



The Steering Wheel

July 2021

Newsletter of the Midwest Antique Auto Club

Not affiliated with any national club.

An independent group of collectible vehicle enthusiasts.

Dedicated to the preservation of the antique/collectible automobile.

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Meetings are held on the third Sunday of each month. The Board meets at 1:30 p.m. and the general meeting begins at 2:00 p.m. during the months of November, January, February and March at the **NEW CASSEL RETIREMENT CENTER at 900 N. 90th St., Omaha, NE 68114.** During the summer months of April, May, June, July, August, September and October, there are no inside meetings. In these months we have “Official Car Tours” on the third Sunday of each month. Plus whatever extra tours may please us. There is no meeting in December, that meeting is replaced by our annual Christmas banquet. All vehicles are welcome, any year, make or model, but a drivable collectible/antique vehicle is not a requirement for membership.

The deadline for articles for the Steering Wheel is the last Saturday of the month.

The President's Message



Hello Everyone,

I hope you enjoyed our trip to New Cassel to show our cars to the residents. I know they appreciated seeing our cars and the New Cassel staff continues to show us great hospitality. The meal they provided us was great. Thank you to everyone that showed up.

I had a chance to go to the Good Guys Car Show at the Iowa State Fairgrounds in Des Moines on July 2-3. They had almost 5,000 cars show up. It was great to be at a large car show again. I took a few pictures of the event on the next page. I was fortunate to go with my son Michael, brother Mark and nephew Reece with each of us bringing an old car to the show. Unfortunately, my brother's 72 Plymouth Cuda broke down on the way home but a good Samaritan helped my brother by trailering the car back to Omaha. Car people are the greatest helpers that I know.

See you in July.

John and Karen Thurber



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

July Driving Tour – July 25

8th Annual Missouri Valley Hot Rod Reunion – We have been asked by the sponsors of the Missouri Valley Hot Rod Reunion to participate in the car show and help manage spectators that will be attending on **Sunday, July 25**. The show will raise funds for Make-A-Wish, Child Saving Institute and the Shriners. The show will be located at **5111 N. 78th Street** at the lot behind Midlands Baptist Temple. There will be a band, four top fuel dragsters and food trucks. **Please meet at 11 a.m.** The show will start at noon (please see the attached flyer). **There is no cost for MAAC members to participate in the show.**

August Driving Tour

We are still arranging the August driving tour. More information to come in the August Steering Wheeler

Member News

June Tour to New Cassel

It was great to show our cars at New Cassel Retirement Community. I really appreciate the resident's questions about the cars and the hospitality shown by the staff at New Cassel. Although a list wasn't taken, my recollection of the participants include Delmar Bunch, Monte and Marj Frost, Clif and Joyce Ellis, Dave Hansen, Ed and Janet Hedegaard, Tom and Gloria Kannas, Dave and Ester Miller, John and Karen Thurber, Michael Thurber, Jerry and Connie Vincentini, Frank and Liz Van Doorn. We had a great meal provided by the New Cassel staff.

Dick Sorensen, a long-time member of MAAC, passed away of last year. A memorial service will be held on August 1st at 2:00 p.m. at Rockbrook United Methodist Church at 9855 W Center Rd, Omaha, NE 68124. Please keep Connie and the Sorensen family in your thoughts and prayers.

MIDWEST ANTIQUE AUTO CLUB

AN INDEPENDENT GROUP OF COLLECTIBLE VEHICLE ETHUSIASTS

How to convert from bias-ply tire measurements to modern metric tire measurements without using a chart

By [Daniel Strohl](#) on June 21, 2021 - Hemmings Motor News

There's no guessing as to the size of a tire - it's always right there, molded in the sidewall along with the load rating, date code, and plenty of other information about that tire. Older tires, however, used a slew of different sizing formats unrecognizable to most people who've bought tires in the last 40 years or so and are used to the now-standard metric sizing system. Sure, there's plenty of charts out there to find a modern equivalent to older tires, but it only takes some math, a tape measure, and a quick history lesson to convert to modern sizing.

