

Winter Advice for your Tires

A new season is creeping up on us and for many parts of the U.S. that means making the switch to a different set tires. But what should you do with the tires you take off your car? Heat, ozone and exposure to the elements influence a tire's aging process but you can prolong the life of your tires by properly storing them. Here are a few tips to help you extend the life of your stored tires.

1. Before storing grab some soap, water a tire brush to clean each tire of dirt, grime and brake dust. If you keep your tires on wheels, make sure to clean those too. Make sure to dry completely and don't apply any type of tire dressing.
2. After cleaning, place each tire in its own large, airtight plastic bag (lawn and leaf bags work well here) for storing. Avoid any moisture in the bag and remove as much air as possible. Close the bag tightly with tape to create a personal space for each tire. This helps to reduce oil evaporation.
3. Keep tires out of direct sunlight. The sun's ultraviolet rays and heat are detrimental to rubber.
4. Place the tires in a cool, dry location. A basement or climate-controlled space works best whereas a standard garage, shed or attic often see a wide range of hot and cold temperatures as well as precipitation and humidity. Make sure to store your tires away from things like electric motors, furnaces, switches, and sump pumps because they are sources of ozone.
5. If possible, store tires vertically rather than stacking horizontally to reduce stress and tire distortion. Also, place on a piece of clean wood and not directly on the ground.
6. If you don't store your tires in individual bags, and instead stack them, make sure to stack them "white to white" and "black to black" to prevent staining of the white rubber as white and black rubber are compounded differently.
7. As an additional note, don't let a vehicle sit on tires for extended periods of time. Long-term inactivity is more harmful to tires than weekly drives. Driving on your tires will help flex the tire and maintain oil dispersion within the rubber compounds.

Just like us, tires are always aging. But these few tips will help slow the process and extend the life of your tires while in storage. Remember, before mounting your stored tires back on your vehicle, make sure to have a tire professional inspect the tires first.

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