

# AMBIENT CAMPING

## BURNER BEACH DIRECTIONS

### FROM: Austin, San Antonio

I-35 south from Austin to I-37 in San Antonio (don't take 410 bypass, just plow straight through town, it's faster). Drive south for 2.45 hours until you reach Padre Island via John F. Kennedy Memorial Causeway. Stay on the causeway. Turn left to stay on S. Padre Island Dr./Park Road 22.

The entrance to the Ambient Camping beach is Access Road 6. It's 1.5 miles past the intersection of Whitecap and South Padre Island Drive. On the NE side the road is called Sea Pines and on the left or SW, it is called access road 6. It is the next left after the entrance to Bob Hall pier (RV camping). If you pass the horse rental place or if S. Padre Island Dr narrows to one lane, you went too far.

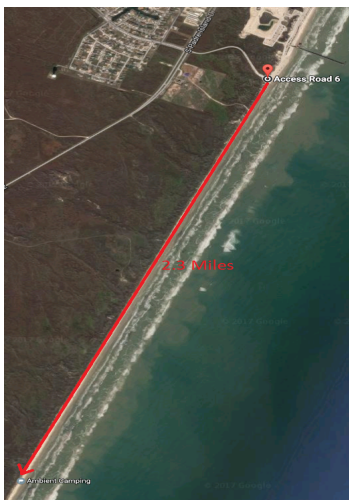
After you turn left onto Access Road 6, drive until you reach the beach. Once you're on the beach, turn right and drive down to Mile Marker 262. It is about 2.3 miles down. You should see evidence of camping and music when you arrive.

### GPS

27°32'58.7"N 97°14'13.9"W

### Google Maps

<https://www.google.com/maps/dir//27.5798662,-97.2213548/@27.5651636,-97.2405351,4516m/data=!3m1!1e3!4m2!4m1!3e0>



## **HEADING TO THE EVENT**

Don't forget to gear up on the way out! The final leg of the journey will have you heading out to Padre Island while traveling on South Padre Island Drive. This is the main thoroughfare through Corpus Christi and it plays host to pretty much every store you can imagine (no Fiesta, though).

### **Last Chance for Supplies**

#### **Super H.E.B. & SPEC's**

1145 Waldron Rd, right before the JFK bridge.

#### **Last Liquor Stores**

Spanky's Liquor 13947 S Padre Island Dr,  
WB Liquors & Wine 14457 S Padre Island Dr #105

#### **Last Gas Stations**

Valero / Stripes 15233 S Padre Island Dr  
Valero / Stripes 15302 S Padre Island Dr  
Gas up before heading down the beach!

#### **Last Grocery Store**

Island Market IGA, 15401 South Padre Island Dr

### **Nearest Full Service Camping**

Balli Park, RV hookups, showers, etc- right behind Bob Hall Pier.

# BEACH DRIVING PRO TIPS

Original by Jay Noyfub for BWBCC; Revised for Ambient Camping

It's time for Ambient Camping and you're ready to kick off your shoes and enjoy the beach... but how the hell do you get across the sand and slush to the event HQ? While nothing will make up for experience knowing the basics and having a few tips in your back pocket never hurt. This is your guide to driving on the beach.

Anyone telling you they've never been stuck is lying or they haven't been doing this very long. It happens to everyone, don't be fearful of it. Someone will help you. If it's a local, they might ask you up front for cash (Some folks do this simply for profit) – as always, it's your choice but we recommend saying 'no thanks' especially considering you know help is only a couple of miles down the beach, if not closer. That being said, if someone does lend a hand without asking for compensation a gift is always a nice gesture. Some of them may take kindly to a few extra bucks in their pocket, some may prefer a cold beer and others may just ask you to pay it forward. Regardless of who it is, be kind and thankful.

Be prepared! If you wind up stuck in the sand it's an absolute HUGE help to know where your tow points are. Before you leave, pull out the owner's manual or use google to identify the best and safest tow points. Every car has them and they vary widely. Most anyone willing to pull you out is going to want you to hook up your own vehicle to the rope – this mitigates their liability should something go wrong. Know where they are and how to get to them!

## **Beach driving etiquette:**

We've got three lanes of traffic out here, some folks know them and some folks don't. All of them carry a 15MPH speed limit and your seatbelts are required by law. These are Texas roads and all driving laws apply. Make sure to give birth to parked vehicles, deployed fishing rods and watch for kids playing in traffic. Whenever possible, stick to one of these lanes and don't obstruct them. The locals will be appreciative!

