

On the road this Easter break? Here's Dunlop Tyres SA's guide to tackling the busiest routes safely

Issued by [Sumitomo Dunlop](#)

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With the Easter weekend approaching from Friday, 7 April to Monday, 10 April, thousands of motorists will be hitting the roads in and around South Africa, heading off on religious pilgrimages, visiting loved ones, or simply taking a well-deserved break from working life.



The busiest routes over the Easter period are the N1 from Gauteng to Limpopo, the N3 from Gauteng to KwaZulu-Natal, the N2 from the Western Cape to Eastern Cape, the N14 to from Gauteng to the North-West and the N12 from Gauteng to Mpumalanga. While seven out of the nine provinces saw a decline in road fatalities during the Easter period in 2022, according to the Department of Transport, South Africans should remain mindful of road safety precautions, especially considering the increased traffic volumes and congestion that occur over the Easter holiday.

Sumitomo Rubber South Africa (SRSA), proud manufacturer and distributor of the Dunlop, Sumitomo, and Falken tyre brands, and a member of the South African Tyre Manufacturers Conference (SATMC) and Road Safety Partnership South Africa, is dedicated to ensuring road safety during the upcoming Easter holiday period.

To help drivers stay safe on the road this Easter, SRSA reached out to its network of Dunlop independent tyre dealers, some of whom shared the following tips:

- **First things first:** “The first priority should be a full tyre check,” said Shaun Radbone of Orion Auto & Tyre in Matatiele. “Check tread depths, tyre pressures, as well as your spare tyre, ensuring that all five tyres are not showing any signs of ageing or damage. Also check that your tools including your triangle, wheel spanner and vehicle jack are in good working condition and present in case of any vehicle emergency.”
- **Check for any visible damage:** Examine your tyres regularly for cuts, bulges, or other signs of damage. If you find any, take your vehicle to a qualified tyre professional to assess the condition of the tyre. Dean Horn of Super Tyres

Empangeni said inspection for damage is best done by a tyre professional.

“To do a proper inspection, the wheel needs to be removed. You can, however, do a self-inspection by checking for the most commonly found visible problems,” he said. Bulges on the inner and/or outer walls are a major concern, specifically at holiday time when cars are loaded with family and luggage. Other visible damage such as side impacts can be difficult to see without removing the wheel.

“On long distance trips when making rest stops you should also do a visual check on your tyres,” added Juan Le Roux of Capital Tyres in Mahikeng.

- **Regularly check your tyre pressure:** Properly inflated tyres ensure optimal grip, fuel efficiency, and better handling. Check your tyre pressure every two to four weeks and before embarking on a long trip. Do so when the tyres are cold and have not been driven over a long distance, preferably in the mornings, as this will ensure a more accurate pressure reading. “Correct tyre pressure is obviously the goal, however, low pressure is the most common and biggest safety concern,” cautioned Horn. “The air in your tyres effectively carries the weight of the vehicle, but, when the pressure dips to a tipping point, there is a real threat of the tyre imploding, which is obviously not a good outcome,” he said.
- **Check the tyre tread depth:** The manufacturer’s recommendation is that the tread grooves retain a certain minimum depth, when measured at the Tread Wear Indicator (TWI), located around the circumference of the tyre. This is measured at 1.6mm. Should any part of the tyre tread be level to the TWI, that tyre should be replaced. Horn warned, “The biggest safety concern with insufficient tread depth is aquaplaning, amongst many other possible issues. Most people wait until the tyre starts balding before worrying about the tread depth. The danger, however, is when the depth reaches the tiny tread wear indicators in the tyre tread itself. This is easily inspected, but make sure you check across the full width of the tyre.”
- **Rotate your tyres:** Tyres wear unevenly, so it's essential to rotate them regularly to ensure even wear, better handling, and a longer lifespan.
- **Monitor your tyre’s age:** “Typically tyres have a safe lifespan of up to five years. The most common issues we see are on spare tyres and trailer tyres that typically don’t do high mileage and end up staying in or on the vehicle for far too long,” said Horn. “To check the age of most tyres there is a little oval on the tyre with four numbers in it, for example 3606, which would denote the 36th week of 2006. Tyres tend to go more brittle with age and cracks start to appear in the tread, separation starts to occur and it becomes unsafe. It is extremely important to get them checked periodically,” he added.
- **Cover yourself against nasty tyre surprises:** Tyre insurance such as Dunlop Sure is important, as it can protect you against irreparable tyre damage from any road hazards such as potholes or poor road surface conditions.

Well-maintained tyres will provide better grip for your vehicle, allowing it to stop, start and manoeuvre more safely and responsively.

In addition to tyre care, Sumitomo Rubber South Africa’s Dunlop dealers offered the following tips for staying safe on the road during the Easter holiday period:

- **Plan your route and breaks in advance:** Avoid unexpected detours and busy routes by planning your trip ahead of time. Long journeys can be tiring, so take regular breaks to stretch your legs, rest, and recharge. “A driver that is fatigued is almost as bad as a drunk driver,” cautioned Radbone.
- **Save emergency contacts:** “Make sure you have emergency contact numbers on your phone,” advised Le Roux.
- **Check all key roadworthy features:** Ensure all lights, indicators, wipers and brakes are working. Radbone also

advised, "Check all vehicle fluids are at the correct levels, including engine oil, radiator coolant, brake fluid, and water for your windscreen washer reservoir and windscreen wipers."

- **Buckle up:** "Make sure you and your kids are wearing seatbelts and that babies and toddlers are in their car seats, not held in arms," warned Le Roux. In South Africa and across the world, young people between the ages of 5 and 29 years old are the most vulnerable road users and road traffic injuries are the leading cause of death in this age group.
- **Avoid distractions:** Distracted driving is a leading cause of accidents. Keep your focus on the road at all times, not on any electronic devices or your passengers.
- **Keep a safe following distance and don't speed:** This gives you enough time to react in an emergency and avert a possible crash. "While traveling, always monitor your speed and the distance between you and the vehicle in front of you. If a safe distance is kept, it could be a life saver," said Radbone.
- **Mind the barrier:** Never overtake on a solid barrier line.
- **Don't drink and drive:** Identify a responsible, designated driver who will not be consuming alcohol if you plan to do so.
- **Travel during daytime:** This will provide better visibility and drivers will be less fatigued.

The Department of Transport intends to reduce road fatalities by 25% by 2024, while the United Nations has set an ambitious target of preventing at least 50% of road traffic deaths and injuries by 2030.

By following these tyre care tips and practising responsible driving practices, we can all do our part to make our roads safer over the Easter holiday period.

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