



10 rules of tires every driver should follow before they hit the road

(BPT) - Every time you drive, you trust your tires with your safety. Tires may seem simple, but they are more complex than many drivers realize. That begs the question: What do you need to know about them in order to stay safe on the road?

Here are 10 Rules of Tires - core principles drivers should know before they turn the ignition or walk inside a tire shop. Follow these important guidelines and you can have peace of mind when you hit the road. To read more about each rule, visit NokianTires.com/TenRules.

Purchase tires that suit your climate. Even the best set of tires could be the wrong fit for where you live. If you get lots of snow and ice each winter, then winter tires are likely your safest option, which means you will need to switch to all-season tires in the other three seasons. If you do not get any winter weather, all-season tires are a good choice for year-round use.

If your winter weather is unpredictable or you live near the mountains, all-weather tires provide a great compromise: winter safety in a tire you can drive all year long. NokianTires.com/Weather has more information about all-weather tires.

High-quality tires are worth the investment. The tire shop is one place where price should not be

your top priority. There are many factors - such as grip, responsiveness to the road and low rolling resistance - that make high-quality tires worth the purchase and could actually help save you money in the long run.

Tires can be sustainable without sacrificing safety. High-quality tires aren't just about safety; good tires can also help you minimize your environmental footprint. Many tire makers are lowering their products' rolling resistance, using eco-friendly ingredients and introducing sustainable production processes. Rewarding them for their efforts can also help protect the planet.

Tires are only as safe as their maintenance.

Even the best tires depend on you. Keeping them up to speed gives you a better chance of staying safe on the road. That means inflating them to the proper pressure level, regularly checking for damage and rotating them frequently. Winter tires don't belong on spring and summer roads.

The qualities that keep you safe on snow and ice make winter tires a bad fit once weather warms. Fortunately, there are other solutions crafted to keep you safe when the mercury rises, such as driving all-weather tires year-round or switching to all-season tires.

Much of a tire's quality is determined before it touches the road.

Want to know what you will get out of your tires? Pay

close attention to what goes in them. High-quality rubber and state-of-the-art technology set great tires apart from the rest. For example, Nokian Tyres reinforces many of its products with Aramid - the same fiber used in bulletproof vests - to help protect against road hazards.

When you're choosing tires, trust the experts. Tire dealers work hard to help keep drivers safe. They can help you see past marketing gimmicks and understand which tires are best for you.

Make sure your tires fit your vehicle. The right-sized tires are more likely to provide you with safety, fuel efficiency and comfort. Make sure your tire size matches your vehicle's recommendation, which you can typically find in your door jamb.

Put stock in the features that actually matter. Low price and high mileage warranties can be overrated. To choose the right tires, pay attention to other details - such as ingredients, rolling resistance, and whether the tires match your typical road conditions.

Treat road trips differently than the daily commute. Road trips place unique demands on your tires. Before you leave for a long trip, check your tires' inflation level and tread depth, inspect for visible damage and have them rotated. Following these rules goes a long way toward keeping you safe on the road. To read about each rule in more detail, visit NokianTires.com/TenRules.



How regular maintenance keeps your car firing on all cylinders

5 reasons to accelerate your car maintenance

(BPT) - Car maintenance is often a scheduled chore when you're regularly driving. However, if you're driving less due to the current environment, maintenance can easily become a lesser priority or even completely forgotten. Hankook Tire's latest Gauge Index found that as daily driving decreased as a result of the coronavirus pandemic, nearly one-third (30%) of Americans have done less car cleaning and maintenance too. But car maintenance is always important, especially as drivers around the country gradually resume their travels and hit the road. Hankook Tire found that 60% of Americans expect to take more car trips moving forward. With that in mind, the following are five reasons it's important to keep up with regular car maintenance:

1. Safety First and foremost: Regular car

maintenance helps increase safety when driving. This is especially important if your car has been parked for a while. Be sure to check your fluids (oil, washer, coolant, etc.) and inspect the tires to make sure that they haven't lost their pressure. After all, the Gauge revealed 70% of Americans have not regularly been checking tire pressure during the pandemic. Low tire pressure can lead to several issues such as poor performance, premature wear and higher rolling resistance, which can impact fuel efficiency.

