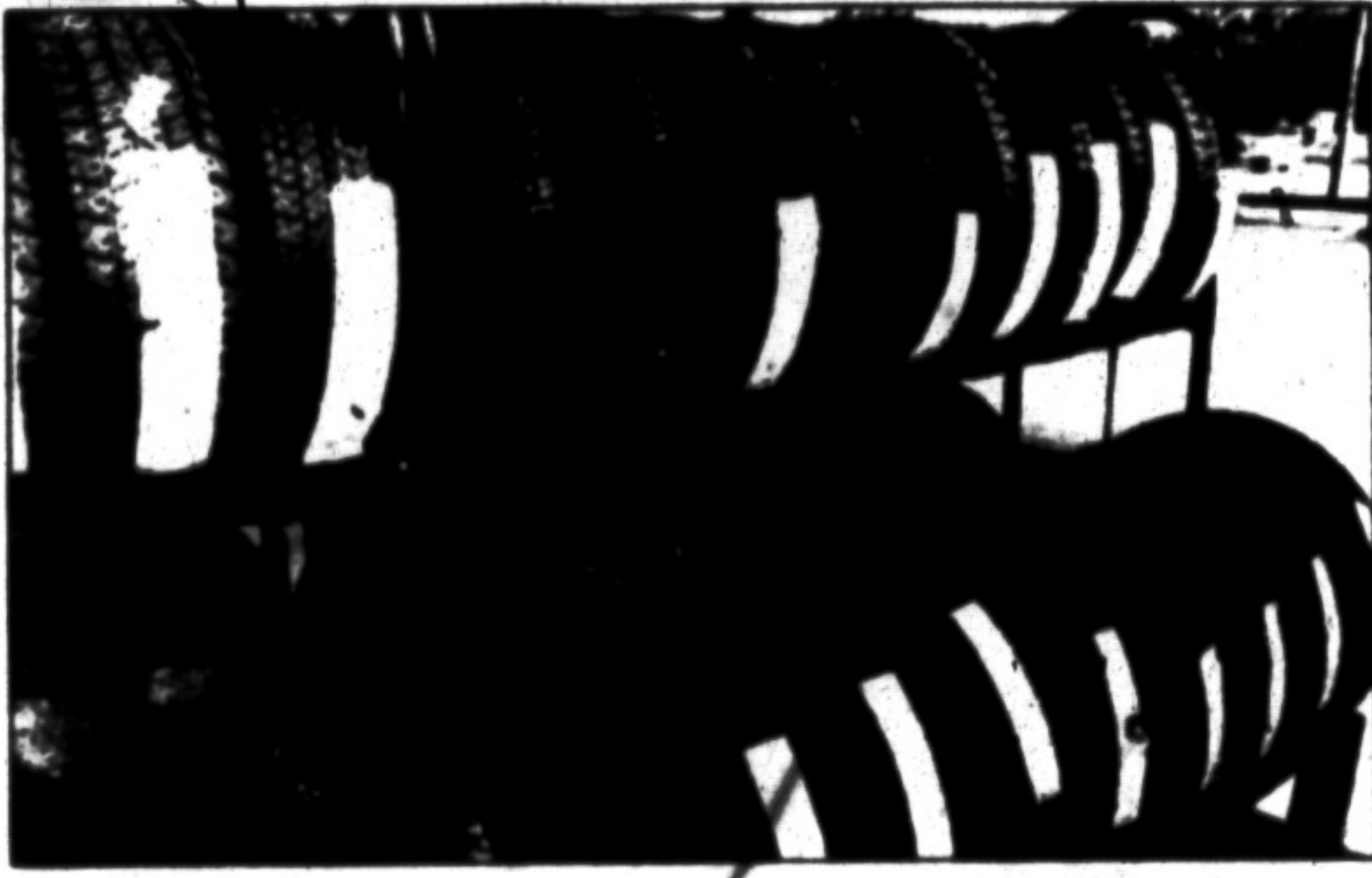


# Choosing Winter Tires



When winter weather arrives, make sure your car is equipped with a tire that can provide added traction. Whether you should use radials, snow tires or studded tires depends on the weather conditions and the snow emergency rules where you live.

In some mountain pass areas, for example, chains are mandatory during heavy snows. In other areas, under emergency snow rules, drivers are subject to fines if they block traffic and don't have snow tires on their cars. All season tires and snow tires with "MS" (mud and snow) molded on the sidewall meet the Tire Industry Safety Council's definition of a snow tire.

Some states also have rules regarding the use of studded tires, and some prohibit them altogether. If studded tires are mounted on the front axle of front wheel-drive vehicles, studded tires must also be mounted on the rear axle for correct handling.

Following are some tips from the Tire Industry Safety Council for cold-weather driving:

- Never attempt to increase traction on snow or ice by reducing tire pressure. Your tires will be seriously underinflated, and it doesn't increase traction anyway.
- Check tire pressure more often during the winter. Whenever the

temperature drops 10 degrees Fahrenheit, the air pressure inside your tires goes down about one pound per square inch.

• Don't make sudden turns when the road is slick; rather, make smooth, gradual turns. To slow down or stop, pump lightly on the brake, gradually slowing the car. If you start to slide, keep your foot off the brake until you regain control.

• Never stand near or behind a spinning tire while trying to push a stuck vehicle.

• If one of the drive wheels becomes stuck, don't race the engine. Otherwise, the free spinning wheel will spin at twice the speedometer reading. This creates tremendous centrifugal force which could result in the tire exploding or disintegrating.

• If your car gets stuck in snow, gently rock the car back and forth, alternating between forward and reverse gears, each time with a little pressure on the accelerator. If your tires start spinning, you're probably only digging yourself in deeper, so ease off the accelerator.

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