**Shore Road**- This is only present when the tide is out considerably. This is the hardest, smoothest, and flattest road. DON'T DRIVE IN THE WATER and DON'T DRIVE IN FRONT OF CAMPS but if it's available, use it.

**Low Road**- This is the most commonly used road. In good conditions it's

smooth and hard packed with a few washouts. When it's bad, you may not be able to tell it from the rest of the beach. Use this when the shore road is not an option. **DON'T PARK IN THE LOW ROAD!**

**High Road**- Under most conditions this is only for the well equipped and experienced beach nuts. It's going to be slushy and impassable for anyone who hasn't invested in the appropriate rig.

### **What to watch for:**

**Washouts**- These are common year around. They change sometimes from day to day. The tidal movement and seafloor shape the paths of the surf as it washes in and out. Some areas erode faster than others and create small valleys stretching from shore road to the coppice mounds. Some are small, some are large and deep. Keep an eye on them and slow down for them. They have been known to blow struts if you hit a big one too fast.

**Holes/Trenches**- People suck, it's a fact of life. Some of them are just assholes. Some of them are just idiots. Either of the two could be the culprit behind that 2 foot deep 8 foot long trench sticking into the low road. Keep an eye out for them. They are easily seen and avoided.

**Slush**- this is the one that's hardest to avoid. Sometimes the beach is slush from end to end, shore to dunes. Sometimes it's just the high road and a few patches here and there. It's easy to spot. Look for deep valleys and peaks created by tires. Look for sand that looks light, soft and fluffy. This is slush. If you cannot avoid it, refer to the driving tips in this guide.

### **Driving Tips:**

As always, keep your eyes glued to the path ahead. Avoid cars. Watch for pets, kids, and other obstructions.

**Speed**- Momentum will aid you through the soft stuff. Don't haul ass, but 15-20mph is usually enough to get you through moderately slushy spots. Once you're in and moving, don't slow down! Your wheels will be spinning faster than you're moving. The sand is being thrown and you have far less grip. Think of it as peeling out but instead of the rubber burning, the sand is being tossed behind you. Don't over rev your car but if you're still moving, keep your foot in it!

**Direction**- Choose your path long ahead of time- use your eyes to spot what's ahead and pick the straightest path possible around the slush and other obstacles. Turning your wheels changes the direction of momentum. Straightforward is the best use of this momentum. Changing direction means not only are you now going to be pushing through the sand with the side of the wheel, you're also not inherently moving in the direction of your wheel's

rotation. It's physics folks.

**Stopping-** Give yourself plenty of lead time to stop. It's nowhere near ice but it's definitely not asphalt and you will have a little bit of a slide if you are moving and stopping quickly.

**Tire Pressure-** This is an excellent tip that not too many people actually use these days. Dropping the tire pressure in your tires once you're on the beach will help prevent you from getting stuck. It increases the surface area of rubber in contact with the sand and provides a bigger footprint and more friction. DO NOT go too low. 10-15 psi is the most I will advise dropping because of the wide variation of tire designs, tread health, and pressure ranges. Bear in mind, there is no air filling station on burner beach and once you get back to the blacktop it's a few miles before you get to one.

**If you get stuck-** DO NOT just floor it.

If you stop moving forward when your foot is on the gas, stop trying to force your way out! If you continue to dig into the sand you are only making extraction harder. Instead, get out and assess the situation. Before you start trying to move the car, decide if you can get through what's ahead or if backing up and taking a different path is better.

Can you back up? Is there a path behind you that you can back up onto? If so, do it and then reassess your path.

**Are you just a little bit stuck?**

**Rocking-** If your wheels are just spinning but they aren't more than a couple inches into the sand then you should be able to rock out of the hole. Have a friend or passerby push forward (or backward depending on the best direction of travel) and then release alternating to get the car rocking. Once it's rocking enough give it some gas just before the peak of the direction you want to travel. The other alternate solution for rocking out of the ruts is not great practice to do often as it can be hard on automatic transmissions but alternating reverse and drive (or reverse and 1st) very quickly could possibly get you out if you're solo by building momentum to push your car up and out of the holes you dug.

**Pushing-** Have someone (or someones) push on the car in the direction of travel while you give it a little gas... but just a little. If a little isn't moving you, a lot won't either. The more people pushing the better chance you have.