While modern tires come in a variety of widths, heights, and aspect ratios, up until the early Seventies, tire manufacturers offered just two aspect ratios: 90 percent up to 1964, then 80 percent from 1965 to 1972. Not a lot of choice, but that system vastly simplified the tire sizing format, with one number ahead of the dash to indicate the section width of the tire (in inches) and one after the dash to indicate the wheel diameter (in inches). According to Coker's Wade Kawasaki, the earlier 90-series tires [had measurements that ended in a 0](#), while the later 80-series tires has measurements that ended in a 5. The exception would be some European tires that didn't display aspect ratios; Kawasaki said to assume those are 80-series tires regardless of the last digit.

So, for instance, the 700-15 whitewall tire above, installed on a Buick in the Hemmings Sibley Shop collection, would have measured 7 inches wide and had a 90 percent aspect ratio. The sidewall would have thus measured 6.3 inches high (7 inches x 0.9 = 6.3 inches) while the entire tire would have measured 27.6 inches tall (6.3 inches x 2 + 15 inches = 27.6 inches).

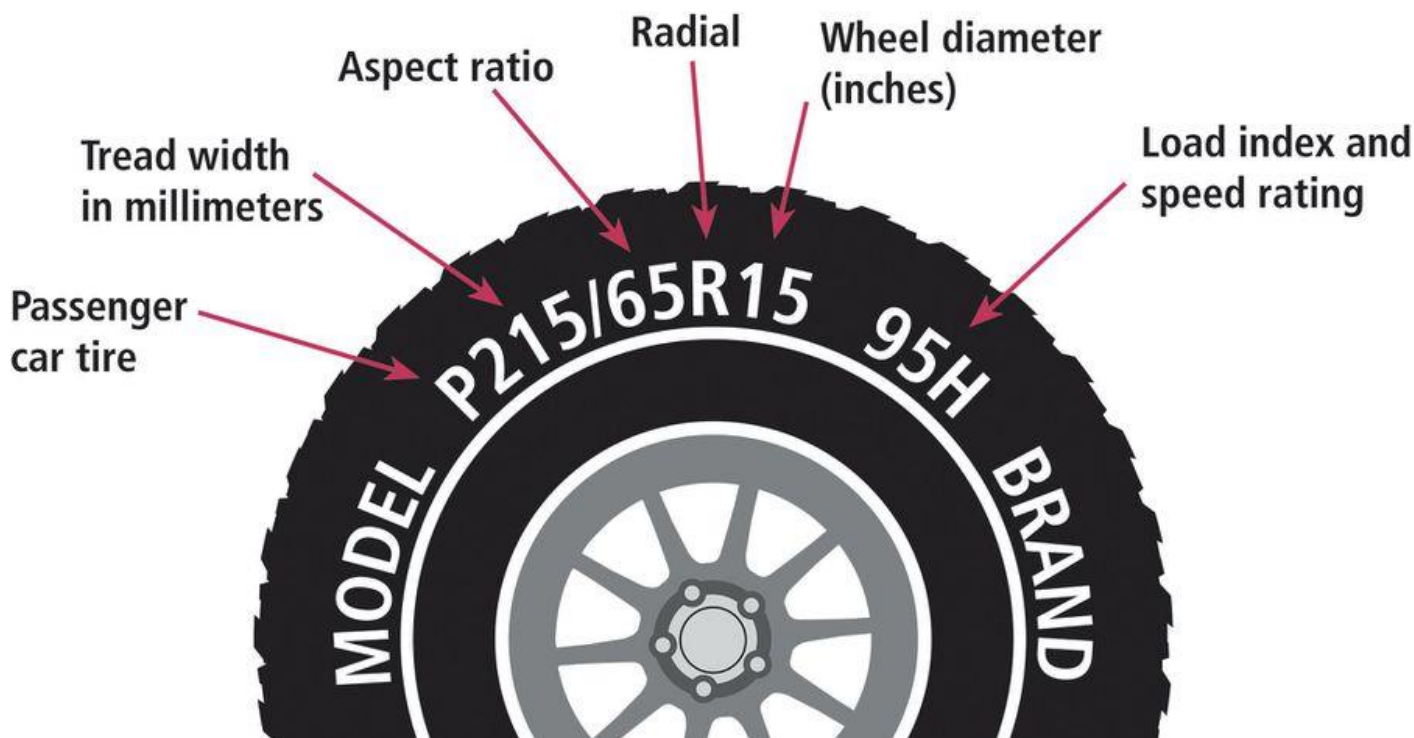
alphanumeric-series tires

letter	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	J	L
width (13-inch tire)	6" / 165mm	6.5" / 175mm	-	7" / 185mm	-	-	-	-	-	-
width (14-inch tire)	-	6.45" / 165mm	6.95" / 175mm	-	7.35" / 185mm	7.75" / 195mm	8.25" / 205mm	8.55" / 215mm	-	-
width (15-inch tire)	5.6" / 155mm	-	6.85" / 175mm	-	7.35" / 185mm	7.75" / 195mm	8.25" / 205mm	8.55" / 215mm	8.85" / 225mm	9.15" / 235mm

Later in the Seventies, things started to get complicated. More aspect ratios came along - most popularly 78 percent and 70 percent - to meet the demand for wider tires. Rather than express the tire's width in numbers, tire sizes switched to letters,

with the letters denoting the tire's load rating and with the tires getting wider as the letters progressed through the alphabet: A for tires 6 inches (165mm) wide, progressing up to L tires more than 9 inches (235mm) wide. To add to the complication, along came radials during this time, introducing slightly different formats. Michelin, for instance, measured section width and even wheel diameter in millimeters.

