

How Old Should New Tires Be When You Buy Them [EXCLUSIVE]

An old tire that has never been used can look exactly like a brand new one above. The tread is good, and the manufacture stickers may still be on it. When tires reach a certain age the rubber begins to dry out and crack. That can make it unsafe for road use because it may run the risk of blowing out, falling apart, or lose traction during bad road conditions. That is why one should know how to find the date a tire was made before having them installed on your vehicle. Throwing away a spare tire that have never been used may look like throwing away money. Spare tires are meant to aid you for a short period of time and it is best practice to replace them when you purchase a new set of tires for your vehicle. We recommend you avoid the risk of driving with a 7-9 year old spare tire after experiencing a flat or blow out. For years, people have relied on tread depth to determine when to replace a tire. If the tread passes the "penny test," they assume the tire still has life, regardless of how old it is, which can be a fatal mistake. Old tires are dangerous, regardless of tread depth. While there's no federally sanctioned safety guidance on when a tire is too old to be safe, many carmakers recommend replacement at six years from the date of manufacture. **Heat:** NHTSA research has found that tires age more quickly in warmer climates. NHTSA also found that environmental conditions, such as exposure to sunlight and coastal climates, can hasten the aging process. People who live in coastal states and other areas with warm weather should keep this in mind when deciding whether they should retire a tire. Tires are expensive, especially when you factor in the price of mounting and balancing. That's why used tires become more attractive to people who are strapped for cash, and so some small and major shops continue to offer used tires as an alternative. But when you buy a used tire, you have no idea how well it was maintained or the conditions in which it was used. The previous owner might have driven it with low pressure. It could have hit curbs repeatedly. It could have been patched for a nail. You can check its age, but it's better to avoid it entirely. If you buy tires and soon after discover that they're really a few years old, you have the right to request newer ones. Any reputable store should be willing to make amends. But to save yourself the hassle, check the date before you buy. Tire tread provides the gripping action and traction that prevents your car or truck from slipping and sliding, especially when the road is icy or wet. Tires are not safe and should be replaced when the tread is worn down to 2/32 of an inch. Tire pressure monitoring systems continuously monitor the pressure in the tires through sensors located in the tires (direct system) or the use of wheel speed and other vehicle sensors (indirect system). The information collected by the sensors is transmitted to an on-board processor that interprets the sensor signals and warns the driver when tire pressure is below the minimum acceptable level by illuminating the TPMS symbol on your dashboard. There are two different low tire pressure warning indicators allowed by the Federal standard. One icon is the cross-section of a tire with an exclamation mark inside. The other is a top view of a car with all four tires exposed. No matter which TPMS symbol your vehicle has, it will illuminate on the vehicle dashboard when your tire pressure is significantly under inflated. When the TPMS symbol appears on your dashboard, it means at least one of your tires is significantly underinflated. You should inspect your tires and check the tire pressure as soon as possible. The symbol will extinguish after the tires are properly inflated. On cold mornings, the TPMS symbol may illuminate for a short period of time and then turn off. This is likely caused by marginally low tire pressure that dips below the warning threshold overnight but rises to an acceptable level as the tires heat up through vehicle operation or an increase in external temperatures. If the TPMS symbol goes on and off, you should inspect your tires and check your tire pressure. The lamp should not illuminate when the tires are properly inflated. All TPMS installed on 2008 model year vehicles and beyond are required to detect and warn the driver when the system is not functioning properly. A system malfunction may be indicated by a flashing of the TPMS symbol for 60 to 90 seconds with the warning lamp remaining illuminated after the flashing sequence. The flashing sequence followed by continuous illumination of the warning lamp will repeat at each subsequent vehicle start-up until the malfunction is corrected. You should contact your vehicle dealer for a system inspection. Here at NHTSA.gov, we provide information to consumers about buying tires, tire maintenance and labeling, aging, and fuel efficiency. We also provide resources for tire manufacturers, retailers, and other partners to provide essential information to consumers to help them choose and care for their tires. NHTSA also issues and enforces federal safety standards for tires, rims, and tire pressure monitoring systems (TPMS). Data show that TPMS can reduce the likelihood that a vehicle will have one or more significantly underinflated tires by more than 55 percent. Another factor is you, the driver. Just like the rest of the vehicle, you have an essential role in the care and maintenance of the tires on your wheels; they will last longer the better you look after them. You're also responsible for deciding when it's time to replace worn tires with new tires. Together with other members of the tire and automotive industries, Continental advises that all tires (including spare tires) made more than ten years ago should be removed from service and replaced with new tires. If you are in a situation where you will be replacing fewer than four tires,

select tires that are similar to what is currently installed on your vehicle. If you are replacing just two tires, those two tires should only be installed on the rear axle. You should only consider tires that are within the same category as your existing ones. Or, you can order your tires through Amazon or a third party supplier like Tire Rack or Tirebuyer; these sites promise the lowest possible price and are great for people who have a favorite mechanic or can handle the installation themselves. When tires are replaced in pairs, the new tires should always be installed on the rear axle, and the partially worn tires should be moved to the front. Driving with new tires on the rear axle can help the vehicle to maintain control on wet roads because the tires with deeper treads are more likely to resist hydroplaning. Replacing a single tire on a vehicle can have an adverse effect on suspension, gear ratios, transmission, and tire treadwear. However, if replacing only one tire is unavoidable, the tires should be rotated so that the new tire is paired with the tire having the most tread depth of the other three and placed on the rear axle. On average, tires last about six years or between 36,000-75,000 miles. But the actual lifespan of tires varies with factors like climate, maintenance and driving habits. No matter how they look, tires should never be used longer than 10 years. All tires will start to deteriorate over time. Even if they have very little mileage on them, their tread will start to become thinner. So while you might get more than the average five to six years out of a tire, always replace tires before they hit their 10-year anniversaries regardless of how often you drive. The National Highway Traffic Safety Association (NHTSA) states a driver is three times more likely to be involved in a crash caused by poor tire condition. Safer is smarter when it comes to the health of tires, so if there is ever a question on tread wear or age, have the tires checked. Poor driving habits like hard cornering, quick acceleration, and sudden braking can increase the stress on tires tremendously, causing them to wear rapidly. Drivers can extend the life of their tires significantly by avoiding aggressive driving. Another way to extend tire life is to keep up with the proper maintenance of a vehicle and its tires. A couple of things you can do yourself are to check the air pressure and tread depth. You should have a qualified technician periodically check their balance and alignment and be sure to have tires rotated at regular intervals. maintenance is essential for your tires to perform their best and last their longest. Imagine cruising down the road on a beautiful spring afternoon or returning home after a long day at work when suddenly the back right tire of your vehicle explodes. Luckily, you maintain control and safely maneuver to the side of the road. The tires are new, purchased a few months ago from a local tire shop. How could this happen to new tires? Recently, some tire manufacturers have begun to stamp partial codes on the outside of tires (facing away from the vehicle) so that checking the date does not necessitate removing the wheel. This partial code, boxed in yellow in Figure 1, is the most important piece of information about a tire. These last four digits of the DOT code represent the manufacture date of the tire. The last two digits refer to the year the tire was produced, and the first two digits identify the week number within that year. The tire shown in Figure 1 was manufactured on the 36th week of the year 2001. That tire was on a trailer that had been sitting in a field unused for 10 years, and it showed signs of dry-rot cracking. It is unclear whether trailer tires should be replaced every six years since they do not receive the same daily punishment as automobile tires. However, automobile tires should be replaced every six years.

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