

Stoke-on-Trent, December 7, 2020

Fitting inappropriate tyres could impact running costs and performance, Michelin warns fleets

Drivers and fleet managers are being urged to pay close attention when selecting replacement tyres for their cars and vans, with Michelin warning that inappropriate or incorrect fitments could negatively impact vehicle handling and performance characteristics – and in some cases risk invalidating the vehicle manufacturer’s warranty.

Michelin’s fleet team points to a rise in the instances of vehicles driving on inappropriate tyres, such as cars running on van tyres (or vice versa), the mixing of standard and run-flat technology products, or incorrect tyres which don’t have the required speed or load rating for the vehicle.

Some manufacturers of 4x4s and high-performance vehicles also stipulate specific marked, homologated tyres for their vehicles – and non-approved fitments can risk invalidating the warranty.

Peter Wood, Michelin Key Account Manager, says: “As technology has evolved, so has tyre choice. Customers can now select between summer, all-season, winter, extra load, run-flat technology and even acoustic tuned tyres, to name just a few of the options. In one size alone, there can be several different load and speed ratings to suit various vehicle types, plus options for different seasons and driving styles.


“This makes it more important than ever before to seek expert advice from a tyre dealer you can trust, such as a Michelin Quality Centre.”

Brian Porteous, Michelin’s Technical Manager - Car, Van, 4x4 and Government Contracts, explains: “It is crucial that any replacement tyres you select are compatible with each other, compatible with the vehicle and deliver the appropriate handling and performance characteristics.

“Vehicle manufacturers work incredibly hard to fine-tune their cars and vans to handle a certain way, and all of that can be upset if you fit a tyre which, although the correct size, might be intended for a different vehicle altogether. Driving on inappropriate tyres can also lead to reductions in fuel efficiency, passenger comfort and tyre life, plus a noisier ride.”

To help fleets maximise safety and avoid incorrect tyre selection, Michelin has published a six-point guide which is applicable regardless of tyre brand preference.

1. Tyres must meet the vehicle manufacturer’s requirements of load and speed, plus any local regulatory requirements such as: vehicle speed, E marking, winter marking, directional fitment etc.
2. If a vehicle manufacturer requires specific marked, homologated tyres, then these must be fitted. It is sometimes possible to use other tyres, but not always – consult your vehicle handbook.

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3. It is essential for vehicle stability that the best grip is maintained at the rear. If all tyres are not being replaced together, the new tyres must be fitted to the rear.
 4. The tyres on each end of an axle must be of the same type. Differences in tyre performance, particularly towards the end of a tyre's life, make this critical for vehicle stability and predictability.
 5. Winter tyres must always be fitted in full vehicle sets. Do not mix summer and winter tyres across a vehicle.
 6. Run-flat technology tyres must always be fitted in full vehicle sets and to the appropriate wheel type. The vehicle manufacturer's guidance must be followed as there are often differences in vehicle characteristics to work effectively with the run-flat tyre capability.

For further information on the Michelin tyre range visit <https://business.michelin.co.uk>

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Michelin, the leading mobility company, is dedicated to enhancing its clients' mobility, sustainably; designing and distributing the most suitable tyres, services and solutions for its clients' needs; providing digital services, maps and guides to help enrich trips and travels and make them unique experiences; and developing high-technology materials that serve a variety of industries. Headquartered in Clermont-Ferrand, France, Michelin is present in 170 countries, has more than 127,000 employees and operates 69 tyre production facilities which together produced around 200 million tyres in 2019. (www.michelin.com)

For further press information please contact:

David Johnson, Michelin Press Office

Tel: + 44 (0) 1782 402341 Email: d.johnson@michelin.com

Dan Jones or James Keeler, Garnett Keeler PR, Inver House, 37-39 Pound Street,
Carshalton, Surrey, SM5 3PG

Tel: +44 (0)20 8647 4467 E-mail: dan.jones@garnettkeeler.com / james.keeler@garnettkeeler.com

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