

Information on a Tire Sidewall (what does it all mean)

There are hundreds of tire manufacturers around the world and combined they make thousands of different tire brands. Additionally, in the commercial truck tire world, tires are designed to run on specific wheel positions (steer, drive, and trailer) in specific service vocations (linehaul, regional, pickup & delivery, on-off road and others).

There is a lot of information cured into a truck tire sidewall that gives you valuable information about that specific tire:

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|----------------------|----------------------|
| - Tire Manufacturer | - Tire Brand |
| - Tire size | - Tire load range |
| - DOT number | - Retread DOT number |
| - Inflation Pressure | - Maximum tire load |
| - Safety warning | - Tire Materials |
| - Directional Tire | - Regroovable |

- Tire manufacturer and brand is clearly visible on the tire sidewall in the largest font letter/numbers on both sides of the tire.
- Tire sizes are broken down into standard aspect ratio and low profile. For instance, a 11R22.5 is a standard aspect ratio tire. 11 is the nominal tread width measured in inches. R is for radial, and 22.5 is the wheel diameter measured in inches. The aspect ratio by default is about 90 which means that the tire sidewall width is 90% the width of the tread. In low profile sizes such as the 295/75R22.5, 295 is the tread width measured in mm's and 75 is the aspect ratio. In this case the sidewall is a lot narrower than the standard aspect ratio tire size (90 for standard; 75 for the low profile). The smaller this number, the less sidewall area.
- It is important to understand DOT numbers. The Dept. of Transportation requires a 12 digit number on new tires. Every new tire manufacturer has been assigned a 2-letter/number designation which can be found on the DOT website

(<http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/cars/rules/manufacture/>).

Retreaders each have a 3-letter designation preceded by the letter R (for retread). An example of new tire DOT number would be MJ 37 AB3D 1508. MJ is the manufacturer's plant code, 37 is the tire size, AB3D is the design code, and 1508 designates the week and year the tire was built (15th week of 2008). Retread DOT numbers have only 7 digits (preceded by the R for retread) designating plant code and date of production. If a tire has been re-

treaded twice, there will be three numbers on the tire - the new DOT number and two retread DOT numbers. This indicates to you how old the tire casing is (or how many times it has been retreaded).

- The tire load/inflation pressure listed on the tire sidewall is the highest load capacity that the tire can handle for a given pressure. Your actual pressures should be determined by the worst case load scenario that the tire will see in real life.
- Load range is just a letter designation for the load carrying capacity of the tire. The higher the letter in the alphabet...the larger is the load capacity.
- There will always be a mounting/dismounting safety warning.
- The type of material used in the tire construction (ie. steel) will be listed with the number of plies.
- Some tires are only designed to run in a single direction; in that case the tire has an arrow that shows the direction the tire needs to be mounted. And most tires say "regroovable" which means that after the tire is worn, there is additional undertread available if you are interested in regrooving versus retreading.

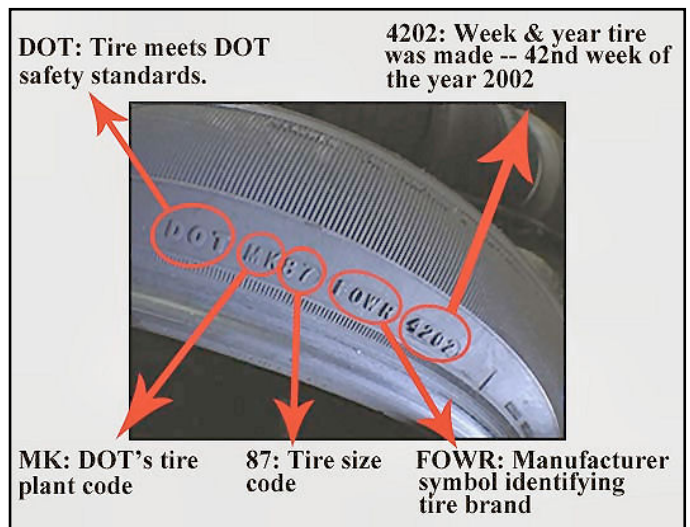


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