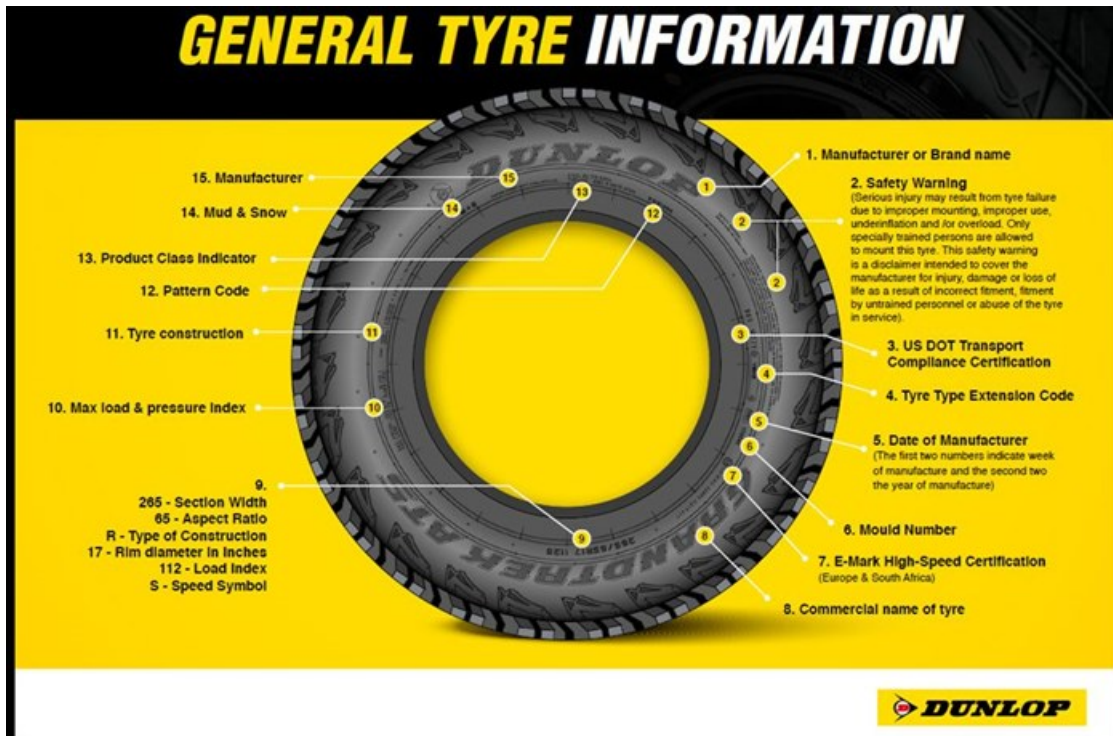


# Knowing what the tyre markings on your tyre mean

Issued by [Sumitomo Dunlop](#)

24 May 2021

Understanding the markings on your tyre may not seem like an important skill to know, after all, you expect the experts fitting your tyre at the tyre dealership to be sure of their business.



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“Did you know that each tyre tells a story? Take a closer look at the sidewall of your car’s tyre, take note of the various numbers embossed onto its sidewall,” says Lubin Ozoux, CEO of Sumitomo Rubber South Africa, the manufacturer of Dunlop tyres for Africa. “Each number detailed there tells a story about the suitability of the tyre you have chosen to place on your vehicle.”

Has this piqued your interest? Read on to find out more about what your tyre has been telling you all this time!

## Starting at the beginning

On the sidewall, you will see four numbers standing alone, just beneath the manufacturer’s name. They refer to your tyre’s date of birth – or date of manufacture. The first two numbers state the week of manufacture, and the last two – the year. For example, if your tyre says 2920, your tyre was produced in Week 29 of 2020. That tells you the exact age of your tyre, ensuring that you know when, if your tyre does not require replacing due to usage, you should consider replacing your tyre due to old age – yes, tyres do age - or for how much longer your [tyre warranty](#) may be valid.

## Breaking it all down - 225/45 R17 94 S

That may seem like a lot of confusing numbers. But let’s decipher them section by section. The first three digits, in this particular case the numbers 225, refer to the section width of the tyre across the tread. Why is the tyre section width important? Remember that the only part of your vehicle to touch the road surface is your tyres. A wider section width means a larger contact patch which means more grip. This will allow faster breaking, better cornering and when required, increased acceleration.

Following on from the 225/45 – the 45 refers to the sidewall height of the tyre, which is a percentage of the section width. This is generally known as the aspect ratio of the tyre (45% of 225). When people refer to the profile of the tyre, they are referring to the height of the tyre. Higher profile tyres are recommended for off-road driving while low profile tyres are suited for higher speed and tar road motoring.

## R is for Radial

The letter that follows the first set of numbers, refers to the method of construction used to produce the tyre. In this case, the R refers to Radial. Most modern tyres produced are radial tyres, replacing the former production type - cross-ply or bias construction. Radial tyres have the cords (or tyre reinforcement) run at right angles to the direction of travel or rotation of the tyre. The number that follows the R refers to the rim diameter (rim size). Should you select a tyre with a different rim diameter from the original tyres on your vehicle, you will need to replace your wheel rims.

## Embracing your need for speed

The speed and weight rating best suited to your selected tyre are the next numbers reflected on the sidewall. In this case, with the 94 referring to the weight and the S, quite obviously perhaps, referring to the speed. But surely that does not make sense – 94 what? The 94 is a rating referring to the tyre being able to carry 670 kgs. A rating of 97 would rate the tyre fit to carry 730kgs and 100 would specify it as able to manage 800kgs.

On to speed, the S shows that the tyre is capable of handling 180kms per hour. A rating of H for 210km/h, V for 240km/h, W for 270km/h and 300km/h on a Y rating. Our example of 94 S means the tyre can carry 670kgs travelling at a maximum speed of 180kms per hour.

Understanding the markings on your tyre will help you select the correct tyre for your specific vehicle and driving style. Wanting to go off-road? Check that your tread width and profile are suited. Prioritising the freedom of the open road? Best you make sure your tyre selection meets your need for speed.

**Still unsure of what tyre to choose? Download the Dunlop MyTyres app and ask the experts. [www.dunlop.co.za](http://www.dunlop.co.za).**

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Sumitomo Rubber South Africa, known as Sumitomo Dunlop, is a leading tyre manufacturing organisation in South Africa. Sumitomo Dunlop manufactures the Dunlop, Sumitomo and Falken tyre brands for Africa.

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