2. Save time and money. Consistent car maintenance also helps extend the overall life of not only your tires, but the systems that drive them, including the engine, suspension, brakes and transmission. With the median price of a set of four tires ranging from \$300 to \$600, investing in regular tire upkeep such as rotations and alignment when necessary, helps deter more costly repairs

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down the road - making both your car, and your money, go further. And, you'll save time. Regularly scheduled basic maintenance appointments traditionally don't take too long - and some dealerships even offer special pick-up and drop-off appointments so you never have to leave the comfort of your home.

3. First place performance. Just like a regular gym routine helps keep your muscle groups firing on all cylinders, regular trips to the mechanic can provide the same benefit to your car. Whether it's a crushing leg day (suspension) or a cardio workout (engine), routine inspection of your shoes (tires) will help you maximize your workout traction so you're ready for the next round and running at peak performance.

4. Cleanliness. While cleaning the vehicle's interior and exterior was the primary maintenance measure (40%) Americans took at the height of quarantine, the idea of clean cars goes beyond just dust on the dashboard and sanitized seatbelts. It keeps the environment clean, too. Little maintenance checks add up to a big environmental impact. For example, regular oil changes contribute to a cleaner engine and lower vehicle emissions, while properly inflated tires can contribute to better fuel efficiency.

5. Vehicle value. When the time comes to upgrade your vehicle, one of the first points of inspection is on the inside. A vehicle's internal condition is one of the key factors in determining its worth, so it's best to keep everything well-oiled and running smoothly, even if you don't have any immediate plans to trade it in.

While it is recommended to adhere to your vehicle's outlined maintenance schedule, there are a few things that drivers can do on a regular basis to provide added value. Every month, double-check to make sure headlights and taillights are working, fluids are topped off, and your belt and hose systems are running smoothly. Use the penny test to check your tire's tread. In addition, keeping a vehicle maintenance log helps you stay organized and ensure good habits that can have a real impact when it comes time to trade in. If any issues do arise, Hankook recommends getting your vehicle checked out by a certified mechanic before getting back behind the wheel.

Top tips for weathering storm season

(BPT) - It's not over yet. Just past the peak of hurricane season weather forecasters have already had to resort to the Greek alphabet to name storms. And with severe storms and tornados appearing around the country, it is more important than ever to take steps and be prepared before, during and after a storm.

One of the biggest threats during any storm is tree damage. A tree might seem like it would be able to sustain the forces of a large storm, but whether it is unseen internal damage, wet, unstable ground, or proximity to power lines, trees are vulnerable during severe storms and can present a significant hazard. The following tips from expert arborist and STIHL spokesperson Mark Chisholm can help you protect yourself, your family and your property from a storm.

Before the storm. Develop a relationship with a certified tree care professional. By choosing the right company ahead of time, you'll likely be prioritized as an existing customer when a storm does hit.

Conduct a pre-storm assessment and identify trouble spots. A pre-storm assessment can help you identify potential hazards on your property such as cracks in tree trunks or major limbs, hollow or decayed trees, limbs extending over a roof, or trees in close proximity to power

lines.

Take measures to prevent damage. After assessing possible hazards to your property, consider measures to limit potential damage. Remove dead, diseased or damaged limbs. Inspect leaning trees and consider removing those with large cavities. Prune branches that are too close to your house and over the street, and check your gutters and be sure to remove any debris to prevent water damage. For any work in and around your home, consider calling a professional, and always call a professional to assess and/or remove anything within close proximity to utility lines. Never attempt to do this yourself.

During the storm. Don't try to be a hero. Your property is not more important than your life. Prepare in advance, follow guidelines for evacuation and shelter.

