



Technical Bulletin - no. 16

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Tyre Replacement – Tread Patterns and Vehicle OE Marked Tyres

As a general rule when advising on replacing tyres on a car, it is recommended to fit those approved by the vehicle manufacturer. The vehicle manufacturer will conduct extensive tests to establish which specific tyres provide the optimum performance balance for their vehicles and only by refitting original equipment (OE) approved tyres, will total compatibility be retained.

This leads to a general recommendation to have the same tyre type fitted to all wheel positions (exception where OE fit tyres are different between axles) and replace like with like.

However it is recognised that it is sometimes difficult to adopt the recommendations stated above so the following further advice is provided:-

1. Where only two tyres are being replaced then, in the absence of specific vehicle manufacturer recommendations, it is advised to fit them to the rear axle, this assists in reducing the chances of excessive over-steer issues in extreme wet weather conditions. Consideration should also be given to the remaining tread depths of the existing tyres in relation to the new tyres being fitted as large differences can affect handling and may lead to vehicle damage on some 4 x 4 and all drive vehicles (*Check vehicle handbook for maximum tolerances*).
2. If the same pattern family is unavailable, or the OE approval has changed pattern family or pattern concept (ie Asymmetrical or Directional) then it is recommended that these be replaced as an axle pair.
3. Where tyres carrying a specific vehicle manufacturer mark are being offered e.g. "MO"(Mercedes), ★(BMW), "AO"(Audi) or "J"(Jaguar), these may be fitted to other vehicle makes by following the above guidelines including mixing of the OE markings provided that the tyre is the same as the original fitment in terms of Pattern family, service description, size etc.
4. There are exceptions to notes 1 to 3 which include but are not exclusive to 'M3' (BMW), R01/R02 (Audi). Due to these being high performance cars that require tuned tyre performance characteristics then it becomes more important to only refit the OE approved tyre.
5. Tyres carrying specific OE markings for example (AO, MO, J etc) may be fitted to other types of vehicle other than those they were originally approved but wherever possible only in complete sets with the full understanding that performance criteria such as comfort, handling and wear rates may be very different to the original fitment tyres.
6. Consideration should also be given to high performance vehicles and drivers with a particularly sporty driving style, as either of these are likely to be more sensitive to any deviation from the vehicle manufacturer's original fitment tyre specification.
7. One manufacturer where there is a particular requirement to maintain correct fitment is Porsche. These should only be fitted with approved N designated tyres, and that the vehicle must be fitted with the same generation of tyre and N designation all round.



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- Where Conti eContact tyres are fitted to an electric vehicle such as a Nisan Leaf where fitting of a non rolling resistance optimised tyre will result in a significant reduction of the vehicle operating range. Therefore when replacing these tyres they should be replaced like for like.

Exceptions

In the case where a single tyre is being replaced and the matching tyre is unavailable then tyres from the same family of the next generation should be fitted. It is also strongly recommended that tyres of similar tread depths are matched across an axle. However this should only be done if there is no other option and a matching pair of suitable tyres are unavailable.

If in doubt advice from the vehicle or tyre manufacturer should be sort.

In all cases the Load Index and Speed Symbol of replacement tyres should be at least equal to or higher than those of the original fit tyres.