

TTN TRUCK TIRE NEWS





PICKING THE RIGHT TIRES FOR WINTER

The middle of summer is the time when many operators start thinking about winter and the tire requirements for their vehicles. Legislation is changing and the increasing compulsory requirement for winter tires and other equipment means that correct tire choice is essential as well as being important for safety and to prevent vehicles getting stuck when the weather turns bad.

Winter tires do not yet have a universally accepted definition, which can make tire selection very difficult. Goodyear Dunlop winter tires carry a mountain and snowflake logo and these tires should not be confused with M + S tires, which are suitable for occasional use on slippery roads but not true winter tires. Winter tires not only have tread patterns designed for snow and ice but they also have compounds that give vital grip at low temperatures.

“If you are using your vehicles in conditions where temperatures are low or where you are likely to encounter ice or snow then our advice is to fit true winter tires”, said Boris Stevanovic, Marketing Director Truck Tires EMEA, Goodyear Dunlop Tires Europe, “They are not only safer but also you are far less likely to get a vehicle stuck, which can be very costly. They also perform well in all conditions so can be left on the vehicle all year.”

The Goodyear Ultra Grip WTS, Ultra Grip WTD and Ultra Grip WTT winter tire ranges provide excellent performance in winter conditions, keeping fleet efficiency at maximum level by providing good mileage, all season capability and excellent snow handling and braking. The Ultra Grip WTS and WTD ranges are for the steer and drive axles respectively and the WTT is a trailer tire.

The following is a summary of the winter tire requirements in most European countries. This was compiled with the help of the Freight Transport Association in the UK and is taken from its International Road Transport Guide 16th Edition. However the regulations should always be checked prior to visiting countries regulations change. [1/6]

Albania

It is compulsory to carry snow chains from November 1 to April 30 in the following regions;

1 - Northern Albania, in the prefectures of the cities of Shkodra, Kukesi, Peshkopia, Burrel, Puka, Rreshen and Tropoja;

2 - North-east and south-east Albania, in the prefectures of the cities of Librazhd, Pogradec, Korca, Bilisht, Erseka, Gramshi, and Permeti.

Chains should be fitted to the drive axles of commercial vehicles and to all the drive wheels of a road train or articulated combination vehicle.

Legislation concerning the use of winter tires is laid down in the Highway Code of the Republic of Albania under law n/8378. Recognized winter tires should be fitted.

Infringements are sanctioned by a fine of up to ALL 25,000 (USD \$200), which should be paid to the police on the spot. Foreign registered vehicles attract particular attention from the police.

Armenia – There is no requirement to carry or use snow chains although in mountainous areas they may be useful. Drivers are advised to fit appropriate tires in winter and not to travel with worn tires.

Austria

It is compulsory to carry snow chains on board vehicles over 3.5 tonnes between November 15 and March 15. Roads may or may not show signs 'Schneeketten vorgeschrieben'. This sign does not mean it is compulsory to be in possession of chains but to fit chains. Chains must be fitted to at least two drive wheels on the same axle. On other roads, chains must be fitted when conditions require it and the driver must decide for his and other road user's safety. Snow chains must conform to ENORM standards or carry an EU CE number and be fitted properly so that the complete surface of the tire is covered and that there is always contact between the chains and the road. It is not compulsory to carry a spade and chains may be required for abnormal load movements.

It is compulsory for all passenger and goods vehicles of over 3.5 tonnes to be equipped with winter tires between November 15 and March 15 on at least one drive axle. The minimum tread for crossply winter tires is 6mm and 5mm for winter radials. Tires should carry the mark M+S, M.S. or M&S. Tires must be of the same type per axle: it is possible to mount summer tires on the front axle and winter tires on the rear axle.

Penalties incurred for infringement of these winter regulations vary between different regions but may be as much as \5,000 or six weeks' imprisonment.

Azerbaijan

There are no rules regarding snow chains or the use of winter tires.

Belgium – Snow chains may be used in snowy or icy conditions but it is not compulsory to carry them. Studded tires may be used from November 1 to March 31 on vehicles up to 3.5 tonnes and breakdown vehicles provided the necessary decree has been issued by the Ministry of Communication. Maximum speed for studded tires is 90 km/h on motorways and dual carriageways and 60 km/h on other roads. Minimum tread depth 1.6 mm including winter tires.

