When did you last check your vehicle’s tyres? Take a close look, for safety’s sake…

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Tyres can suffer from a variety of problems, including degradation through ageing; frequent checks are vital to ensure safety… advises Start Rescue.

They tell us:

(All words and images from Start Rescue).

- Spring ‘driving season’ right time to check tyre ages
- Healthy, safe tyres not all about tread-levels and pressures
- Start Rescue continues to see rise in tyre-related problems

Checking tyre tread levels is a must-do for all responsible UK motorists, but knowing the age of your tyres can be just as important if you want to avoid calling-out your breakdown provider this Spring.

Lee Puffett, Managing Director of Start Rescue, one of the UK’s largest breakdown companies explains:

“Better weather means all kinds of vehicles are coming out of hibernation and back on the road, such as cherished classics, cool convertibles, motorhomes, family runabouts and sports bikes. Even cars parked up for months by fair weather drivers will also make an appearance.

And whilst there might be plenty of tread and you’re road legal, the tyres could be in bad shape. The majority of leading tyre manufacturers recommend replacing tyres at ten years, including the spare in the boot, and we think this is sound advice from the experts.”

Tyre ‘age checks’ don’t need expert help, there’s a prominent DOT marking on the sidewall with the final four digits showing first the week and then the year of manufacture, as shown in the photograph below (in this case indicating the eigth week of 2016):



If you're seeing 0212 (that's the second week of 2012) it might be high time to buy some fresh rubber, even if the tread is fine.

Start Rescue's data underlines how (usually avoidable) tyre problems continue to plague motorists, with 20 per cent of all requests for their help at the roadside being tyre or wheel related.

And those stats are nudging in the wrong direction with a seven per cent increase noted in the first months of 2023 compared to last year.

The 10-year 'time for change' advice is not the only factor. Even younger, low mileage tyres can get old before their time due to low usage, periods of idleness or the rubber drying out due to UV light exposure. This means that a tyre that regularly 'hits the road' can often be

healthier because anti- oxidising chemicals are activated which slow the ageing process.

Start Rescue, a Which? Recommended Provider for the last four years suggests a fortnightly routine, especially before long journeys, which focusses on tread depths, keeping to manufacturer-advised pressures and keeping an eye-out for deterioration like cracks, uneven wear, bulges, cuts and the tyre's age. Anything that doesn't look right should be checked by a professional.



This tyre (above) has more than reached the end of its road; check closely the side walls and treads for early signs of such deterioration.

Puffett, concluded: "Worn tyres are dangerous, but add in potholes which are evident throughout the UK and you could be facing a very serious problem for you and other road users. So, just as we do a major clean at home in spring, checking over your tyres at this

time of year makes really good sense. Tyre related breakdowns and safety issues are preventable if motorists will just do some basic checks on their pride-and-joy."

About Start Rescue:

Start Rescue has a 4.5-star rating on Trust Pilot, a five-star Defaqto* rating and recently achieved Which? Recommended Provider status for the fourth year running. Start Rescue also has a 97% recommendation rate from customers helped at the roadside.

Launched in 2009, Start Rescue is an integral part of the nation's fourth largest breakdown and recovery service, Call Assist, which now has more than two million UK customers.

For further breakdown advice, please visit startrescue.co.uk, and click the following links to find detailed and user friendly Start Rescue guides on tread depth and safety checks and how to read tyre codes."

www.startrescue.co.uk is a trading style of Call Assist Ltd, which is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and has been providing breakdown services on behalf of many brands for the past 24 years. Call Assist currently services more than 2 million policyholders through a large network of approved recovery agents throughout the UK and a further network in Europe.

*Defaqto helps financial institutions and consumers make better informed decisions, by researching and analysing the terms and conditions for every financial product on the market. Defaqto then rates products on a scale of 1 to 5, based on the quality and comprehensiveness of the features and benefits they provide.