Best Road Bike Tires in 2021

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Whether you already have the bike of your dreams or buying your first one, there's always something else that can help you be more competitive. And, you're tires actually make a bigger difference then you think.

Remember, tires are the only part of your bike that touches the ground, keeps you upright through tough corners, and provides you rolling speed.
For this reason, tires come in different shapes and sizes. And, what you end up buying depends on what you need.

In this piece, I'll provide a buyer's guide and product review. I've categorized the tires in four categories (all-around, racing, puncture resistance, commuting).

Best All-Around Road Bike Tires:

Fastest Road Bike Tires:

Best Road Bike Tires for Puncture Resistant:

Best Road Bike Tires for Commuting:

Best All-Around Road Bike Tires

1. Continental Grand Prix 5000

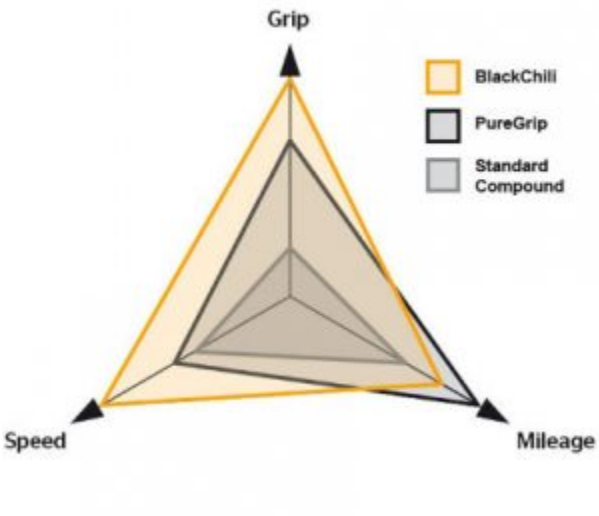
Continental made its first tire in 1871. It's fair to say the German brand knows a thing or two when it comes to making tires, and it's no coincidence that they are the most popular brand in the pro-Peloton. Now the GP 4000 was first introduced 14 years ago and it's long been regarded as the best all-around road bike tire available to humanity. I'm a big fan of the GP 4000, but now it's being replaced.

This is the Continental GP 5000. It's not the 4000S III because it's a completely new tire with a completely new design.

The GP 5000 has got a more precise tread pattern on the new tire, and this is down to Continentals' molds now being laser cut rather than the machine. And it's said to improve cornering grip.

Features

Continental reckons that the new 5000 has 12 percent lower rolling resistance than the 4000. And this is in part down to a new improved Black Chili compound, and a higher 330 TPI, that's Threads Per Inch carcass. It's also got 20% more puncture protection, which is attributed to an improved Vectran Breaker. And it's five grams lighter in a 25 mm, then the previous GP 4000. It's also sent to offer more comfort, and reduce road vibration. And this is down to a new way in which Continental actually constructs its tires and the way your tire is built.



But how is it developed, and what makes it so special? This may surprise you, but Continental isn't claiming that the 5000 is the fastest tire, or the one with the most grip, or the one with the most puncture redaction, or the lightest. But that's the whole point. The design objective with the GP 5000, like the GP 4000 is to produce a tire with the best all-around performance. You could have the lightest tire in the world, but it'd be pointless if it meant that you got a puncture before the end of the race. You could have a tire with the lowest rolling resistance, but that also would be pointless if it meant that you have no grip and slid out on a corner.

Continental has performed extensive research and development into road bike tires, and a key component of that has been the development of a new compound. But why is the compound so important, you ask? You can't design the optimum compound until you fully understand the demands

placed upon the tire. Now, Continental's research suggested that the actual contact patch on the road is much smaller than previously thought. Take a look at the road, for example, from far it looks pretty smooth, but when you get down close and take a closer look, you can actually see, but it's very bumpy and imperfect. And well, if you were a bacteria, this would be like The Himalayas.

Contact Patch

Now the result of this is that Continental thinks that the contact patch is actually just 15% of what you'd actually expect. Of that, measly 15%, Continental believes that 98% of the tires grip is attributed to the compound. That said, the material properties of that compound become hugely significant. You want it to be grippy, but not to grip as that will make it slow. You want it to have low rolling resistance, but if it has too low a rolling resistance, then it won't have enough grip.

Compound

Some other tire companies buy in their rubber compounds, but the Black Chili compound is exclusively developed and constantly improving by Continental. Now the exact ingredients and procedure that go into making it are top secret. But how do you have good puncture protection in a tire without compromising the rolling resistance? The answer is Vectran, but what is Vectran? Chemically speaking, it's a polyester formed by the polycondensation of 4-hydroxybenzoic acid with 6-hydroxynaphthalene-2-carboxylic acid. In non-chemistry nerd terms of fiber that has really high tensile strength similar to that of Kevlar, and in actual fact is used in Mars Rovers.

It's used in tires like the 5000 as a very densely woven layer that's still very thin, so it adds a great deal of puncture protection like a stab vest, but without compromising the rolling resistance.

Sizes

The tires are going to be available in 23, 25, 28, and 32 mm width. And the tubeless version, well that's going to be available in 25, 28, and 32 mm.

