

PRODUCT EVALUATION

ATLAS AIR NECK BRACE & DEFENDER CHEST PROTECTOR

Keep your upper body safe

By the staff of Dirt Wheels



□ We here at *Dirt Wheels* are big supporters of riding protection, and so is the crew behind the Air neck brace and Defender chest protector made by Atlas. Whether you ride your quad on the motocross track, shred trails or rail the dunes, accidents happen, and being prepared for them is a must. We put these two upper-body protectors to the test.

ATLAS AIR BRACE

When it comes to neck protection, it's worth it to pony up for a great system. The Atlas Air brace will run you \$299.99, which is decently priced compared to other braces, like Leatt's GPX 5.5 brace that offers similar protection for \$369. The first thing we noticed when testing the Air was its light weight and comfort. Oftentimes we forgot we were wearing the 1.3-pound brace. The Air flexes with the movement of your body due to its split flex frame, which adds to its comfort level. The back pads can be adjusted in six different positions for a proper fit, and the brace comes with additional pads to add height on the shoulders.



Atlas' Defender chest protector and Air neck brace go hand in hand with each other. They are both very comfortable for hours of riding and protection.

◀ *The Defender protector is waterproof and has 52 vents designed into it. This provides good airflow on hot days, and when the weather is rough, the chest protector won't get weighed down with water.*

The Atlas Air neck brace comes in multiple color schemes that can be changed or customized to your liking. One of these braces has a half-black sticker kit and half-white one. ▶

Adjusting the brace for a proper fit is easy, and it comes in three sizes: small, medium and large. The only issue we found with the Atlas Air brace was the release system. It has a simple yet very sturdy center-front buckle system that can get clogged up with dust and dirt. This makes it a bit difficult to push in the button to open the Air brace. If you occasionally blow the dirt out of the buckle system it keeps a smooth operation. The Atlas Air comes in five different color schemes, and you can purchase new padding and decal kits for the Air to customize it to your liking.

DEFENDER PROTECTOR

Whether you ride recreationally or race, a chest protector is a must for deflecting roost and saving the upper body from an occasional tumble. Atlas' Defender protector goes hand in hand with the Air brace. It is comfortable for hours of riding and has good features. The Defender has four adjustment points: two waist and shoulder straps. It comes with a removable upper chest plate to fit most neck brace systems, but it works best with Atlas braces. The back of the Defender can be modified to not have protective pieces, which can be useful if you wear a hydration pack.

The waist straps have magnets built into buckle ends to ensure they stay attached to the protector while riding hard. There are built-in straps on the shoulders to hold down a neck brace system as well. Atlas provides a GoPro mount that can be attached to the front of the Defender protector. Comfort and protection aside, the biggest plus to the \$129 chest protector is the airflow through it and that



The brace's opening system is easy to operate and opens up wide to help when putting on the Air.

it is waterproof. Water can't soak into the padding and add weight to the Defender, and cleaning dirt and mud off of it is easy. The Defender protector comes in black or white in one adult size.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Taking a tumble off a quad is always a possibility with any type of ATV riding. We feel it's better to be properly protected than not. The Atlas Air neck brace is lightweight, comfortable and very protective. The Defender protector is just the same and pairs perfectly with any Atlas brace. The full system will set you back \$430 but is worth every penny to keep you safe. For more information on Atlas products, go to www.atlasbrace.com or call (661) 505-4407. □