

## YOUR **TIRE** MAINTENANCE CHECKLIST

### **P**RESSURE

Underinflation is the leading cause of tire failure. It results in unnecessary tire stress, irregular wear, loss of control and accidents. A tire can lose up to half of its air pressure and not appear to be flat!



### **A**LIGNMENT

A bad jolt from hitting a curb or pothole can throw your front end out of alignment and damage your tires. Have a tire dealer check the alignment periodically to ensure that your car is properly aligned.

### **R**OTATION

Regularly rotating your vehicle's tires will help you achieve more uniform wear. Unless your vehicle's owners manual has a specific recommendation, the guideline for tire rotation is approximately every 6,000 miles.

### **T**READ

Advanced and unusual wear can reduce the ability of tread to grip the road in adverse conditions. Visually check your tires for uneven wear, looking for high and low areas or unusually smooth areas. Also check for signs of damage.



## HOW TO TAKE CARE OF YOUR **TIRES**

Proper tire care and safety is simple and easy. The Rubber Manufacturers Association (RMA) recommends getting in the habit of taking five minutes every month to check your tires, including the spare.

If you think you may have a tire problem or are unsure of the condition of your tires, consult a tire dealer as soon as possible.

### ABOUT THE **RUBBER MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION**

Headquartered in Washington, D.C., the Rubber Manufacturers Association (RMA) is the primary national trade association for the finished rubber products industry in the United States.

Founded in 1915, RMA represents over 100 member companies and affiliated organizations that manufacture products such as tires, tubes, gaskets, belts, seals and hoses. The Association is comprised of two main divisions — the General Products Group and the Tire Group.

RMA is a major force in shaping legislation and regulations affecting the rubber industry. It is widely recognized as the single most important voice of the industry and the forum through which manufacturers can work together toward common objectives.

RMA operates in service areas of general concern to all members, including economics, education, technical and standards, environment, government relations, natural rubber, occupational safety and health and rubber statistics, public relations, and transportation.

To learn more about RMA, visit our Web site at [www.rma.org](http://www.rma.org), or contact us at:

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**RUBBER**  
manufacturers  
association

# be tire Smart



## play your **PART**

**PRESSURE • ALIGNMENT • ROTATION • TREAD**

A consumer education program of the  
Rubber Manufacturers Association

## PRESSURE

It's important to have the proper air pressure in your tires, as underinflation is the leading cause of tire failure. The "right amount" of air for your tires is specified by the vehicle manufacturer and is shown on the vehicle door edge, door post, glove box door or fuel door. It is also listed in the owner's manual.



1. When you check the air pressure, make sure the tires are cool — meaning they are not hot from driving even a mile. (NOTE: If you have to drive a distance to get air, check and record the tire pressure first and add the appropriate air pressure when you get to the pump. It is normal for tires to heat up and the air pressure inside to go up as you drive. Never "bleed" or reduce air pressure when tires are hot.)

2. Remove the cap from the valve on one tire.

3. Firmly press a tire gauge onto the valve.

4. Add air to achieve recommended air pressure.

5. If you overfill the tire, release air by pushing on the metal stem in the center of the valve with a fingernail or the tip of a pen. Then recheck the pressure with your tire gauge.



6. Replace the valve cap.

7. Repeat with each tire, including the spare. (NOTE: Some spare tires require higher inflation pressure.)

8. Visually inspect the tires to make sure there are no nails or other objects embedded that could poke a hole in the tire and cause an air leak.

9. Check the sidewalls to make sure there are no gouges, cuts, bulges or other irregularities.

NOTE: Air pressure in a tire goes up (in warm weather) or down (in cold weather) 1-2 pounds for every 10 degrees of temperature change.

# be tire smart

## play your PART

PRESSURE • ALIGNMENT • ROTATION • TREAD



## ALIGNMENT

Misalignment of wheels in the front or rear can cause uneven and rapid treadwear and should be corrected by a tire dealer. Front-wheel-drive vehicles, and those with independent rear suspension, require alignment of all four wheels. Have your alignment checked periodically as specified by the vehicles' owners manual or whenever you have an indication of trouble such as "pulling" or vibration.

Also have your tire balance checked periodically. An unbalanced tire and wheel assembly may result in irregular wear.

## ROTATION

Sometimes irregular tire wear can be corrected by rotating your tires. Consult your vehicle's owners manual, the tire manufacturer or your tire dealer for the appropriate rotation pattern for your vehicle. NOTE: If your tires show uneven wear, ask your tire dealer to check for and correct any misalignment, imbalance or other mechanical problem involved before rotation.

Before rotating your tires, always refer to your car's owner's manual for rotation recommendations. If no rotation period is specified, tires should be rotated approximately every 6,000 miles.

## TREAD

Tires must be replaced when the tread is worn down to 1/16 of an inch in order to prevent skidding and hydroplaning. An easy test: place a penny into a tread groove. If part of Lincoln's head is covered by the tread, you're driving with the proper amount of tread. If you can see all of his head, you should buy a new tire.



Built-in treadwear indicators, or "wear bars," which look like narrow strips of smooth rubber across the tread will appear on the tire when the tread is worn down to one-sixteenth of an inch. When you see these "wear bars," the tire is worn out and should be replaced.

Visually check your tires for signs of uneven wear. You may have irregular tread wear if there are high and low areas or unusually smooth areas. Consult your tire dealer as soon as possible.

## OTHER IMPORTANT INFO...

Practice good driving habits, which will help keep your tires in good condition.

- Obey posted speed limits.
- Avoid fast starts, stops and turns.
- Avoid potholes and other objects on the road.
- Do not run over curbs or hit your tires against the curb when parking.
- Do not overload your vehicle. Check your vehicle's tire information or owners manual for the maximum recommended load for your vehicle.



If properly cared for, tires can last a long time — usually from 40,000 to 80,000 miles, depending on the application.

Log onto [www.rma.org/tiresafety](http://www.rma.org/tiresafety) for more information about tire safety.