Clincher or Tubeless

The Continental Grand Pix 5000 has two versions: one that has a tube and one that is tubeless. That is the only significant difference between the two. Otherwise they the same functions and features.

You'll need to decide whether you want the advantages of having a tubeless tire or are happy with a "traditional" tire.

Overall, you'll be able to ride your bike with these and feel faster, more comfortable, and to top it off it has increased tire protection.

Both versions of the tires have these features:

- Active Comfort Technology
- Lazer Grip
- Vectran

The Active Comfort Technology was embedded into the tire during its construction. The technology absorbs the vibrations you'd feel from the road and makes your ride more comfortable.

The Lazer Grip helps you feel every curvature of the road on your rides. The lazered profile structure expands over the tire's shoulder and helps you go around sharp corners.

The Vectran is one of the most innovative technologies in puncture protection. Vectran is a synthetically manufactured high-tech fiber that is silk-like, which makes it a liquid-crystalline polymer.

Since Vectran is spider-silk like it has an enormous tear resistance at a very low weight, which helps reduce rolling resistance.

Verdict

Cyclists who have used these tires like them because there is an option to order them as "traditional" or tubeless, depending on their needs. Nearly all riders notice that they have a smooth ride and they can ride on a lower pressure than other wheels. The lower tire pressure gives them more confidence to go riding on a rainy day and corner around sharper corners. They do have little rolling resistance that is great for every type of riding.

I'd recommend these tires to anyone who wants an overall middle-grade tire. It helps give you a smooth ride and you can take these tires on wet and possibly uneven surfaces. They can be your training tires if you wish since they have low rolling resistance. But for serious racers read on to the next section.

Continental GP 5000 tyre First Look & First Ride

2. Vittoria Rubino Pro

The Vittoria Rubino Pro tires were made for anything ranging from intensive training and racing to the hard weekend rider. The Rubino Pro builds on the standard Rubino platform.

The designers used the same exclusive 3C Graphene compound structure, long service life, puncture protection, and sharp handling traits. However, it substitutes the folding bead material for reduced weight, just something to be mindful of.

What makes the tire versatile is the use of Graphene material, which elongates the tire's life. You can use the tire for not only racing but also long weekend ride or even bike tours during the summer.

Verdict

Cyclists who have bought the tires like them since they are so versatile and last a long time. Bonus, the tires fit very well over rims since the rubber is soft and pliable to pull over the rim whenever you get a flat. On the road, cyclists report that the tires feel smooth on the road and they are very puncture resistant, which puts their minds at ease. Having said that, they always bring a repair kit with them.

I highly recommend this tire for those who want a strong tire that can be used for training and racing at high intensity levels. You can take these to different venues and be sure that they won't get a flat on the course. Just be sure to check your tires before the race and have a repair kit ready! These tires can be used for recreational or touring, but I wouldn't but too many miles on them, if you also race. Just get another set.

3. Michelin Power Endurance

Michelin is the first company to make an appearance on our list that is not Continental, though this brand is likely far more well-known even if they are more known for automotive tires rather than high-end road bike tires. That said, Michelin does have a fairly good reputation with tires in its primary market, so there is no reason those same qualities could not crossover and apply to road bike tires. In fact, Michelin actually managed to do that which is a great thing on one hand but a bit limiting on the other.

The new Michelin Power Endurance Road tire is new and updated with new technologies to make your ride smoother with fewer flats.

The new design is 20% more puncture resistant on the crown. The tire is made with the new "Aramid Protek +" reinforcement, which makes it very strong against not just bumps in the road, but different weather conditions.

Many people who use these tires do year-round biking and often go off-road temporarily on a casual bike ride. Sometimes used for sport and competition, but is really built for everyday intensive riding. Even if you bike 45 minutes to work.

Since it is built to last long, there are some elements that are compromised. For example, this is not a light tire. It is a robust and “weighty” tire compared to your skinny racing tire. Speed of the tire is dependent on your bike’s weight and your own weight. But overall these go “slower” compared to tires that are not as strong against the elements.

If the weight is not an issue for you, these tires are great and rates highly for its wet and dry grips, robustness, and longevity. All categories the company made up for itself.

Mileage

When Michelin tries to sell a set of automotive tires, they make it a point to ensure that their tires can last as long or longer than any of their competitors. When you take that same philosophy to the road bike tire market, you likely end up with something a lot like the Michelin Power Endurance. In fact, the Michelin Power Endurance actually provides the best mileage out of any other puncture resistant road tire on our list. This is in a large part due to the fact that Michelin uses an X-Miles compound that is specifically designed to increase the mileage of the tires.

Convenience

The Michelin Power Endurance is also a fairly convenient puncture resistant road tire and offers an easier way of doing things in a couple of ways. For one, this is a clincher type of puncture resistant road tire, so if you ever do have a flat tire, you can quickly and easily change it should you keep an extra on you while riding. Another way that the Michelin Power Endurance aims to make your ride easier is by providing tread wear indicators which make themselves known when you have worn the tread on your tires low enough to need new ones. Finally, this tire comes in 5 sizes which are generally the most common wheel rim and racing sizes.