After the storm. More people are injured after a storm than during one. Storm damaged trees present unique challenges and dangers. Put safety first. Evaluate what you can handle and what's for a professional - anything not on the ground should definitely be handled by a professional. Some things could be a threat to your life such as large broken or hanging limbs where chainsaw work is needed, or branches that are too close to a utility line. Never approach or attempt to move downed utility lines

and report branches close to or touching utility lines immediately.

If you're skilled enough to do the work yourself, always wear proper attire and protective equipment including boots, gloves, protective glasses, chainsaw protective pants, a helmet system and hearing protection. Never operate a chainsaw from a ladder, roof, in a tree or while standing on any other insecure surface - leave these jobs for the pros.

Evaluate damage. A storm-damaged tree may not have to be removed. Inspect your trees to see if they're healthy despite storm damage. If at least 50% of the tree's crown is still intact, and the remaining branches can form a new branch structure, then there is a good chance the tree can be saved.

Repair minor damage & debris. Remove any broken branches, stubs or jagged remains of limbs. Smaller branches should be pruned at the point where they join larger ones. Don't worry if the tree's appearance is not perfect.

Stay educated. Learn more tips on tree safety, chainsaw safety, finding a tree care professional, and how to prepare for storms by visiting STIHLUSA.com.

Mark Chisholm is a third-generation arborist with his family-owned Aspen Tree Expert Company in New Jersey and STIHL, Inc. spokesperson.



Clear your air. Top 6 tips to improve indoor air ventilation during COVID-19

SUBMITTED BY 919 MARKETING

Our nation's top health agency recently issued an urgent warning that coronavirus can spread through the air even if we're six feet apart - especially in poorly ventilated enclosed spaces.

This warning by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has home and business owners worried about their indoor air quality as temperatures drop and we gather indoors - where the very air we breathe could be a petri dish for the virus.

Here are some helpful tips:

- The Filter First - Make sure your HVAC filter is correctly in place and consider upgrading to the highest-rated filter your

system can accommodate. Professionals recommend using filters with a MERV (Minimum Efficiency Reporting Value) rating between 8 and 10 and a thickness of one inch for most homes.

- Fan of the Fan - HVAC systems only filter the air when the fan is running, so run the fan continuously or for an extended period. You can set most systems to run the fan even without the heat or air conditioning on.

- Purify the Air - Most air purifiers will help circulate clean air and have HEPA filters that remove up to 99 percent of airborne allergens, including pollen, dust, pet dander and mold spores. A mid-priced

room purifier can cost \$50-125. Many people place it in their bedroom where they spend most of their time.

- Open Up - Improve indoor air quality by opening windows or screened doors to bring in fresh air from the outside, if possible.

Ventilation can be further increased by opening windows at opposite sides of the home (cross ventilation) or on different floors of the house. Avoid this when outdoor air pollution is high or if it poses a health risk to family members.

- Keep Moving - Keep internal doors throughout the house open to promote movement of air. Operate a bathroom fan or kitchen exhaust fan when the

room is in use. Portable fans can be used to further increase ventilation but make sure to direct the air flow so that it does not blow directly from one person to another

- Don't Duck the Ducts - The CDC reports proper ventilation of heating and air conditioning systems can reduce airborne virus transmission. Air ducts are the circulatory system of your home, which help move the air, so it is important to keep them clean for optimal circulation. The National Air Duct Cleaners Association (NADCA) recommends cleaning air ducts every 5 - 7 years.

When used along with other best practices recommended by the CDC, increasing indoor air ventilation can be an important part of the plan to protect families against the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

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Grow Garlic this Fall for Flavorful Meals and Health Benefits

By MELINDA MYERS

Add a bit of flavor and health benefits to your main course with some homegrown garlic. This vegetable has been used for thousands of years as both food and medicine. Today it is credited with fighting heart disease, lowering blood pressure and cholesterol, and boosting the immune system while fighting cancer.

Grow garlic in a well-drained soil and full sun. Plant cloves in fall about six weeks before the ground freezes in cold climates and early winter in warmer regions. Garlic needs 6 to 8 weeks of cool temperatures below 40 degrees for the shoot and bulb to develop. The leaves will form during cool, short days then slows as bulb growth begins when the days are warmer and longer.