Bosnia & Herzegovina

From November 15 to April 15 winter equipment is compulsory on all snow-covered roads. A minimum of one pair of chains must be fitted to the drive axle. Police can order a driver to fit chains or to take the vehicle to a place where winter equipment can be obtained. All coaches and trucks should carry a shovel on board as well as a bag containing between 20kg and 50kg of sand. The use of winter tires (MS or M+S) is covered by the law on the Security of Road Traffic. Tires should have a minimum tread depth of 4mm. Infringements can result in a fine of approximately \200 to \2,500.

Bulgaria

Snow chains must be carried from November 1 to March 31 and the authorities may impose the mandatory use of snow chains when crossing mountain passes. Chains must be used in compliance with the relevant road sign and fitted on at least two drive wheels. Vehicles not properly equipped will not be allowed to use the road to which the sign applies and may be refused entry to Bulgaria.

Croatia

Snow chains are obligatory when there is at least 5 cm of snow on the road or when the road is covered in ice. Vehicles should carry one pair of snow chains for the drive axle as well as a spade. Vehicles not carrying winter equipment will be forbidden to use the roads. Police have the authority to order drivers to fit snow chains or to take the vehicle to a place where chains and appropriate tires can be obtained. Fines for non-compliance are in the region of HRK 6,000 for companies allowing vehicles on the road without the necessary equipment and HRK 150 for drivers who have not fitted snow chains. In winter the minimum tread depth must be at least 4mm. Studded tires are forbidden.

Czech Republic

Snow chains should be carried for use during winter months if vehicle weight exceeds 7.5 tonnes and must be fitted when the relevant road sign is displayed. When used, a minimum of one pair of chains must be fitted to the drive axle; in the case of a vehicle combination two pairs of chains must be fitted. Vehicles fitted with them may not exceed 50 km/h. Studded tires are forbidden. Minimum tread depth 1.6 mm. [2/6]

Denmark

Minimum tread depth 1.6mm up to 3.5 tonnes and 1.0mm above. There is no specific legislation regarding the use of snow chains or winter tires.

Estonia

Snow chains are not compulsory. The use of studded tires is permitted between October 1 and May 1.

Finland

It is not compulsory to carry snow chains on board vehicles but they must be used in winter months. Studded tires are permitted from November 1 to March 31. Winter tires with a minimum tread depth of 3mm are compulsory for vehicles of 3.5 tonnes and above from December to February. They are not compulsory for vehicle less than 3.5 tonnes but tread depth must be over 1.6mm.

France

The use of snow chains is authorized on all snow-covered roads no matter the period. Use is compulsory in compliance with the road sign 'Equipements speciaux obligatoires'. Fines are imposed for non-compliance. The use of winter tires is not covered by specific legislation. However on roads equipped with the B26 signpost, if it is not specified that the use of winter tires alone is acceptable ('pneus neige admis'), the driver must fit chains. Studded tires are authorized for vehicles of less than 3.5 tonnes gvw (maximum speed 90 km/h) except for certain limited uses where the local Prefect can grant derogations to vehicles of more than 3.5 tonnes carrying essential goods, perishable foodstuffs or dangerous goods (maximum speed 60 km/h). Minimum tread depth 1 mm.

Germany

It is obligatory to equip the vehicle to suit the prevailing weather conditions, particularly with regard to appropriate tire for wintry conditions. Snow chains and 'M+S' winter tires must be fitted to vehicles on snow covered roads in compliance with the relevant road signs. Non-compliance incurs a fine of up to \80. Chains should be fitted to the drive axle. The maximum speed is 50 km/h. Minimum tread depth 1.6 mm. In addition to chains, vehicles should carry a spade, pickaxe and tow rope. Minimum tread depth is 1.6mm. Studded tires are illegal. There is no obligation to carry a spare wheel.

Greece

Minimum tread depth 1.6 mm.

