

LOCAL ADVERTISING GUIDE

everything AUTO

Spring tire care

There's more to tire maintenance than switching them out occasionally. Here's a look at how to get your tires ready for spring.

ALIGNMENT

Streets become more susceptible to potholes and other hazards during the winter months due to icy conditions and the salting process. Sometimes, crumbling infrastructure goes unnoticed because of the build up of snow. This puts your car at risk for misalignments, which could lead to premature tire failure. Blow-outs can potentially lead to extensive damage to your car, and could even be life threatening. In the meantime, a misaligned vehicle is much more difficult to control. But that's the principal way drivers can make a quick diagnosis of this issue. If the car pulls one way or another at highway speeds, your tires are out of alignment.

TREADS

The treads on your tires provide the gripping action needed to steer and stop. They get a huge workout every winter, as worsening road conditions present every-day challenges. Worn tires put your car at risk of hydroplaning in rain or melting snow, a scary moment when the tire loses contact with the road. Spring is the

perfect time to make sure there's still enough tread to give your car the traction required to operate safely. To administer a tread test at home, simply place a penny into your tire tread. If you are unable to see any part of President Abraham Lincoln's head, your treads are lower than the recommended depth. The tire should be replaced immediately.

ROTATION

Rotate your tires each spring, and you'll ensure that they wear more evenly, extending their life. Front and rear tires age in different ways, because of their unique responsibilities during the driving process. As with alignment, you can test for rotation issues while driving the vehicle. If you notice vibrations during turns, it's time to rotate your tires.

PRESSURE

Tire pressure should be checked monthly to guard against uneven wear, flats or something far worse. Cars that have under-inflated tires of more than 25% are actually three times more likely to crash, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. As temperatures warm in the spring, under-inflated tires also risk overheating and then rapid failure.

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