Verdict

Cyclists who have bought these tires comment that these are on the hard side when you initially put them on. But on the road, these tires ride really smooth for being a “heavy” tire and last long against the elements. The grip is exceptional and cyclists feel comfortable going out in the elements if they bike year-round.

I recommend these tires to anyone who does intense riding year-round and needs a pair of tires that you can depend on. Yes, they are hard to get on initially, but you'll rarely get a flat. And, these can keep up with your intense and nearly constant biking.

4. Continental Grand Prix 4000 S II

When looking at road tires of any sort, there are few companies out there that are better respected or well known than Continental. With a storied history that stretches back over 130 years, Continental has always been a high-end and professional-grade road tire to which most of their competitors are compared to as a general benchmark for overall quality within any of their given categories. That trend remains pretty much constant as the Continental Grand Prix 4000 S II beat out the other road tires to be our Best Buy puncture resistant road tire.

Compound

One of the best qualities about the Grand Prix 4000 S II is its use of the company's patented Black Chili compound which is in a large part responsible for this road tire being able to provide such all-around great riding qualities. The Grand Prix 4000 S II may not necessarily be the fastest bike tires we saw, but it is very nearly so. The same thing can be said about the mileage of this tire which, while not strictly the best, is still well within the tour to shorter "marathon" range and potentially longer depending on the conditions of the road. That said, you will definitely have to pay a bit more for the Grand Prix 4000 S II than you will virtually any other puncture resistant road tire we saw.

Durability

As one would expect, the Grand Prix 4000 S II is more durable than most road tires, but the benchmark of the class goes many steps further to ensure its market dominance. For instance, this road tire has by far the highest thread count out of any other product reviewed with 330 tpi which is near twice the thread count of its next closest competitor. Of course, the Black Chili recipe does simply provide general riding benefit as it further reinforces the Grand Prix 4000 S II from puncture with above average flexibility. That said, the toughest protection the Grand Prix 4000 S II has is the Vectran Breaker layer that uses a spider silk-like liquid-crystalline polymer to provide amazing puncture protection at an incredibly lightweight.

5. Continental Gator Hardshell

As one of the most well-respected companies in professional-grade bike tyre manufacturing, Continental understands that it must do more than simply provide the best all-around performing tire on the market. They must also produce the highest performing bike tyre in different niche categories.
For instance, sometimes the area where you are riding is not one which you can readily predict the conditions of like for a city road whose conditions can change from day to day. It is in this precarious and unpredictable scenario that you will likely want to opt for the puncture resistant road tire that is the most durable.

Durability

By far the most impressive quality about the Gator Hardshell puncture resistant road tires is how durable they are. There are numerous technologies and design features that go into this, but by far one of the most important are the various layers that this road tire employs as protection.
For instance, the entire carcass and inner tube are shielded by a Polybreaker layer which uses cross threaded polyester to form a flexible, thick layer of protection. To further ensure this road tire has no need to be concerned with punctures, Continental also adds their DuraSkin protective siding to the Gator Hardshell which protects one of the most vulnerable points on even a puncture resistant road tire.

Compound

The Gator Hardshell has numerous layers of protection to ensure that it has nothing to fear from an external puncture, but it also has some protection built into the design itself.

For instance, this puncture resistant road tire uses the Carbon Black compound which is in a large part responsible for the Gator Hardshell's exceptional mileage when compared to many other road tires.

That said, the compound is a bit heavier than most and all of those layers do add a fair degree of weight to this road tire as it comes in at a heavy 460 g. This means that the Gator Hardshell is not the road tire you choose if you are looking to train for speed unless you are looking for light resistance training.

Fastest Road Bike Tires

1. Vittoria Corsa Speed

The Vittoria Corsa Speed is reliable and consistently performs well compared to other tires by this company.

This specific model features the lightest tubeless ready casing on the road bike tire market.

What sets this tire apart from its “all-around” counterpart, is the materials used.

The Corsa Speed road bike tire uses proprietary Graphene G+ ISOtech compound that is paired with an ultra-fine Corespun-T casing. All these materials make this tire very useful for race-day situations.

The tire has minimal rolling resistance, which helps you push your speed on race day and has exceptional wet weather grip so you can turn corners with confidence. And to make this tire even more reliable, it has the trademark Corsa suppleness.

If you decide to use this tire as a tubeless option, the casing works well with sealant, which provides an even higher level of flat protection. Additionally, this casing can be used with an inner tube if you desire.

Verdict

Cyclists who have bought these tires like them because they are reliable and come with the Vittoria technology, which makes them a reputable choice. On the road, they are very smooth and grip the road very well. The most experienced cyclist report that they can easily handle sharp turns and corners on slick roads and courses.

I highly recommend these tires for your race day needs. If you're looking for tires that you can rely on and go with a reputable tire maker, Vittoria has your back. These tires are on the "heavier" end of the lighter tires, but having a peace-of-mind on race day might override the cons. You can be sure that if you look over your tires carefully and don't over pump them, you'll lower your chances of getting a flat on the course.

2. Pirelli PZero Velo

In a few words, the Pirelli Pzero Velo tires are superlight, aerodynamic, and can withstand the distance and miles you'll put on them.

