait to be asked before giving your opinion and service. Volunteer; "need a spot", but wait until your offer has been accepted before blurting out your expert advice.

Hand Signals:

Since we know each other let's have a set of hand signals and directions so that we can build the trust we need to get us through the trail.

Spotter, once your role has been established;

Never ever say "right" or "left". Instead, use the terms "driver" and "passenger" when giving direction.

Use your right index finger to pointed across your body to the driver's "passenger"

Use your left index finger to pointed to the driver's "driver"

Use your other hand to indicate; come forward, palm facing you, motioning the driver to move forward, and urging to "come" to you.

Back up, palm facing the vehicle, motioning the driver to "back up".

Thumb up for "climbing", thumb down for "dropping off".

"OK" sign in combination with any opposite hand sign for "little bit".

Both hands, two vertical palms facing each other, pulled towards the body, motioning the driver to move forward for "come on, straight at me".

Both hands held at a distance and moving closer to each other to indicate how far a vehicle is from the obstacle.

Both hands, palms faced down, moving them up and down for "slow down"!

Both hands, palms faced out for "stop".

One open hand, palm down, moving back and forth in front of neck for "cut engine, shut it down, parking brake, stop everything, I am coming to you to talk this over".

Winching:

Spotter;

Hold your forefinger pointing up, in the air above your shoulder and draw small circles in the air to "winch in".

Hold your forefinger pointing down, below your shoulder and draw small circles to "winch out".

These can be used with the hand signals above to power forward, turn driver, turn passenger, etc.

Closed fist for "stop" the winch. Driver stop everything.

Both hands down, palms faced in for "I'm working at the drum, don't do anything!"

The driver's response is to put the winch control on top of the dash and show the spotter both hands.

After the event, driver, be a decent guy and thank your spotter.