NEWS
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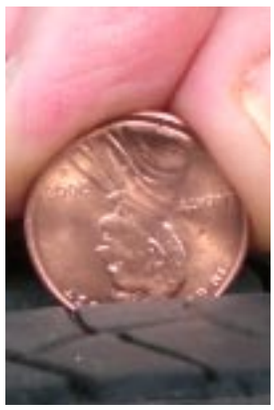
Tire Replacement Guide

A good starting point in any discussion about tires is; when should they be replaced? The Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 109 was implemented in 1968. Among other things, it required that "wear bars" be molded into the tire tread to show when the tread wore down to 2/32 of an inch. When the wear bar is even with the tread the tires are considered to be worn out. Another way to measure tread depth is the old penny test. Here you hold a penny in the tread with Lincoln's head toward the center. If all of old Abe's head can be seen, the tread is 2/32" or less.



With time we've experienced inflation and now it is suggested to do the same test with a quarter. When a quarter is used to measure tread depth, it reveals that there is less than 4/32" of tread left when all of George Washington's head is visible. Honest Abe versus "I cannot tell a lie" George. Who's right?

Here are some test results done on a 2006 BMW 325i and a 2006 Ford F150 2WD stopping from 70 mph on a road with a dime's thickness of water on it. Three tests were done; one with new tires, one with tires at 4/32" of tread and finally 2/32" of tread.

VEHICLE	NEW TIRES	4/32" TREAD	2/32" TREAD
F150			
Stopping distance	256 ft	378 ft	499 ft
Time to stop	4.8 sec	6.0 sec	7.5 sec
BMW325i			
Stopping distance	195 ft	290 ft	379 ft
Time to stop	3.7 sec	4.7 sec	5.9 sec

In the BMW test with the 2/32" of tread, the car was still going 55 mph at the point where the car had stopped completely with new tires. As you can see with 2/32" of tread it takes nearly twice as long to stop as with new tires and nearly 50% farther than the tires with 4/32" of tread.

Fortunately in Colorado the roads aren't wet a majority of the time, but depending on the season it may be wise to replace tires when they get down to 4/32"

Don't be penny wise and pound foolish. Replace your tires on time. That's my 2 cents worth. Or is it 26 cents worth?