They are best used for triathlons, criteriums and other types of road cycling races.

The tire's tread is made of a mix of thoughtfully selected and balanced chemical elements and engineered grooves. The materials used are SmartNET Silica and ICS and FGD technologies.

The SmartNET Silica technology makes the tire roll more efficiently and reduces heat while increasing elasticity. This technology also gives you a reliable grip in wet weather conditions. The material has microscopic rod-shaped particles arranged systematically that create a strong, long-lasting tire.

To top off the tire, it has an aramid fiber belt located underneath the tread to protect the casing from sharp objects. Aramid is a fiber material that has high cut and abrasion properties.

Verdict

Cyclists who have bought the tire like it because it is extremely supple and has an exceptional grip. The tires corner very well and might be able to help build some confidence for beginner cyclists. Cyclists also say that the tires seem to have a good balance between rolling and puncture resistance. Since these are a lighter tire, it is more prone to flats. Just to be aware and be sure you have a repair kit handy.

I highly recommend these tires if you want to gain some more confidence and speed on the bike. These tires handle well, have a great grip on the road, and corner easily. It would be a great option if you're looking to buy your first pair of racing wheels.

3. Michelin Power Competition

The Michelin Power Competition road bike tires have the new Race Compound derived MOTOGP technology that helps give you more grip, which ultimately helps you go around curves more easily.

Of course, when you buy a Michelin tire, you also get Aramid Protek that is 13% greater puncture resistant compared to other tires.

The Bi-Compound is a mix of two rubber compounds on the tread that provide central rolling efficiency and grip on the road.

These tires also have the Grip Compound that gives you a little more grip on wet surfaces.

The X-Miles Compound provides abrasion resistance, so the tires have a thicker layer on the crown. This, of course, increases the tires' durability.

And finally, the Race Compound is a rubber compound with a low deformation rate, which reduces the rolling resistance and also helps the tire grip in dry conditions.

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Verdict

Cyclists who have bought the tires say that they were light and supple, but the first time mounting them can be challenging. The tires are slick and don't have any tread and directional label on the sidewalls. On the road, the tires are light and control and respond well to turns and road surfaces. The tires come with wear indicators on the shoulder, which help a lot.

I recommend these tires if you want a reliable and robust pair you can rely on. Although they have practical benefits, such as being long-lasting, they also can easily go around corners and feel slick on the road. All qualities that might appeal to you if you're looking to go faster on the road.

4. Schwalbe Pro One

Schwalbe is definitely a well-respected maker of high-end bike tires, even if they are also one of the youngest companies at a sprightly 55 years old. That said, Schwalbe was founded for a singular purpose: to make the best professional bike tires on the market. While their success towards that goal is debatable, what is not is that Schwalbe has definitely managed to consistently put out well-made and well-performing bike tires. In this case, Schwalbe decided to offer the best of both worlds with the Pro One.
The Schwalbe Pro One road bike tires turn heads as you whizz by on your bike during a race.

It's fast, reliable, and light, which are all good qualities to have for your race day tires.

This is all possible since the tires are made from patented MicroSkin.

Although the tires come in tubular and tubeless options, you can experience the full benefits of the tire if you go tubeless.

The tubeless version is not only lighter and faster but having the MicroSkin takes it a step higher. The material envelops the entire carcass and facilitates smooth riding even if you pump up your tires.

And, the MicroSkin also improves the cut resistance for both the tubeless and tubular options. To ensure that you get the most miles from these tires, they also have Doc Blue Professional sealant. This helps prevent puncture and flats during a ride or even a race.

To improve an already great tire, Schwalbe began with triple compound rubber, adding Snakebite and Sidewall protection that complements a liquid, tubeless sealant to retain air pressure longer and resist punctures.

Schwalbe has been able to accommodate different size tires to fit more bike frames. For this specific model, it's extra-wide tire size is 30-622. If you want to use lighter tires on a "heavier" bike you now have that option.

Type

By far the best quality about the Schwalbe Pro One is its type, and that is large because the Schwalbe Pro One does not have a single type. Instead, this puncture resistant road tire was designed to be able to fulfill whichever role you need of it. If you need an inner tube, then this puncture resistant road tire can serve as a tubular road tire. However, if you would rather not deal with the inner tube, the Schwalbe Pro One can also always be used as a tubeless puncture resistant road tire. The only downside to this is that you will definitely need to have the wheel adhered either way.

Speed

Outside of the interchangeable type design, the Schwalbe Pro One also offers an all-around solid build with numerous features that are on par or average for the market of road tires. For instance, while it is not the fastest road tire anywhere, it is by far one of the faster puncture resistant road tires that we reviewed. Part of this has to do with the fact that the Schwalbe Pro One uses a patented MicroSkin compound which provides the Schwalbe Pro One plenty of grip and traction to get the most out of every stroke. Another way that the Schwalbe Pro One ensures that you get as much speed as possible is by keeping the weight down well below that of some of their competitors' puncture resistant road tires.

Verdict

Cyclists who have bought the tires have a polarized opinion of them. Some are able to get a thousand miles, at least, on them before needing a change. Others have had some problems with the tires being too "sensitive" to the road conditions. One cyclist even reported that she rode over a pedal and then the sealant liquid oozed out.

