

AT and HT Light Truck Tires Offer Different Attributes for Pickup Truck and SUV Owners

GT Radial experts say knowing the differences between HT and AT light truck tires can lead to better satisfaction with the tires and vehicle.

RANCHO CUCAMONGA, CA, USA, January 23, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- HT or AT truck tires -- what's the difference and what is the right fit for a pickup truck or SUV? Knowing the differences can lead to better satisfaction with the tires and optimum performance of the vehicle.

All tires represent tradeoffs in performance, as well as appearance. Truck tires exist on a spectrum from sport truck to HT (Highway Tread), to AT (All Terrain), to RT (Rugged Terrain), to MT (Mud Terrain); all serving a specific set of performance attributes.



The GT Radial Adventuro ATX delivers a good balance of on road and off road performance.

AT tires are generally more aggressive in appearance than HT tires, with HT tires taking on the appearance of a beefed-up touring tire, according to the experts at [GT Radial](#), a tire brand that has been traveling on American roads and highways for more than 25 years. Many GT Radial tires sold in the US are produced at the company's passenger and light truck tire plant in Richburg, SC.

Looking at the GT Radial line-up, for example, the [Adventuro HT](#) has a five rib, or four groove, traditional highway pattern, as opposed to the [Adventuro ATX](#) with larger blocks, greater void areas, deeper tread, and off shoulder design elements normally found with the AT tread designs.

The AT tire's aggressive tread pattern allows for more traction off road and is especially suited for consumers who frequently take their vehicle off road for recreation or work. In addition to the pattern differences, AT tires generally have deeper tread depths which aid in their off-road capabilities. The combination of the pattern and deeper tread depth leads to some tradeoffs, specifically noise and ride; AT tires will be louder and will ride rougher than their HT counterparts.

A key feature in most AT tires today is the three peak mountain snowflake mark, or 3PMS. This designates that a tire has achieved a certain level of snow performance that was previously reserved for winter tires but has now come to AT tires through advancements in compound technology.

Aesthetic characteristics are another important consideration. AT tires have a much more aggressive appearance compared to HT tires. This can be seen in both the main tread portion of the tire as well as the area in the upper sidewall leading to the tread -- what is commonly referred to as the off-shoulder area.

For some consumers, this more than anything else drives them away from an HT towards an AT tire. If not, go with HT tires. For those seeking an even more aggressive appearance, they may choose an RT or an MT. Again, there are trade-offs. The decision one needs to make is if they are willing to sacrifice some on noise, ride comfort, and likely tread wear for that aggressive appearance, when their idea of an off-road adventure is pulling onto the grass to let the kids disembark at the soccer field?

Lastly, tire sizing and type, P-metric vs. LT-metric vs. flotation, may come into play for the consumer. For consumers wanting to upgrade their trucks, which usually means plus sizes, they will generally trend towards AT tires. These upgrades are, for the most part, aesthetic, so naturally they are drawn towards the more aggressive AT tire. No matter what tire they choose, it must be able to carry the load, and additionally for newer vehicles, it must not trip the TPMS.

AT tires must focus on great off-road performance and an aggressive appearance while HT tires should focus on a smooth and quiet ride. A great AT tire will find the right balance between aggressive off-road and reasonable on-road manners. The RT and MT offerings are for those folks who do more serious off roading.

In conclusion, if a vehicle spends a large majority of its time on paved surfaces with some tame off roading thrown in, go with HT tires. They will deliver dependable traction and a smooth ride on paved surfaces . . . and will typically provide longer tread wear than the alternatives. If the vehicle spends a fair amount of time on the road but the driver also needs traction on the farm or for getting to that favorite fishing hole, AT tires are the best choice. If the driver likes slinging mud and serious off roading, go with RT or MT tires.

A local tire dealer, armed with information about how the driver uses his or her vehicle, can help determine the right direction in tire choice.

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