

Tires are one of the most important safety components on any vehicle. Whether you operate a passenger vehicle, pickup truck, tractor, or trailer, a tire that is worn, damaged, improperly inflated, or overloaded can fail without warning.

What to Look For During a Tire Inspection

Before operating a vehicle, don't just kick the tires and assume they're good. **Take the time to visually inspect them:**

- **Tread wear:** Look for low tread depth, uneven wear, cupping, bald spots, or exposed wear indicators. Uneven wear can indicate alignment, suspension, or inflation problems.
- **Sidewall damage:** Check for cuts, cracks, bulges, bubbles, punctures, or other deformities. Do not operate a vehicle with a bulge, bubble, or other significant structural damage.
- **Ply or cord damage:** Look for exposed or broken cords/plies, especially on heavy-duty tires. Any exposed internal material requires the tire to be removed from service.
- **Inflation:** Check tire pressure **when the tires are cold** and maintain the manufacturer's recommended pressure. Underinflation creates excessive heat and wear, while overinflation can reduce traction and increase the risk of damage.
- **Objects and punctures:** Look for nails, screws, rocks, or other objects lodged in the tread or sidewall.
- **Age and condition:** Tires can deteriorate with age even when they appear to have adequate tread. Look for cracking, dry rot, and deterioration.
- **Lug nuts:** Look for missing or loose lug nuts. Large commercial trucks can use torque indicators to quickly identify loose lug nuts.

Heavy-duty vehicles

Inspect all tractor and trailer tires, including **inside duals**. Check for mismatched or improperly paired tires, abnormal wear, damaged valve stems, and signs of overloading or excessive heat.

Tire Changing Safety

Changing a tire can be extremely dangerous, particularly on heavy-duty vehicles.

- Park on firm, level ground whenever possible and **set the parking brake**.
- Turn off the engine and secure the vehicle against movement.
- Use properly rated jack stands and lifting equipment. **Never rely solely on a jack to support a vehicle.** Never work underneath a vehicle supported only by a jack.
- Do not attempt to service a tire or wheel assembly unless you are properly trained and equipped.
- Treat inflated heavy-duty tires and wheel assemblies as **stored energy**. A tire/rim failure can cause catastrophic injury or death.
- Never weld, heat, hammer, or otherwise work on a damaged or pressurized wheel assembly.
- Use the correct tools and procedures for removing and installing wheels.
- When inflating a heavy-duty tire, use appropriate restraints and inflation equipment and stand clear of the potential trajectory of a failed assembly.
- For roadside tire problems, get as far away from traffic as safely possible, use appropriate warning devices, and contact a qualified roadside service provider whenever possible.

When in Doubt — Don't Drive It

- If you find a tire with serious tread wear, exposed cords or plies, a bulge, significant cracking, or other structural damage **stop, remove vehicle from service and report it to your supervisor.**



Bottom Line: A tire inspection takes minutes. A tire failure can change someone's life in seconds.



Toolbox Talk Attendance Form

Supervisor / Project Manager: _____ Date: _____

PRINT NAME	SIGNATURE