I am hesitant to recommend these tires completely since cyclists have given these mixed reviews. It seems as if you just have to hope that you buy a pair that lives up to its highly regarded product description. If you do buy these tires, be aware that they might not last as long as advertised.

5. Zipp Tangente Speed

The Zipp Tangente Speed road bike tires provide and keep up with your racing demands. You can lean in and push yourself harder on the bike.

This is designed to lower rolling resistance and aims to help you better handle your bike and have smoother ride no matter what terrain you train and race on. And, if you add the tubeless technology, then smooths things out even more and gives protection from punctures.

And, if the tubeless technology doesn't seem protective enough, this one also has a polyamide puncture protection layer under the tread. This layer is potent against road debris and protects from stray nails and glass while you're riding.

The tire's tread pattern ensures a reliable grip even when cornering and on slick or wet roads.

To make this tire last, it was made with a more advanced durometer rubber that reduces rolling resistance while also increasing cornering grip and tread longevity.

Verdict

Cyclists who have bought the tire rave about it because it's a high-end and reliable racing tire they can use for a whole reason of racing. They can bring it to their "A" race and not have to worry about getting a flat. Most cyclists don't train with these tires because they want to keep them fresh for race day.

I highly recommend these tires for race-exclusive use. If you want to use them for training, I'd ride with them a couple of days before race day. You want to use these tires in the best condition as possible. Of course, break these tires in before race day, but after the initial riding period, keep their use to a minimum.

6. Continental Grand Prix TT

The Continental Grand Prix TT tires were made for time trials, triathlons, and other road cycling races.

They were made so that you have the optimal rolling resistance for any triathlon or time trial you line your bike up for.

And thanks to the BlackChilli Compound you'll have excellent grip and efficient rolling.

You won't have to worry about getting a flat on the road or even during competition since these tires have a Vectran puncture protection insert.

The BlackChilli Compound is a tread compound that balances the triangle between grip, rolling resistance, and the mileage you can put on your tires.

How does the compound work?

For BlackChilli, the design team refines special synthetic rubbers with natural rubber to high-performance tread mixtures. Lastly, soot particles are added to this mixture, which is then optimized in shape and surface properties.

The Vectran is one of the most innovative technologies in puncture protection. Vectran is a synthetically manufactured high-tech fiber that is silk-like, which makes it a liquid-crystalline polymer.

Verdict

Cyclists who have bought these tires like them because it has a good grip on the road and has low rolling resistance. Most people can feel that they are going faster without putting in too much effort; compared to their previous tires. The tires were not hard to install and are durable so cyclists have used them for a few seasons.

I'd recommend these if you're looking a "middle of the road" set of tires. They will do the trick and will help you go faster and corner turns better. These might not be the best if you're going on bumpy roads or are sensitive to the vibrations you get from riding.

7. Hutchinson Fusion 5 Galactik

The Fusion 5 Galactik is the result of the design conducted around the ElevenSTORM compound and the Fusion 5 range.

The tire has a compound thickness, casing/compound bonding procedure, Lightskin polyamide reinforcement; all which make to a tire dedicated to speed, performance, and even has the ability to restore energy. All this makes this tire unparalleled in this category of racing tires.

If you've used Hutchinson wheel before, then you can compare it to previous models. This tire, in testing labs, saw a 14% improvement in durability and 6% improvement in rolling resistance.

The technologies that make this tire a good option is worth mentioning.

The Storm Infernal Compound help reduce the rolling resistance, increase grip and mileage you can put on the wheels before a change or flat.

Verdict

Cyclists who have bought the tires like it because the tires roll very well and can corner very easily. Overall, they make their rides softer and smoother compared to gatorskins. The downside to these smooth tires is the durability. They are very sensitive tires and puncture very easily, even the tubeless option. Some cyclists say that a buying a well-performing tire is not worth the risk of getting a puncture every time you take your bike out.

I am hesitant to recommend these tires 100% since they puncture easily and may not be the best option. Especially if you want and need a tire that is reliable. Even if you get a flat and have the tools to repair, it can be a bit of an annoyance if it happens frequently.

Best Road Bike Tires for Puncture Resistant

1. Continental GP 4-Season

The Continental GP 4 Season tire is a robust all-season tire that you can rely on and not even more about it being punctured or its lifespan. This tire is best used for touring and training since it’s heavy and durable. That way you can train all you want and not have to change a flat.

This tire has excellent puncture protection since it was made with Vectran puncture protection insert. Vectran is a synthetically made high-tech fiber made from a natural model. The Vectran is a liquid-crystalline polymer and is spun from the melted liquid polymer Vectra and then processed to a multi-strand thread. This makes it very tear-resistant at a very low-weight.

Additionally, the tires have DuraSkin which is sidewall protection that allows you to use the tires in whatever condition you want to bike in. The high-quality polyamide fabric protects the tire casing against whatever you “throw” at your bike. And, these tires stand out because of their brown sidewalls.

Verdict

Cyclists who have bought these tires like them because they have low rolling resistance and have high puncture resistance. These two features allow cyclists to put thousands of miles on the tires and even use them in city streets and year-round.

