

What You Need to Know About Tire Size

Your tire size is one of the most important things that you should know about. What is the importance of the right tire size and what can happen if you fit the wrong tires? How do you find out your size and what do the size figures stand for?

Size Importance

Never use the wrong sized tire on your car. A lot of things can happen. At the very least you can reduce the performance capacity of a car that would ordinarily work fine with the right tires. You therefore get less for what you bargained for. More importantly though, ill-fitting tires can be the cause of accidents and on-road mishaps. These can result in injuries and life threatening situations. You should never underestimate the value of proper sized tires.

How to Find the Size

There are several ways of determining your car tire size. The most logical place to start is to look into your car manual. You can however also find the size of the tires on the placard on the driver's door or on the sidewall of the tire itself. If you are online and you do not have your car beside you, you can log on to some websites that will allow you to enter your vehicle type and model to find the size that will fit it.

What the Figures Say

If you look at your tire's sidewall, you will see a series of letters and numbers. These constitute your complete tire size information. It may seem like a foreign language but the letters and numbers stand for important information that you may have to keep in mind.

- The first letter stands for what kind of vehicle the tire can be used for. It could be intended for a passenger vehicle, light trucks, heavy cargo trucks and European cars. Some tires can also be designated as temporary spares. Following its intended use will be numbers that stand for the tire's width in millimeters.

- Aspect ratio, tire construction, tire and wheel diameter, load index and speed rating are the other information that your tire can tell you.

Asking Your Dealer

Even if you have some knowledge about sidewall information you may still not be sure about your tire size. You may also be uncertain that you can interpret the information correctly. If this is the case, you should consider asking your tire dealer.

Not every tire dealer will do however. You need one who has had considerable tire knowledge. A good tire dealer will look into your type of vehicle, brand, driving conditions and your personal performance preferences before giving you some advice on the right tires to use. This means you need customer oriented employees who are more than just salespeople but tire and car experts as well.

When it comes to tire sizes, you can never be too careful. When in doubt, the safest route is to ask experts for advice and help.

About the Author

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