

DRIVERS PAYING THE PENALTY FOR DEFECTIVE TYRES

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- Police force data reveals that tyres now account for 50% of defective vehicle offences –

New analysis by Kwik Fit reveals that defective tyres account for a growing proportion of the total penalty points received by drivers for the poor condition of their cars. The UK's leading automotive servicing and repair company collated data from British police forces regarding the issuing of penalty points for vehicle defects over the past three years. Analysis of the information showed that in 2015, 50% of the defective vehicle offences for which drivers received penalty points were due to issues with their tyres – up from 40% in 2013¹.

The overwhelming majority of tyre offences were having insufficient tread, with 65% of cases categorised as being below the legal minimum of 1.6mm. A further 2% were stated as being below 1mm, and even more worryingly were the 26% who were found by the Kwik Fit analysis to have tyres with the ply or cord exposed. 3% of the cases were for tyres which were under or over inflated, while 2% of offences were for having a tyre with a lump, bulge or tear.

Issue with tyre	Proportion of penalty point offences relating to tyre defects - 2015
Use of a vehicle with insufficient tread – less than 1.6mm	65%
Use of a motor vehicle or trailer with a tyre with any of the ply/cord exposed	26%
Use of a motor vehicle or trailer with incorrectly inflated tyre	3%
Use of a motor vehicle with tyre less than 1mm tread	2%
Use of a motor vehicle or trailer with a tyre with a lump, bulge or tear	2%
Use of tyres unsuitable for the use to which the vehicle being put	2%
Use of a motor vehicle or trailer with a tyre with a cut in the fabric	1%

Source: Kwik Fit analysis of data provided by UK police forces for 2015

This analysis comes after a UK wide study by Tyresafe, in conjunction with Highways England, found that more than a quarter (27%) of tyres being replaced were already illegal² with tread under 1.6mm at the point of replacement. Tyresafe, an organisation focused on raising awareness of tyre safety, estimates that 10 million vehicles could be driving on illegal tyres in 2016.

Roger Griggs, communications director at Kwik Fit, says: "These figures reveal that some drivers on British roads are taking serious risks with both their own safety and the safety of other road users. We would encourage drivers to pay much closer attention to the condition of their tyres – after all they are the only things keeping their car connected to the road.

"There is absolutely no excuse for a tyre being worn down so far that its ply or cord is exposed – it will have gone past the legal minimum way before that point. If drivers are trying to save money on their motoring, then risking penalty points, a fine and higher insurance premiums by not replacing their tyres is not the best way to go about it."

In some instances, the ply or cord will be exposed because the tyre has suffered uneven wear. Wheels can move out of alignment gradually over time or because of an impact such as hitting a pothole or bumping into a kerb. Uneven wear can mean that a tyre which has a lot of tread across most of its width is well below the legal limit in one strip all the way round the tyre. Spotting and rectifying uneven wear early can lengthen a tyre's life span and save drivers a lot of money, as well as making them safer on the road through better handling and grip.

Kwik Fit offers laser alignment services across the UK, enabling cars to be set to the manufacturers' exact specifications. Details of wheel alignment can be found at www.kwik-fit.com

For the latest news and updates from Kwik Fit, customers can follow the company on Twitter at [@kwik_fit](https://twitter.com/kwik_fit)

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