**Digging-** This is the least effective and hardest to do. If you're at this point you might as well send someone to find a 4x4 for extraction. If you must try it, dig out in front and behind all four tires in an attempt to create a flat path

by which you can achieve enough momentum to get out of the ruts you've dug. It's not fun and it rarely works without hours of digging.

**Call for help-** We haven't yet come up with a method for calling HQ for assistance but rest assured we will be able to come get you! If you're really in a bind walk the rest of the way to HQ and we will come pull you out. But first, look around for someone nearby who is able to pull you out. There are TONS of 4x4's on burner beach. Flag them down and ask for help. Again, it will be HIGHLY appreciated by anyone pulling you out if you A- haven't dug yourself in deep and B- have the tow-points memorized and accessible for the person extracting you.

**Equipment:**

2wd vs 4wd- So you've got power to all 4 wheels, awesome! You now have an advantage over Joe's Galant. Why, then, did Joe just cruise past you with his fishing rods sticking out the backseat window while you're up to your knees in sand digging out that shiny new Ram 3500? Because you don't know where to go, how to drive, and what to look for. Did you forget to look for the slushy spots and wind up crawling into them at 2mph? PAY ATTENTION!

4wd is not always necessary but if it is, you need to think about it as a preventative, NOT a solution to getting unstuck. Before you hit the slush, lock in your hubs and be prepared to stop short of the gnarly spots to kick it into 4wd. Use physics and your brain to get you through. Crawling through it isn't going to work most times and jumping lanes in the slush will probably get you stuck as well.

On the other side of the coin, an experienced beach driver can sometimes navigate through the slushy days in a 2wd car. If you're lucky you will have some patches that are more solid and flat than others. Plan your path as far ahead as possible to avoid them using as few maneuvers as possible at the highest safe speed possible.

**Tires-** There are several schools of thought regarding tires on the beach. All but one are wrong. While you're on burner beach, look around at the locals cruising the coppice mounds), dunes (Illegal!), and slush patches. Then look at the ones trying to dig themselves out or flagging down the guys who just crawled out of the bowl. The former are nearly always going to be the guys who bought a handful of specific tires. Sure, any of them will do when the driving is good but the ones that are wide, tall, and have a non aggressive tread pattern are the ones you want. I'm not going to drop brands and models here but look around and you'll see a pattern, I promise. So, why wide? Because your footprint is your weight dispersal. Ever seen someone walking through mud in stilettos? I bet they wouldn't sink in so much if they

had snow shoes. ;) The larger your area of weight dispersal the less you will sink. This is why the pressure in your tires matters.

Why tall? Because every tire is going to sink a little bit in the slush. The sidewall then becomes more surface area by which the torque of the wheels can be applied. If you are running a low profile tire in slush, before you know it the sand is on the INSIDE of the wheel where zero weight is carried and no forward motion is applied. That means you just started digging your way closer to china. Again, the tire pressure trick applies here.

Aggressive tread on the street may work well for grip and safety but that doesn't apply when the substrate upon which you're applying friction can be easily moved by the object applying force. This is a grip and friction game here, folks. The more you can compress the sand below your tires the better it's going to hold up when that tire applies force to push your 4000 lb crossover down the beach. Flat tread patterns with thin gaps will get you further than inch long paddle like appendages that will just dig you down to the frame.

**Weight-** This is for those of you driving beefy diesel trucks, RVs and Buses. If you have anything smaller than a 1 ton truck, your weight is not going to make much difference. The basic concept is lighter=better. If you cruise in with a jeep wrangler and the proper tires you are practically floating on the top of the sand, even the slushy stuff. If you roll in with a single axle RV at 4.5 tons and pizza cutter tires, you're going to need some assistance. :)

**Wheelbase-** The shorter the distance between the axles provides a definite advantage. It would take a lot of explaining (most of which is over my head) about weight distribution and the fluidity of crystalline particles and other craziness I've never sat down and thought about or been taught about to really define this one. Do what I do, just know that the wheelbase does matter. Not as much as other factors, of course, but it all makes a difference.

**Clearance-** height is a huge advantage in the slush. Not only do you want to avoid objects striking your undercarriage as you cruise down the beach, you want to keep as much space between the chassis of your vehicle and the top of the sand as possible. The more non-tire surfaces in contact with the sand, the more work the tires have to do to push you along. If your tires and wheels keep your chassis 6 inches above the slush you've got a far better chance of making it to HQ unassisted. And if you do get stuck, it makes extraction much easier.