

PROPER INFLATION AND LOAD

Tires are designed to give many thousands of miles of excellent service. But you must take good care of tires in order to get the maximum benefit from them.

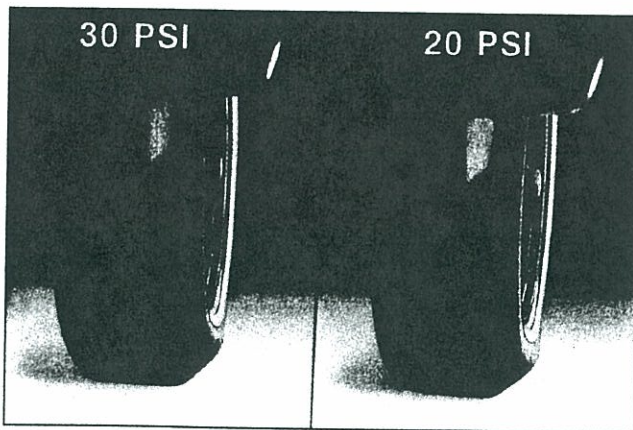
The most important factors in caring for tires are:

- INFLATION PRESSURE
- DRIVING WITH CARE
- LOADING
- INSPECTION

TIRE INFLATION

IT IS IMPORTANT THAT TIRES BE PROPERLY INFLATED. FAILURE TO MAINTAIN CORRECT INFLATION PRESSURES MAY RESULT IN FAST AND UNEVEN TREAD WEAR, IMPROPER VEHICLE HANDLING AND EXCESSIVE HEAT BUILDUP WHICH MAY RESULT IN TIRE FAILURE.

Air pressure enables a tire to support the load, so proper inflation is critical. **IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO DETERMINE** whether tires are properly inflated just by looking at them (see following photo).



BE AWARE OF:

- The “MAX LOAD” on the tire’s sidewall indicates the maximum load rating of the tire and its corresponding minimum cold inflation pressure.

The operating pressure is based on a number of factors (like load), and so **may not be the same** as the maximum inflation pressure on the tire’s sidewall. Additionally, the U.S.

Department of Transportation now allows 240 kPa (35 psi), 300 kPa (44 psi), or 350 kPa (51 psi) inflation pressures for standard load tires, but, **no increase in the tire’s load** (from that of the 240 pressure) is allowed. **Remember, for normal operation, follow the pressure recommendations in owner’s manual, on vehicle placard, or on the certification label.**

- It is often impossible to “feel or hear” a disturbance when a radial tire is underinflated or going flat while in-service. Such unintentional abuse is the most common cause of radial tire failures.

- Use a tire gauge to check tire inflation pressure, including the spare, at least monthly and before long trips. Motorists should be strongly urged to buy their own reliable tire air pressure gauge, as automatic service station gauges frequently may be off 2 to 4 psi and occasionally more.
- When weather temperature changes occur, tire inflation pressures will also change. A drop of 10°F causes a corresponding drop of about 1 psi in inflation pressure. Check frequently and adjust to placard or certification label pressure.
- Check air pressure when tires are cold, that is, when the vehicle has sat for *at least 3 hours* and been driven *less than one mile* at moderate speed.
- If checking air pressure when the tire is hot; never “bleed” or reduce air pressure when tires are hot from driving, as it is normal for pressures to increase above recommended cold pressures. A hot tire at or below recommended cold inflation pressure is dangerously underinflated. In this case immediately determine the cause and have the tire checked by a dealer.
- Make sure all tire valves and extensions are equipped with metal valve caps to keep out dirt and moisture. It is recommended that a new valve assembly be installed whenever a tire is replaced.
- Inflation pressures for light truck tires used in off-the-road situations should be the same as those for highway driving. If a lower inflation pressure is used in sand service to gain additional flotation, **it is mandatory** that the tires be reinflated to recommended inflation pressure before resuming driving on hard surfaces or other off-the-road surfaces.