



How to get the most from your tyres

Poorly-maintained tyres can affect your car's efficiency and performance, as well as having serious safety implications too. Read our guide for top tips to help get the most from your tyres.

How to get the most from your tyres

Nothing affects the way your car handles, grips, brakes, and steers more than your tyres so it is essential that you keep your tyres in good condition. Unfortunately, many drivers fail to look after them properly, which can have serious consequences.

If you want to keep your vehicle safe and roadworthy for longer, it's crucial to ensure that your tyres are maintained at all times. Below are some helpful tips to help you keep your tyres in tip top condition.

Tyre Tread

The first and most obvious place to start when caring for your tyres is to check the tyre wear by ensuring the tread depth is still above the legal limit.

Current UK law requires that the tyres fitted to cars and vans must have a minimum tyre tread depth of at least 1.6mm across the central three quarters of the tread and around its entire circumference. Drivers found in breach of this law face a personal fine of up to £2,500 for each illegal tyre and 3 penalty points.

Read our **Tyre Tread factsheet** for instructions on how to easily check your tyre tread depth.

Tyre Pressure

The best way to keep tyre wear to a minimum is to maintain correct tyre pressures for the load and speed conditions.

If tyres are under or over inflated, it can increase fuel consumption and make them more susceptible to wear and tear.

To avoid putting yourself and any passengers in danger or having to call for breakdown assistance, it's important to make sure that you check your tyre pressure at least every month, including the spare.

Driving Style

Driving as smoothly and carefully as possible as well as avoiding fierce braking, hard cornering and violent acceleration will help keep tyre wear to a minimum.

Fierce braking and acceleration scrub rubber off the tyre treads until a bare flat patch is worn. But a bare patch can often indicate that something is wrong with the vehicle. It may simply be that the tyres are not properly inflated, or there may be faults in the braking, steering or suspension systems. The fault may be dangerous, and should therefore be checked/remedied as soon as possible.

Wheel Alignment

Having your wheels out of alignment can also create problems for your tyres. Incorrectly aligned tyres can result in uneven wear, which can weaken them and make them more prone to damage. It can also reduce the driver's control of the car and increase fuel consumption.

When you are having your vehicle looked over or having new tyres put on at a garage, make sure the alignment is checked and adjusted if needed.

Be mindful when mounting the kerb

Whether you're pulling up to park on a busy street or you're trying to get around an obstacle in the road, sometimes mounting the kerb can be unavoidable. However, it's important to be mindful when you're manoeuvring your car in this way – especially if you want to keep your tyres in tip top condition. As well as knocking wheels out of alignment, mounting the kerb can cause the tyre's sidewall to become pinched between the kerb and the wheel, causing them to weaken and potentially resulting in a tyre blow-out.

Ideally, you should avoid mounting the kerb altogether, but if you have to, make sure you're careful in your approach. Climb the kerb slowly at an acute angle and ensure you don't scrape up the side of the pavement to avoid damaging your tyres.

Check for damage and unusual wear and tear

It's also important to do a physical check of the tyres and look out for any signs of unusual wear or damage. This can include cuts, bulges or any objects that have punctured the tyre. If you notice any of these problems, you will need to get them checked by a professional mechanic and repaired if necessary. In some cases, the tyre will need to be replaced with a new one.

Don't overload your vehicle

Overloading your vehicle can be more hazardous than you may at first think. A vehicle that is carrying a lot of weight can compromise the handling and cause excessive wear on the tyres due to excessive heat. This could cause a tyre explosion and put you at danger of having a road accident.