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TEXAS AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
THE TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM  
COLLEGE STATION, TEXAS 77843

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

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AGRICULTURE  
AGR 101



OFFICIAL BUSINESS

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300



## TEXAS AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE

The Texas A&M University System

### S.O.S. Shopper:

You can tell if you need to shop at tire sales by checking the condition of the tires on your car and the spare. Tires have wear bars molded into the tread. When less than 1/16 inch of the tread remains, the bars appear as a solid band across the tire. When the bars show, it is time to replace the tire. If you are planning a long trip, consider new tires to prevent accidents and avoid costly "on-the-road" purchases.

When buying tires, remember that the guarantee is part of the cost you are paying. Be sure you understand its provisions. Inside this letter you will find clues for "sizing-up" warranty claims and selecting the type of tire that best suits your car and driving needs.

Happy Sales!

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County Extension Agent



## TIRE SALES

To assure a real bargain when buying tires on sale, follow these general guidelines:

- Follow your car manufacturer's recommendations, found in your owner's manual, on the label on the glove compartment door or on the driver's door frame. Never use tires smaller than the original equipment. The size, type, number of plies and composition of cord are molded into the sidewall of the tires on your car.
- Match tires . . . don't mix! Avoid unpredictable handling problems by using the same type of tire on all four wheels. Never use radials with any other type. Bias and belted tires can be used together only when both tires on each axle are alike.
- Match your road conditions and driving speed to the tire. **Radial plies** give optimum performance and handling for long-distance, high-speed driving; their city ride may be rough. **Bias plies** give smooth city rides, but generate more heat at high speeds. **Belted bias** perform similarly to radials, but do not grip the road quite as well on curves and corners.
- Check the dealer's reputation. Ask other people who have bought tires on sale from this dealer what type of adjustment they have received on their warranty.



### About the Warranty

How many more miles do you plan to drive this car? If the car will be replaced long before the warranty expires, avoid paying for a warranty you will not use. Think twice about advertising and warranty claims:

- **Tread Wear Warranty** — indicates expected tire strength against common road hazards and long periods of high speed driving. Consumer's Union judges 15,000 miles to be below average; 20,000, average; 25,000, slightly above average; and 30,000, above average. A tire selling for \$25 and lasting 15,000 miles is no cheaper than one costing \$50 and lasting 30,000 miles.
- **Gas Mileage Claims** — Consumer's Union found no significant difference in gas mileage between belted-bias and bias ply tires. Some radial tires save 40 gallons of gas a year if the car is driven 15,000 miles a year and gets 15 miles per gallon with non-radial tires.

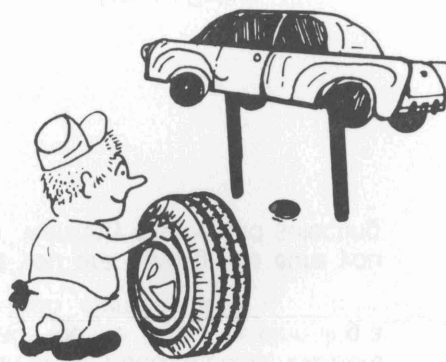
### What Kind to Buy

Three different types of tires are available, covering a broad range of prices and performance. Their composition and expected performance is summarized below:

- **Bias Ply** — the basic type of tire construction. Plies, or layers of fabric cord, are applied at an angle from rim edge to rim edge. They are made with two or four plies of nylon, rayon or polyester. This is the least expensive type of tire.
- **Belted Bias Ply** — A bias tire is made firmer by adding a belt around the circumference before the tread is applied. Belts may be made of rayon, fiber glass, polyester or steel. Belted bias tires last longer than conventional bias tires, corner better, stick to the road better when braking and give a firmer ride over rough roads.
- **Radial** — best wear, handling and performance of any type tire for high mileage and high speed driving. Fabric for the body of the tire is applied from bead to bead (the edge of the tire that fits against the wheel), and a belt is placed around the circumference of the tire. Radials are made of polyester with steel belts, rayon with steel belts or rayon with rayon belts. They do not resist sidewall bruising as well as bias or belted bias tires and are the most expensive to buy.

### Make Your Savings Count

- When you buy tires, save money by spending a little more to have the car's wheel alignment checked and the wheels balanced.
- If you need only one new tire, put the new one and the best old one on the rear axle with the new tire on the right side. Failures on rear tires cause greater handling problems. If two new tires are bought, mount them both on the rear.



Prepared by Extension family resource management specialists, The Texas A&M University System.

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