Plant individual cloves with the pointed side up and the base of the clove 2 to 3 inches below the soil surface. Space cloves 6 inches apart in rows 12 to 14 inches apart or more depending on the variety.

Mulch the soil with weed-free straw after the ground freezes in regions with cold winters. This provides added insulation and

helps prevent frost heaving that occurs when temperatures fluctuate, causing soil to alternately freeze, thaw and shift throughout the winter.

Water thoroughly and often enough to keep the soil evenly moist during active growth. Inconsistent moisture during the growing season results in misshapen bulbs. Mulch the soil with shredded leaves, evergreen needles, or other organic matter to conserve moisture, suppress weeds, and improve the soil as it decomposes.

Double your garlic harvest by using the curly Q stems, called scapes, in cooking and flower arrangements. Watch for these curled stems about a month after the spring leaves appear.

Remove the scape soon after the swollen part appears at

the tip of the stem. Cut or break the scape off just below the swollen area. All parts are edible and can be used fresh or cooked just like garlic. You will not only enjoy the mild flavor but removing the scapes helps increase the size of the garlic bulbs.

Harvest garlic when about one third, but less than one half of the leaves turn brown. Start by digging one plant and checking the garlic for maturity. Cloves should be plump and fill the skin. Immature garlic does not store well while over-mature bulbs are subject to disease.

Cure garlic for 3 to 4 weeks in a warm, well-ventilated location. Once dried, remove the tops and store in a cool, moderately humid location with good air circulation and out of direct sunlight. Properly harvested and cured garlic will last for up to 8 months.

So, plant some garlic this fall and add flavor and health benefits to your meals.



PHOTO BY MELINDA MYERS

Gardening expert Melinda Myers has 30 years of horticulture experience and written over 20 gardening books, including Small Space Gardening. Myers is the host of The Great Courses "How to Grow Anything" DVD series and the nationally syndicated Melinda's Garden Moment TV & radio segments. Myers is a columnist and contributing editor for Birds & Blooms magazine. Myers' website is www.melindamyers.com.



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Fall Garden Tasks to Protect Your Landscape from Winter Wildlife Damage

By MELINDA MYERS

As the seasons change, we adjust our gardening tasks and plantings to match. Animals also make changes this time of year, often changing their eating habits and dining locations. These adjustments can impact your gardens. Reduce the risk of damage by starting in fall to protect your landscape from hungry animals this winter.

Take a walk around your landscape to evaluate plants and plantings for their susceptibility to animal damage. Look for pathways that animals use to access your landscape and areas of potential damage.

Note new plantings, animal favorites and those special plantings you would hate to lose. Make sure these are protected.

Check mulch around trees and shrubs. Deep layers of mulch and mulch piled around the trunk of trees and the base of shrubs provides shelter for



mice and voles. These rodents like to gnaw on the bark of trees and shrubs in winter. Pull mulch off tree trunks and stems and spread out deep mulch so it is only two to four inches deep.

Protect young trees and shrubs with a four-foot-tall fence of hardware cloth sunk several inches into the ground to prevent vole damage at ground level and most rabbit damage. Mature trees are usually only bothered during years where the vole and rabbit populations are high and food is scarce.

Fencing around garden beds filled with animal favorites is another option. Make

sure your fence is high enough, tight to the ground and gates are secure. You will need a four-foot-high fence for rabbits and at least five- to six-foot-high fence to keep deer out of small gardens. A fence of several strands of fishing line has proven to be successful for some gardeners.

Repellents are another less obtrusive option. These use smell or taste to discourage animals from dining in your landscape. Check the label to see if the repellent works on the animals and rodents you are trying to manage. Apply repellents before animals start feeding for best results. Then reapply as recommended on the label. Look for one, like organic Plantskydd (plantskydd.com), that is rain and snow

resistant, lasting up to six months on dormant plants over the winter so you will need to apply it less often.