I recommend these tires if you need something that you can use year-round. These ones have the best durability and puncture resistance compared to other ones. Yes, while they are heavy compared to many wheels, think about what’s important to you. Fast tires or ones that can last? These fall in the latter category and can almost be used as commuter tires.

2. Vittoria Zaffiro Pro

Vittoria Zaffiro Pro is a performance training tire that used a mixed tread design that optimized it for all-around use. The tire works well in a range of training conditions. And, with the durable folding nylon casing, it results in a performance-oriented training tire.

As mentioned before this tire has a unique tire tread. The Vittoria uses its 4 compound tire treads that is a layering technology that separates the base and surface compounds. This design lets the designers fine-tune the flex of the tread-base and tread-surface separately. This process lets the designers correctly place the compound exactly where it should be. The rider can be sure that he can corner, climb, roll, and brake well.

The casing of the tire is 60 TPI nylon, which gives riders a sense of security when they take their bikes out on the road. Along with the additional puncture resistance belt at the center of the tread. These tires were made to last and are backed with Vittoria’s technology and testing.

Verdict

Cyclists who have bought the tires like them because they can easily put thousands of miles on the bike before they need a change the tires. Nearly all cyclists report that the tires have a great grip on the road in all conditions. Some have even punctured their tires with glass, but after patching it, they could still put another two thousand miles on it.

I recommend these tires you have used Vittoria tires in the past and want a pair that you can use daily. The tire tread is unique and really does help as you bike through different terrains either on your commute or training.

3. Schwalbe Durano Plus

The Schwalbe Durano Plus tire is made with maximum puncture protection for your racing bike.

Although, when compared to the Marathon Plus's, the SmartGuard belt is not as deep, it offers a unique level of protection for those who are racing. If you race, you might want to use these.

If you're not familiar with the Durano model line, let me explain. The Durano has a redesigned dynamic tread that is lighter than its other tires. The tires are durable enough that cyclists can put hundreds on mile on them. The dual-compound ensures the best adhesion, no matter what surface your riding on.

The Durano Plus takes everything from the Durano and adds the SmartGuard protection for the maximum puncture protection. The SmartGuard protection belt is made from elastic rubber, which gives it an exceptionally high level of protection for a racing tire.

The tire has middle-of-the-ground rolling resistance and very low off-road grip. But those two qualities are compromised since the tires rank highly for road grip, puncture protection, and durability.

Verdict

Cyclists who have bought the tire like it because they can ride every day if they like and the tire holds up very well. They bought the tires for sturdiness and puncture protection and they were not disappointed. They do weigh a bit more than “performance” tires, but cyclists say it’s worth it since some bike nearly every day.

I highly recommend these tires if you need a pair that you can use for daily use. You can rely on them to get you from A to B. These are heavier than your racing tires, just to be aware. You can, if you wish, train with these and race with lighter tires.

4. Vittoria Corsa Control G+

The Vittoria Corsa Control G+ is a step up from the previously reviewed Vittoria tires. This was designed for those who have a heavy training schedule and race on uneven roads.

The tire has thicker treads for the best puncture protection, even when the weather starts to turn to fall and winter.

To make these wheels even more durable they have 4 compounds in the tread (4C) for increased wear life, better rolling and better grip on the sides of the tires.

Vittoria has a graphene carbon compound mixed in the rubber layup so cyclists can add those extra miles on the bike. And, this compound rubber layup helps give different areas of the tire different handling properties and very high TPI casing. The added graphene to tire rubber to make it more durable and puncture resistance; all in addition to reducing the rolling resistance.

Vittoria is the leading the research and innovation of tires with the cotton casing, which gives the tires an ideal performance. This technology helps make cyclist's rides smooth and nearly effortless as the tires carry the bike across different terrains.

Verdict

Cyclists who have bought the tires like them because they have low rolling resistance, are durable, have a tubeless option, and are relatively easy to install. The tires are soft yet grippy on the road and roll really fast even on the longer rides. They corner well and some cyclists can even hear the tread hugging the corners. Even the cyclists who don't race anymore like it because they can still do long, hard ride with a group.

I highly recommend these if you consider yourself a "retired" racer but still want to ride with a high-level and high-intensity group. You can definitely put a lot of miles on the tires before you have to change them. These are a step-up from the previously reviewed Vittoria tires so if you liked those ones then these might be a good option to try.

5. Continental GatorSkin

While Continental his continued to innovate and pioneer the advancement in technology and technique in the professional biking tire market, that does not mean they have forgotten that there is a large enthusiast market for riders who are not necessarily looking to spend as much money as someone who might be training for a competitive event. Thankfully, Continental is so consistent developing new technologies for their biking tires that older models soon become the new budget option within the category, and that is precisely the case with the Continental Gatorskin.

Versatility

One of the best things about having a product that has remained a viable option in a continuously changing market is that it has time to mature so that it can offer something to everyone. This is precisely the circumstances with the Continental Gatorskin as this puncture resistant road tire offers models in 10 different sizes by far the largest selection on our list. On top of that, the Continental Gatorskin is also the least expensive puncture resistant road tire reviewed even though it was once a market leading road tire and has lost none of the benefits it brought back then.