It soon became apparent that the existing size formats wouldn't be able to adapt to an ever-expanding range of tire sizes across multiple aspect ratios, so in 1980 the International Organization for Standardization came up with the P-Metric standard for passenger cars. This new P-Metric standard still incorporated aspect ratios, but it also decoupled the aspect ratio from the tire's width. It also, confusingly, [made use of both metric and SAE measurements in the same format](#).



Hemmings Motor News graphic.

Converting from bias-ply sizes to P-Metric sizes, in theory, shouldn't be all that difficult. Measure the section width of your bias-ply tire and convert it to millimeters (1 inch = 25.4 millimeters), determine the older tire's aspect ratio, then plug those numbers and the wheel diameter into the P-Metric format.

In practice, however, tire sizes don't exactly match up, and despite the proliferation of tire sizes in recent decades, there's often not a perfect match to older sizes. That means rooting through available tire sizes to compare sizes and to find the closest or most appropriate tire.

The abovementioned 700-15 tire would thus roughly convert to a 175/90R15, but good luck finding radials in that size. Something like a P175/75R15 would nearly match the width, but would have a smaller diameter (25.3 inches), throwing off the speedometer by about 8 percent. Alternatively, a P215/75R15 would come closest in diameter to the original bias-ply, but would measure more than two inches wider, potentially rubbing on the car's fenders or even not fitting on the stock wheels.

We'll note here that larger truck tires and off-road tires often follow a different tire size format using SAE measurements, with the first number representing the tire's overall height in inches, the second its width in inches and the third its wheel size in inches. So a 255/85R16 tire, typically found on large trucks, would translate to a 33X10R16. You may also find different formats for Brass Era tires, racing tires, and older European metric tires.

We'll also note that the tire sizes above are all nominal sizes and not necessarily representative of actual sizes in real-world conditions. Overall dimensions will change depending on load, inflation, wheel width, and manufacturer, so take caution to carefully measure installed tires whenever possible before comparing sizes.

If you're not a fan of math, pretty much all of these conversions have already been done and structured into easily [found reference tables](#) or [online calculators](#). On the other hand, the conversion is fairly simple and it never hurts to know for sure that you're picking the right tire size when upgrading to modern radials.