

Press Release

Tips for Driving to Preserve Your Tires

Driving style partly determines tire lifespan

- ▶ Defensive driving will help you get more mileage out of your tires
- ▶ Maintaining the correct tire pressure is also crucial
- ▶ Regular checks help detect damage early

If you want to save money while driving, you should keep a close eye on your tires. Drivers themselves largely determine how soon a new set will be needed. “Your foot on the gas pedal significantly determines tire wear and lifespan”, says Christian Koch, tire expert at DEKRA. Also important: the correct tire pressure and the right type of tire.

“Drivers who spin their tires during a quick start, like to accelerate rapidly, and often brake hard will pay for it in the form of increased tire wear”, explains the expert. Those who love pushing the limits in curves and stepping on the gas on the highway must also expect to replace their tires sooner. A sensitive, defensive driving style, on the other hand, gives tires a longer life.

The right pressure

But driving style isn't everything. Significant deviations from the optimal inflation pressure can drastically accelerate tire wear and, under certain circumstances, even destroy the tires. “The correct tire pressure ensures an optimal contact patch on the road surface, leading to even, gentle wear. But it's also crucial for the structural durability of the tires”, says Christian Koch.

Too much or too little pressure – both are bad. Significantly low pressure increases the tire's “bending” and accelerates wear. It poses risks to the tire itself, and driving stability suffers as well, which is clearly noticeable when turning a corner. Too high a pressure leads to increased wear in the center of the tire. The recommendation, therefore: Check your tire pressure regularly according to the manufacturer's specifications, especially before long trips.

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The tire type must be right

Seasonal factors also influence tire durability. “Winter tires in the summer and summer tires in the winter – I can only advise against that”, says Christian Koch. The softer rubber compound of winter tires melts in summer temperatures almost like ice in the sun. “Summer tires don’t wear out any faster in the winter, but they pose a significant safety risk due to their lower traction.”

The right type of tire is also essential for frequent off-road use. Driving on unpaved surfaces places increased demands on the tread’s resistance to sharp objects. Here, a trade-off must be considered: Off-road tires excel in the terrain but wear out faster on the road.

The increasingly popular all-season tires do eliminate the need for seasonal changes and save costs. However, the rubber compound must also cope with winter conditions, which is why these all-rounders usually wear out faster in the summer than summer-specific tires.

And what about electric vehicles? Electric cars weigh more than comparable internal-combustion vehicles and therefore generally show increased wear. “But it would be wrong to label them as ‘tire eaters’ per se. Because here, too, under otherwise identical conditions, driving style makes the difference”, says Koch.

Check tires regularly

“Regular tire checks should actually be a given”, explains the tire expert from DEKRA. “This allows you to detect damage early on. Uneven wear, for example, can indicate a faulty suspension setting. You’re in the best hands at a specialist shop.”

It’s also recommended to regularly rotate tires between the front and rear axles, especially when all-season tires are installed. “This leads to more even wear on all tires, so that all four tires are replaced at the same time. It doesn’t result in a longer overall mileage for all tires. However, it avoids a mix of old and new tires, which has a negative effect on the vehicle’s handling”, says Koch.

There is one factor, however, that drivers cannot control: Scientific studies show that topography has the greatest influence on mileage. In the mountains, a tire – under otherwise identical conditions – achieves significantly lower mileage than in the lowlands. Braking and accelerating on hills simply put more strain on the tires and cause greater wear.



About DEKRA

For more than 100 years, DEKRA has been a trusted name in safety. Founded in 1925 with the original goal of improving road safety through vehicle inspections, DEKRA has grown to become the world's largest independent, non-listed expert organization in the field of testing, inspection, and certification. Today, as a global partner, the company supports its customers with comprehensive services and solutions to drive safety and sustainability forward—fully aligned with DEKRA's anniversary motto, "Securing the Future." In 2024, DEKRA generated revenue of 4.3 billion euros. Around 48,000 employees are providing qualified and independent expert services in approximately 60 countries across five continents. DEKRA holds a Platinum rating from EcoVadis, placing it among the top 1% of the world's most sustainable companies.