

Reprinted from Popular Mechanics

Q: My father is notoriously frugal, and I tell him he should replace his old dry-rotted tires even though they still have plenty of tread. Can you please explain why I'm right?

A: I think our dads might be brothers. Tire replacement is straightforward to the cost-conscious: when the tread wears down or a hole cannot be patched. The reality is more nuanced than that. Tires are complex components that undergo amazing stresses during even the most mundane of drives. It took the better part of 50 years and a world war before motorists could depend on reaching a far-away destination without fixing one or two flats. As rubber technology and steel-belted techniques improved, tires became a very reliable part of the car—we just don't expect blowouts and punctures.



Tires do degrade over time, though, and that process is called dry rot. Oils and chemicals in the rubber compound start to evaporate or break down because of UV exposure. The rubber loses its flexibility and begins to crack at the surface, and the structure becomes more and more brittle (think of a really old rubber band), leading to sidewall damage and eventual failure. And we are not talking "Oh, I'll just fill it up and drive on it"; this is a complete loss of function. You might even see tread start to separate. It is good practice to replace tires as soon as you see signs of dry rot, to prevent blowouts and the subsequent loss of vehicle control. Even if there are no signs of rot, the industry standard is to swap out tires before they hit 10 years old, and some tire companies recommend replacement as early as six years after manufacture.

From us: Most people put enough mileage on their tires so that they wear out before they have a chance to dry rot. When tires are worn to a certain point, they become more dangerous, due to longer emergency stopping distance, especially **in wet conditions and less traction, especially when needed the most.**

The bottom line is stop in and we will us check your tires at NO CHARGE to make sure they are safe and reliable for you and your family during the summer driving season.



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