

Chains, Studs, and Other Forms of Tire Bondage

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If you happen to live in an area that experiences severe conditions during the winter, you may want to consider chains or studded tires.

Before you rush out to buy them, though, there are a few things you should know. These traction devices are for situations where a regular tire just can't hack it, not for driving to the corner store in the middle of January. In most cases all-season radials or snow tires can handle anything you would care to throw at them.

Traction devices are for severe winter conditions, when the roads are so snowy or icy that driving with just tires becomes dangerous if not downright impossible.

If driving conditions do require you to use a traction device, then you should definitely do some serious research before making your purchase. Chains come in so many different types that it is essential to examine your options and determine which product suits you and your vehicle the best.

Before you can use chains they must be pre-fit to your tires. Tires that have the same numerical size as each other may in fact be different sizes depending on the manufacturer.

Some of the products called chains are actually "cable traction devices." Basically this means they aren't made out of steel links like a regular chain. One of the big advantages of these is that if they break, they are much less likely to scratch up your paint job than a steel chain would.

If you decide that you need chains but you want to economize, then it is possible to get away with only two sets of chains. They must be installed on the drive tires, which is to say that a rear wheel drive vehicle must have the chains put on the rear tires, while a front wheel drive vehicle should have chains installed on the front tires. For maximum handling, spend the extra money and get chains on all four tires.

Studs are a whole different ball of wax, or in this case, rubber. Some winter tires feature studs actually molded right into the rubber of the tread, thereby increasing traction. Depending on where you live, you may be required by law to have studded tires at all four positions if you have any at all.

Speaking of which, the legality of traction devices vary greatly from one jurisdiction to the other. For example many places have seasonal restrictions on when tire chains may be used. Make sure to check your local laws before purchasing or installing traction control devices. The Goodyear Guy is the friendly face of Goodyear Canada...And now he blogs, not just any old blog mind you, nope - this one's a doozy. So if the 'behind-the-scenes' secrets of Goodyear Canada and their favourite spokesperson appeal to your curiosity check it out! Save \$100 on your next set of Goodyear tires? Grab your digital rebate coupon today.