

Winter tyres

Winter tyres are car tyres designed especially for use in cold weather.

Function

Essentially, car tyres can be divided into summer tyres, winter tyres and all-weather tyres depending on their main application. Winter tyres provide excellent grip on snow and ice covered roads, as well as on wet roads and in cold weather conditions.

The rubber compound in a winter tyre contains a high proportion of natural rubber, which means that the rubber does not become stiff when temperatures fall below 7 degrees Celsius. Instead, it remains elastic and flexible in cold temperatures, which is advantageous in terms of a shorter braking distance.

The profile of winter tyres has deeper blocks, which dig into a snow covered and icy road and thus provide better grip. A winter tyre also has sipes that intermesh with snow and ice to prevent slipping on a wintry road.

Winter tyres should not be used in summer. The soft material in winter tyres yields more in warmer temperatures and the profile becomes deformed. This results in a deterioration in handling and reduces safety. In addition, the increased rolling resistance causes higher fuel consumption and louder running noise.

Winter tyre obligation in Germany

In Germany, a “situational winter tyre obligation” is in force. This means that, according to the German Road Traffic Act, only vehicles fitted with appropriate winter tyres are permitted to drive if there is “sheet ice, hard-packed snow, slush, black ice or slippery frost”.

Tyres for winter use manufactured after 31/12/2017 must have the snowflake symbol, also known as the “alpine symbol”. The M+S marking is no longer sufficient. There is a transition period for older tyres until 30/09/2024.

Safety

Tyres are safety critical components. As a result, tyres should be checked and maintained regularly to guarantee safety. Winter tyres are mandatory in wintry road conditions. Summer tyres represent a safety risk in ice and snow! Winter tyres should not be used in summer.

Value retention

Careful handling and regular checking and maintenance contribute to value retention for tyres. Drivers should regularly check the air pressure, avoid bumping into kerbs and always have new tyres balanced by a specialist dealer.

Protection of the environment

The well-known manufacturers place considerable value on protecting the environment. They go to considerable lengths to make their tyres more energy efficient and environmentally friendly. Disposal of used tyres in landfill is illegal in the European Union and other countries. Many tyre dealers offer disposal of used tyres for their customers when they buy new tyres.

Images



Continental

Source: <https://www.my-cardictionary.com/dictionary/tyres-and-wheels/winter-tyres>