

TIRE FOCUS

Understanding Tires

Understanding the tread pattern:

The tread on a tire can tell you a lot about what kind of tire it is and how it is likely to perform in various conditions.



1 Sipes

More sipes – higher wet traction

Solid blocks – better tear resistance in gravel, etc.

2 Lateral grooves

Open – improved mud, sand and snow traction

Closed – quiet and higher cornering power on highway

3 Shoulder blocks

Open – higher traction

Closed – quiet and higher cornering on highway

5 Circumferential grooves

Wide and clear – improved water dispersion at highway speeds

Zigzag and lugs – improved off road and snow traction

4 Centre rib

Solid – responsive highway handling

No rib (lugs) – higher traction

DOT markings

The U.S. Department of Transportation markings signify that the tire meets DOT tire-safety standards. The DOT markings help track the tire in the same way a lot number tracks a food product.

The first two characters designate the tire manufacturer and plant code. This could be important if the tire receives a safety recall.

Characters three and four denote the tire size.

The fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth (optional) characters identify the brand as well as other characteristics important to the manufacturer.

Sipe

More sipes – higher wet traction

Solid blocks – better tear resistance in gravel, etc. Lateral grooves

Open – improved mud, sand and snow traction

Closed – quiet and higher cornering power on highway Shoulder blocks

Open – higher traction

Closed – quiet and higher cornering on highway Centre rib

Solid – responsive highway handling

The final four numbers denote the date the tire was produced. The first two indicate the week, and the last numbers specify the year.

No rib (lugs) – higher traction

Circumferential grooves

Wide and clear – improved water dispersion at highway speeds

Zigzag and lugs – improved off road and snow traction