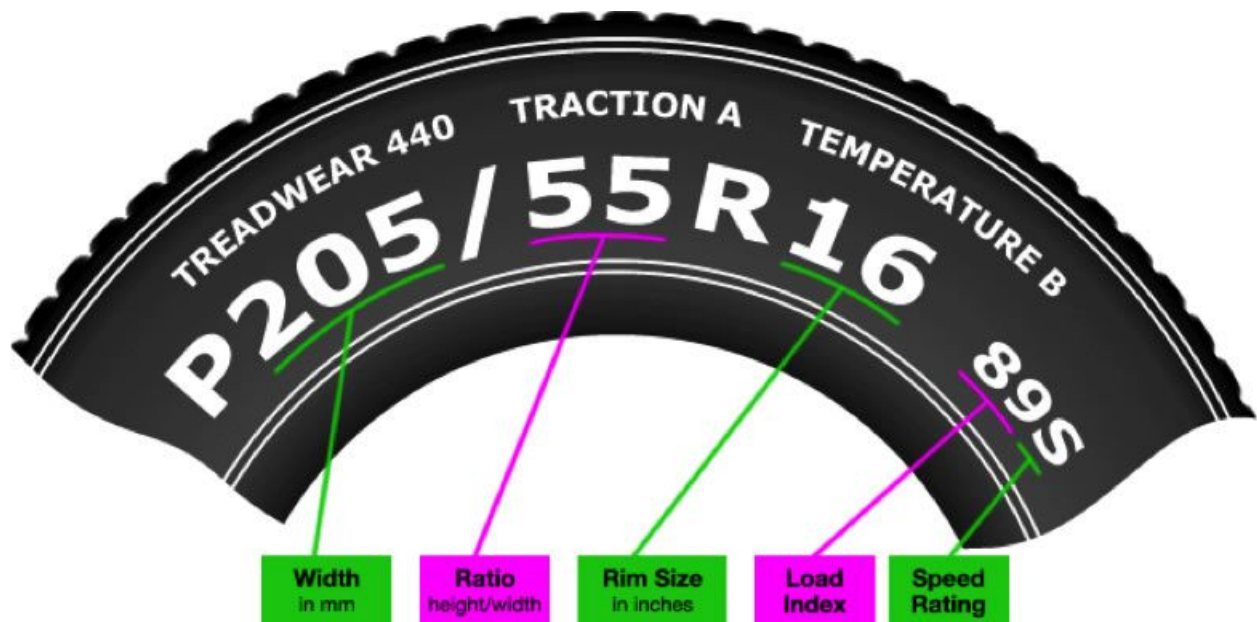


CHOOSING THE BEST TIRES FOR YOUR CAR

By Michael Sachs*

Let's state the obvious. You want the best handling tire on dry and wet roads, good stability when cornering, a quiet and smooth ride, and to last so long they dry rot before they wear out. Well unfortunately there is no such tire, so we have to make some tradeoffs!

What are your priorities? Do you drive it like you stole it or like you own it? Do you do a lot of hard braking? Do you take your car to auto crosses or slalom courses? Or is it just your daily driver for the family? A good tire store will ask you these questions in order to try and recommend the best tire for your needs, but even a good tire store may try and recommend a specific tire, if it's in stock. Some may even steer you to a less expensive tire where they have a greater profit margin. *Protect yourself, you need to know what tire you need before you go to the store.* So how do you do this? First of all, you must get the information off the sidewall of the tires you have now and use the information for comparison. Here is an example of the important information located on the sidewall of a tire.



The tire size is determined by your vehicles specifications. It is what it is, here's the rest.

- Tread wear for every 100 points you should expect about 7,200 miles of use.
 - A. 200 tread wear tire is good for about 14,400 miles
 - B. 400 tread wear tire is good for about 28,800 miles
 - C. 600 tread wear tire is good for about 43,200 miles

Traction Ratings are from AA, A, B, C with AA having the most grip

The Temperature Ratings indicates the extent to which heat is generated and/or dissipated by a tire. If the tire is unable to dissipate heat effectively, or if the tire is unable to resist the destructive effects of heat buildup, its ability to run at high speeds is reduced.

- Temperature Grades - Maximum Speed range.
 - A. Over 115mph
 - B. Between 100 to 115mph
 - C. Between 85 to 100mph

Here's how I compare a tires attributes in order to choose the correct tire for my needs.

TireRack.com has the best tire information I have found. They allow me to compare tires with all the information I need. I do however buy my tires locally for several reasons; service, warranty, flat repairs are free at most places that sell you the tires, and I just like to help the local economy.

The order I use is Tread Design for a quiet ride, tread wear for longevity, traction for handling, and last temperature. So you need to look at the attributes and decide the order of importance for you, in order to make the best decision. **Good luck!**

* Michael Sachs ("The Jag Doctor") is the owner of Sachs Automotive, Inc., and has been working on Jaguar cars since 1989. He is a former member of the Jaguar Master Technician Guild as well as an ASE Master Auto Technician, and the official late model technical expert for the JCCNF.