Scare tactics may be effective depending on where you live. In urban and suburban areas animals are used to human scents and sounds. Gardeners often hang old CDs and shiny ribbons in tree branches to scare hungry animals. If you opt for scare tactics, be sure to employ a variety of options and change their location to increase your chance of success.

Constantly monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the methods used and check all plantings for damage. When animal populations are high and hungry, they will eat about anything. Be willing to change things up if one

method is not working. Using multiple tactics will help increase your level of success.

Protect your landscape from hungry deer, rabbits, and voles this winter. Start preparing in fall before their winter dining habits begin. If you are vigilant and persistent, you can coexist with these creatures and still have a beautiful landscape.

Melinda Myers has written more than 20 gardening books, including Small Space Gardening. She hosts The Great Courses "How to Grow Anything" DVD series and the Melinda's Garden Moment TV & radio segments. Myers is a columnist and contributing editor for Birds & Blooms magazine and was commissioned by Tree World Plant Care for her expertise to write this article. Her web site is www.MelindaMyers.com.

Look. Listen. Learn. Be Aware. Fire can happen anywhere in, around your home

Fall tips from Washington State Fire Marshal's Office

In collaboration with fire agencies and safety advocates nationwide, the Washington State Fire Marshal's Office joined forces with the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) during Fire Prevention Week earlier this month to educate the public about basic but essential ways to quickly and safely escape a home fire.

Home Fires

The number of fires in homes has steadily declined over the last few decades. While we have made great progress in learning how to prevent fires, statistics show a significant increase in injuries and loss of

life over the same time period. Today's homes and buildings can burn faster than ever. Families can have as little as one to two minutes to escape safely from the time a smoke alarm sounds. Planning what your family should do in the event of a fire is critical. Since fires do not just start at home this information can help you anywhere.

Three simple statements lay the groundwork for preparation and action in the event of a home or other fire:

- Look for places fire can start
- Identify electrical and fire hazards in your home. Make sure chimneys are clean and electrical cords are intact. Are your lighters and matches away from small curious hands?

- Listen for the sound of the smoke alarm

Make sure smoke alarms are installed in all sleeping areas and on every level of a home. Close doors behind you to prevent the spread of smoke, heat and fire.

- Learn two ways out of every room

Draw a map of your home with all family members and practice your evacuation plan at least twice a year at night and during the day.

Teach children how to get out on their own and make sure no one ever goes back in a burning building. Ensure your address signs are current and easily seen.

Fire can happen anywhere and with a small amount of preparation and forethought, a dangerous situation can be

overcome quickly and safely.

Wood Burning Fireplaces

Be aware of burn restrictions in your area before starting a fire. Unless the fireplace is the only source of heat, wood fires may be banned in your area due to air quality.

Use only kindling or fire starters to start a fire. Never use lighter fluid, kerosene, or gasoline.

Burn only dry, seasoned wood. Never burn trash in the fireplace.

Keep metal or tempered-glass screens closed unless loading or stoking the fire.

Keep children and pets away from the fireplace with a "kid-free zone" of at least 3 feet.

Allow ashes to cool before disposing of them. Place ashes in a tightly covered metal container at least 10 feet away from the home and any other nearby buildings. Never empty the ash directly into a trash can.

Ensure you have working smoke alarms in your home and test them monthly.

Autumn Yard Work for Fire Safety Year Round

The Washington State Fire Marshal's Office advises residents that a little yardwork around your home now can improve your fire safety and help firefighters respond to emergencies.

Clear leaves and other debris from your roof and gutters to reduce the risk of moisture damage now and fire spreading to your home in the spring. Pick a dry day to remove fallen debris and leaves from your roof top and gutters. Exercise proper ladder safety and assess your own abilities when considering climbing ladders or walking on your roof.

Trim branches or shrubs away from your posted house numbers to make it easier for first responders to find your home in emergency situations.

Keep a clearance of three feet around fire hydrants in your neighborhood. Overgrown vines, tree branches, or even snow, can slow firefighters down when responding to a fire.

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