TASKMASTER TRAILER TIRES

Special Trailer Tires Vs Passenger Tires

There are distinct differences in the way passenger tires and trailer tires are designed, engineered, and constructed. There are also differences in the service requirements between the tires on your car or truck and those on your trailer.

Traction, or grip, is a key element in the design of passenger tires. Traction moves your car or truck down the road. Traction allows you to stop, turn and swerve, and traction also gives you the ability to tow your trailer. Another important consideration in passenger tire design is “ride”. Ride, traction, and handling are all achieved in passenger tire designs by adding flex in the sidewall. By making the sidewall more flexible, tire engineers maximize tread contact with the road, thus increasing traction and allowing the driver to maintain better control over the vehicle.

Traction is only a factor on trailers equipped with brakes, during braking operations, because trailers are followers. In fact, sidewall flexing in a trailer application is a negative. Sidewall flexing on trailers carrying heavy loads; trailers with high vertical side loads (enclosed/travel trailers); or trailers with light tongue weights, is a primary cause of trailer sway. Automotive radial tires with their flexible sidewalls notably accentuate trailer sway problems. The stiffer sidewalls and higher operating pressures common with Special Trailer (ST) tires helps control and reduce the occurrence of trailer sway. Bottom line, trailers are more stable and pull better on tires designed specifically for trailer use.

Also consider that all Light Truck (LT) and Special Trailer (ST) tires are fully rated for trailer applications. This means the tires can carry their full sidewall weight rating when used on a trailer. When passenger tires are used on a trailer, the load capacity of tire must be de-rated by 10%. If the tire has a maximum load rating of 1900 lb., it may only be used in a trailer application up to 1710 lb. This means the GAWR rating on the trailer Certification Label must not exceed 3420 lbs. On a single axle trailer, or 2 times 1710 lbs.

For trailer use, it is important to match the tires to the application and payload. Since Special Trailer (ST) tires are constructed with more and heavier materials, they are tougher and more bruise resistant than typical passenger tires. This is a plus because trailer suspension systems are generally stiffer and less sophisticated than automotive suspension systems. A tire designed to operate in the more demanding trailer environment will provide end users a longer service life and withstand the added abuse tires on a trailer experience.

Bias ply Special Trailer tire technology has been moving trailers around America for nearly 30 years, and more recently, the ST Radial arrived on the scene providing the same durability and dependability in a radial trailer tire. For many trailer buyers, tire decisions are purely price based. The allure of an equal price and the word “radial” for that price draws some customers to the passenger tire. Taskmaster hopes this explanation of the differences will help you make a more informed decision on your next trailer tire purchase.

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