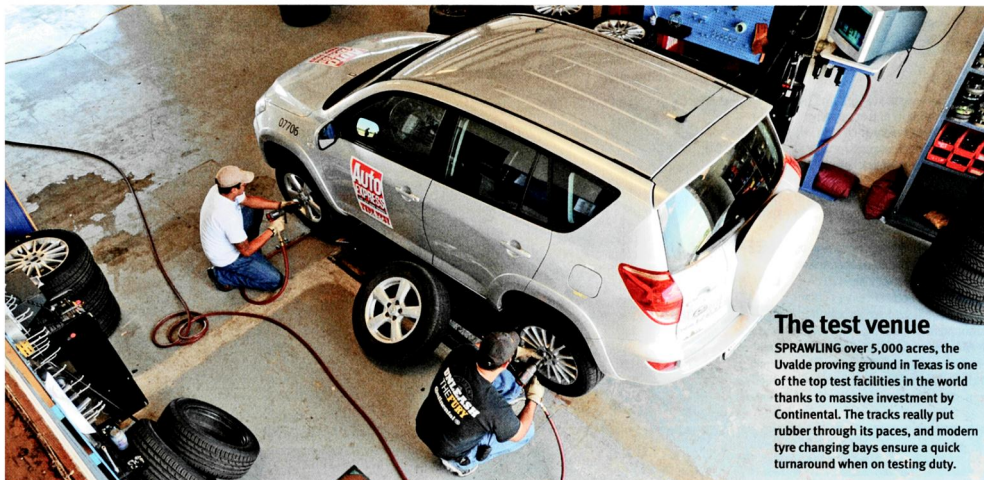


AUTO EXPRESS SUV TYRE TEST



The test venue
 SPRAWLING over 5,000 acres, the Uvalde proving ground in Texas is one of the top test facilities in the world thanks to massive investment by Continental. The tracks really put rubber through its paces, and modern tyre changing bays ensure a quick turnaround when on testing duty.

ROLLING RESISTANCE

The test

FOR many of us worried about the cost of motoring, this is the most important test we do, as it relates directly to how much fuel a car uses. In the lab, we measured to industry standards how much energy is needed to turn a tyre over fixed periods of time at different speeds. An increase of six per cent in rolling resistance will result in a one per cent rise in fuel consumption.

Easiest on your wallet is the Pirelli. The frugal Scorpion was way ahead of the rest here, with a one per cent economy advantage over all its rivals – a major attraction for high-mileage

drivers. Master of building fuel-efficient tyres, Michelin, was next up, heading a tightly packed group led by Hankook, then Continental and Kumho. Goodyear struggled in this test, finishing two per cent behind the standard set by Pirelli.

Results

Rolling resistance

Pirelli	100.0
Michelin	93.2
Hankook	92.3
Continental	91.5
Kumho	90.0
Goodyear	88.4

“Never has a result been so close. Any of the top three will do a great job on your car”

PICKING THE WINNER

DRIVERS can choose what matters to them most from our individual tests, but we wanted our final calculations to come up with the best all-rounder. As a result, we weighted the scores to equalise the performance gap in each discipline. That meant a victory in a category where the results were close, such as dry handling, counted the same towards the final score as a test where the spread was wider, in aquaplaning, for example. The exception to this rule was in price, as this played a small role in our final verdict compared to safety.

Verdict

NEVER have we had a tyre test that has been so close. Any of the top three will do an excellent job on your car, and drivers can confidently choose a tyre based on individual strengths in the knowledge that they are solid all-round performers. Our emphasis on safety means Goodyear takes a narrow victory, thanks to its prowess in the wet. Continental proved to be a consistent performer in all areas, while Michelin matched Goodyear in the wet but was narrowly beaten in the other disciplines. Kumho edged out premium brand Pirelli to take fourth – a good result for the Korean producer. Bringing up the rear was Hankook, which struggled in this company, and needs to do a lot of work to match the standard of the best.

PRICE

The test

INTERNET shopping has made sourcing a standard price for a tyre much easier. We went to online retailer etyres (www.etyres.co.uk) for the prices, which were correct at the time of going to press. Figures include mobile fitting, a valve, balancing and the disposal of your old tyres.

It's no surprise that Kumho topped the list, but premium brand Pirelli looked particularly good value, as it matched the Korean rubber on £116. The Hankook was expensive in comparison at £131, especially when you consider its

proving ground performance, and an extra £10 will get you the Continental. You'll have to dig deep for the Goodyear or Michelin at £164 per tyre.

Results

Price

Kumho	£116
Pirelli	£116
Hankook	£131
Continental	£141
Goodyear	£164
Michelin	£164

