

What is a UTQG Rating?

The Uniform Tire Quality Grading (UTQG) system was developed by the Department of Transportation (DOT) to assist consumers in the purchase of their tires by providing a standard grading system used by all tire manufacturers. The key is to understand that it is a relative evaluation system that you can use for comparison; the UTQG is not a safety rating of any kind and it is not a guarantee of the mileage performance that you will receive from the tires compared.

Tire manufacturers use the UTQG system to grade their tires in three important areas: tread-wear, traction and temperature. The UTQG grade for each tire is shown on the paper label affixed to the tire and is also moulded in the sidewall.

Treadwear Grade – A comparative grade based on the actual wear of the tire's tread when tested under specific controlled conditions. All tires are tested under the same conditions to allow for comparison between manufacturers and between different lines of tires from the same manufacturer. The system is fairly easy to understand. A tire with a tread-wear grade of 400 should have a useful tread life approximately twice as long as a tire with a tread-wear grade of 200; the higher the grade, the better the expected tread-wear.

Traction Grade – A comparative grade based on the tire's ability to stop on wet pavement, again as measured under controlled conditions on wet asphalt and concrete surfaces. The grades, from highest to lowest, are designated **AA – A – B – C**. A tire that is graded AA should have better traction or stopping performance than a tire with a lower grade, based on the specific straight-ahead braking tests.



Temperature Grade – A comparative grade based on the tire's resistance to heat and its ability to dissipate heat, again as measured under controlled conditions. The grades, from highest to lowest, are designated **A – B – C**. An A-rated tire is the coolest running, while a C-rating meets the minimum federal performance standards. These temperature grades are set based on a tire that is properly inflated and not overloaded.

UTQG is a great way to compare tires from various manufacturers and between specific lines from the same manufacturer. Use the UTQG in conjunction with price, warranty, appearance and recommendations to make the right tire choice for you. If you have any questions regarding UTQG or various tire lines, the Big O Tires team is ready to help!