Build

Like the Gator Hardshell that came before it, the Continental Gatorskin makes use of a number of design and construction choices that ultimately make this an incredibly durable puncture resistant road tire, and were it not for the proceeding successor, the Continental Gatorskin would be the most durable puncture resistant road tire we reviewed. This construction includes both of the standard protective layers for the Gator product line like the Polybreaker polyester reinforcement or the DuraSkin sidewalls to prevent errant punctures from pinches or debris. On top of that, this puncture resistant road tire is also made of the popular Black Carbon compound from Continental. That said, the absence of the hardshell exterior that gives the Gator Hardshell its namesake does mean that the Continental Gatorskin tires are prone to becoming tacky when wet.

6. Michelin Power Protection

The newest tire from Michelin is made with the new Michelin Bi-compound that will get you rolling more efficiently. The rubber mix is resistant to abrasion and with a thicker mix on the central tread area you'll get less wear on it.

The "Bead 2 Bead" Protek is a high-density material that is crossed laid that reinforces the protection layer. This protects the whole tire and its 3x110 TPI casing.

The Bi-compound makes it easy to put a high number of miles on the tires for training or even winter riding. Additionally, there is extra sidewall protection that helps elongate the tires and riders can rely on them.

Along with being a tough tire on the roads, it also has more grip compared to other Michelin tire models. This means that riders can safely and confidently glide over any surface type no matter the weather conditions. And, cornering is easy with dependable tires with good grip.

Verdict

Cyclists who have bought these tires say that these are a durable training tire, but can be very hard to mount when they just come out of the box. Some cyclists say that when they first mounted the tires it was like a wrestling match and they had to use multiple tire irons. To avoid this, cyclists recommend the wheels on an old set of rims to stretch them out before using them on your regular wheels. On the road, the tires corner well and they really hug the road. If you're used to a high PSI be warned that these tires only take a maximum air pressure of 116 PSI.

I recommend these tires to anyone who wants a long last tire from a reputable company. Michelin makes a variety of tires for any type of riding. They know what they're doing in the design lab. If you're used to riding on GatorSkins, this would be a comparable brand and you may even switch over to this brand.

Best Road Bike Tires for Commuting

1. Schwalbe Marathon Plus

The Schwalbe Marathon Plus is the most puncture-resistant pneumatic tire that the company makes. It's a tough tire that can take on any commute route. It rates highly for protection and durability along with road grip.

In addition to its outer values, it also was built with a few technologies worth mentioning.

First, it has a low rolling resistance because it was made with patented, 5mm thick SmartGuard layer. If you compare it to other tires, you'll notice the difference as soon as you start pedaling to work.

If you're a supporter of saving the planet, the SmartGuard was used with a proportion of cycled rubber from old latex products. You can be sure that you're buying "smart" and helping the planet with these tires.

The design team developed a special anti-aging technology that makes the sidewalls of the tires very resistant to ugly crack formation.

Last feature worth mentioning is e-bikes. The Marathon Plus tires can conform to e-bikes and they can be ridden on the streets of any major city.

Verdict

Cyclists who have bought the bike all say the tires are very reliable and even stand up to industrial roads full of debris and shrapnel. Some even "tested" out the tires and intentionally rode over the worst roads in their town and nothing. Their tires sustained through the ride.

I recommend these tires if you do a lot of commuting and ride on a variety of roads. You can easily commute with these and not feel too burdened by their weight.

2. Continental Contact Speed

The Continental Contact Speed is a great choice for those who consider themselves city speedster, single-speed bikers and fitness bikers.

The tires are made with the SafetySystem Break material, which is made of Kevlar-reinforced, high-strength nylon fabric. It makes the tires puncture and cut-resistant and light and flexible. The tires can adjust quickly to whatever type of surface bikers are on.

The design team really tried to find the right balance between rolling resistance and weight of the tire. And, they did accomplish it while protecting the tire's carcass against foreign objects and elongate the life of the tire.

In addition to being a robust and long-lasting tire, it's also one that is comfortable to ride on.

Like the previous tire, this one is also suitable for e-bikes.

Verdict

Cyclists who have bought the tires like it because it is a decent tire for the price. Most use the tires or light bike touring, day rides, and commutes to work. Mounting the tires is easy and the tires spin true once they are installed correctly. On the road, the tires have low rolling resistance and a good grip on the road.

I recommend these tires to those who want a light commuting or touring tire.

3. WTB ThickSlick Flat Guard Road Tire

The name implies it all, the tire is made with a burly casing that is made to withstand the roughest urban condition. No joking. The design is slick. And it gives you all you need to ride to and from work, no matter the weather and road conditions.

The tires are made with a nearly indestructible Flat Guard level and Urban Armor casing along with extra rubber gives the tires the best protection. This helps the tires “fight” the city streets on your way to work.

The thicker casing and sidewalls make it hard for glass, pins, staples, and other urban debris to work their way into your tires.

And to elongate the life of the tires, the design team packed in twice the amount of rubber. The extra rubber does more than give you value for the price. It also makes your commute smoother even if you’re having a bad morning.