Hungary

Snow chains may be used on snowy and icy roads with a maximum speed is 50 km/h. If the 'Mandatory use of snow chains' sign is displayed at border crossings, only vehicles carrying chains may enter Hungary. In exceptional weather conditions, vehicle entry may be restricted. There are heavy fines for using snow chains on dry roads and the use of studded tires is forbidden. Minimum tread depth 1.6 mm. There is no specific legislation regarding the use of winter tires.

Ireland

There is no snow chain legislation, nor legislation concerning the use of winter tires.

Italy

It is not compulsory for heavy goods vehicles to carry snow chains all the time during the winter months, however they must be available and used when necessary, or in accordance with road signs. A minimum of one pair of chains must be fitted per vehicle. Since incoming traffic must generally travel through high mountains, it is advisable to carry chains even though they are not required to be carried by law. Some provinces require vehicles to be equipped with winter tires. In the provinces of Bolzano, Novara and Verbano these are required from approximately November 15 to March 31 each year; and in Bologne from mid-November until mid-April. The province of Milano is considering similar legislation.

Road signs will indicate when winter tires must be fitted and infringements are subject to a fine of between \71 and \287. Minimum tread depth 1.6 mm over 75% of the central tread width around the whole circumference with visible pattern over the remainder.

Kazakhstan

There is no specific legislation regarding the use of snow chains or winter tires.

Latvia

It is not compulsory to carry snow chains on board a vehicle. The use of winter tires or studded tires is compulsory only for vehicles up to or including 3.5 tonnes GVW from December 1 to March 1. The use of studded tires is forbidden from May 1 to October 1.

Lithuania

It is not compulsory to carry snow chains. Studded tires are forbidden from April 10 to November 1. For vehicles of up to 3.5 tonnes, the use of summer tires is forbidden from November 10 to April 1. The minimum tread depth depends on vehicle category and varies between 1mm and 2mm except for category M2 which must have a minimum tread depth of 3.0mm from November 10 to April 1.

Luxembourg

There is no obligation to carry snow chains or use winter tires. Legislation is currently being drafted for cars and light vans. Minimum tread depth 1.6 mm.

Macedonia

Between October 15 and March 15 all vehicles must be equipped with snow chains. If snow chains are not carried on board, fines will be levied and the vehicle will be prohibited from moving in poor weather conditions. Winter tires are not compulsory but if used must have a minimum tread depth of 5mm.

Moldova

There is no specific legislation regarding snow chains or winter tires. [3/6]

For all vehicles with an mpw over 3.5 tonnes similar conditions apply. Winter tires should be fitted to vehicles between December 1 and March 31 when winter conditions prevail. The minimum tread depth is 5mm. Tires must have the appropriate markings to indicate their suitability for winter conditions. This rule does not apply to the trailer.

Studded tires are permitted from October 1 to April 15 and at all times when their use is appropriate. Further information is available www.transportstyrelsen.se/en/road/vehicles/winter-tires. The minimum tread depth 1.6 mm.

Switzerland

It is not obligatory to carry snow chains on board vehicles, however the use of chains is compulsory on roads signposted 'Chaines neige obligatoires'; the time period is unspecified as Alpine regions may be subject to summer snowfall.

At least two drive wheels on the same axle, or one per side in case of twin wheels, must be fitted with metallic snow chains or with similar equipment made of some other substance, which is authorized by the Federal Office for Roads (OSR Art 29). If the compulsory use of chains is signposted and the vehicle is not so equipped a fine of CHF100 is imposed.

Studded tires are authorized for vehicles up to 3.5 tonnes gross weight from November 1 to April 30. Minimum tread depth 1.6 mm.

Turkey

It is compulsory to carry snow chains aboard vehicles although no specific regions nor dates are set. The use of winter tires is not compulsory.

Ukraine

The use of snow chains is not compulsory.

Uzbekistan

The use of snow chains is not compulsory, neither is there any specific legislation regarding the use of winter tires.

United Kingdom

No requirement for snow chains or winter tires. Minimum tread depth on commercial vehicles of 3.5 tonnes GVW and above 1mm other vehicles 1.6mm. [5/6]



UltraGrip WTS
385-65R22.5



Ultra Grip WTD
315-80R22.5



GY Ultra Grip WTT
265-70 R19.5_VL0096-00-02 with rim



UltraGrip WTS
385-65R22.5



Ultra Grip WTD
315-80R22.5



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