Verdict

Cyclists who have bought the tires like them because they are tough and reliable. These cyclists are the dedicated ones who bike year-round. They all report that the tires ride smoothly on the streets and are easy to install.

I recommend these tires to those who want a durable tire that they can depend on year-round.

4. Schwalbe G-One Speed

The Schwalbe G-One Speed is a 30mm wide road race tire with the V-Guard protection. If you need a tough tire for commuting that is a little lighter than the other Schwalbe tire, then this might be a good option for you. This tire rates highly for low rolling resistance, good road grip, and protection on the road.

The V-Guard is rated at Level 5 of 6 on the puncture resistance scale. The V-Guard is an extremely cut-resistant high-tech fiber. This material makes it possible to ensure a high level of puncture resistance even on very light tires.

The Snakeskin also makes it very easy for a tubeless conversion on your bike in addition to being cut-resistant.

Verdict

Cyclists who have bought the tires like it because they're easy to install and are supple tires. The tubeless feature is a bonus for the cyclists who prefer a lighter tire, even if it isn't for racing. On the road, riders report that the tires roll very smoothly and have a good rotational mass. The tire grip very well either on the road or even light gravel. It's recommended running these tires on lower air pressure to prolong the tires' lives even more.

I recommend these tires if you regularly commute and are tired of using heavy tires. It can be a drag "hauling" them to and from work. These are lighter than other commuter tires and are a good choice if you commute on roads and some light gravel. If you ride on roads with more debris, I'd go for a heavier and more durable tire.

5. Vittoria Evolution

The Vittoria Evolution tires are best used for the city and beyond since it is a medium-width commuter tire. These tires can navigate the city surfaces with ease.

The tires feature a deep multi-surface tread design that offers comfort and grip for your bike no matter if you're riding through the city or going on a light trail ride. You can even use these tires on your mountain bike if you wish, they are that robust.

Verdict

Cyclists who have bought the tires like them because they are tough like mountain tires but can easily be used on a road or commuter bike. They are easy to get on and ride smoothly on trails or roads.

I recommend these tires to those who want a tire than can be used on both a commuter and mountain bike. They are truly versatile for biking.

Best Road Bike Tires – Buyer's Guide

Whether you are simply an enthusiast or an amateur to a professional rider, by far one of the more important choices regarding equipment that you will make involves which kind of tires you choose. If you ride your bike exclusively on the road, then it only makes sense for you to look for the best road tires available.

To begin let's talk generally about what factors will influence what type of tire you end up buying.

In an ideal world, your road bike tire would weight close to nothing, have zero rolling resistance, last forever and you'd feel as if you're floating above the ground.

Unfortunately, there's not a tire out there.

Whether you're purchasing a new bike or just looking to upgrade your current tires, it's important to understand which options are best suited to your particular bike. This includes consideration of the type of tire, size, thread count, and pressure capacity.

Types of Bikes and Bike Tires

First, let's review common bike models and the general conditions for which each is best suited:

Road bikes are ideal for fast rides on smooth, even terrain. The tires are narrow and light. There is little use for tread: most road bike tires are smooth, allowing them to ride fast in dry conditions. The grip is essentially a result of rubber on the surface of the road – even in wet conditions, a regular road bike tire has a larger contact area and therefore an adequate grip.

Gravel bikes are designed for use on a combination of different surfaces like trails, grass, gravel, and pavement. The tires are wider and provide more stability and traction when riding off-road. The amount of tread depends on riding conditions. If you're riding in mud, you'll want a gravel bike tire with separated knobs and sharper edges: they won't wear down as easily because of the softer conditions. If you're riding in mixed conditions, you'll want gravel tires with round knobs because they'll offer traction and grip while still allowing you to move reasonably fast.

Track bikes, intended for indoor or outdoor tracks or 'velodromes', use smooth, narrow tires, inflated with high air pressure to decrease rolling resistance. Typically tubular tires are used, although clinchers are still an option.

Mountain bikes are best for use on unpaved trails and are great for shock absorption and damage protection from obstacles like rocks. They have wide tires with knobby treads (allowing for better grip when riding on dirt, gravel, or sand) and a smaller wheel diameter. Because they are heavier they are less efficient on roads. The maximum grip is achieved when running these tires at the lowest air pressure possible.

Types of Bike Tires

There are three types of bike tires: clincher, tubular, and tubeless tires.

Clincher Road Bike Tires

The most common type of tire is a clincher. The clincher consists of a tire and an inner tube, made of latex or rubber. Everything is held in place using air pressure. The 'bead' (the edge of the tire) tucks into the rim and the tube sits inside. On less expensive tires, wire beads are used. Higher quality tires use Kevlar beads because they're more flexible, making them easier to get off the rim. They're foldable, which is ideal for compact storage – especially if you're carrying a spare on your bike. Kevlar beads also won't stretch with constant tube changing, but this can also make them a little harder to mount on the rim. Wire-beaded tires aren't foldable but can be twisted into smaller loops. Just be careful not to leave a tire with wire beads bent for too long; they hold their shape (even when not mounted) so this can create a kink which will affect the fit. Wire beaded tires may stretch over time, compromising the fit of the tire. When it comes to clinchers, different options are easy to find and there's a wide price range.

Essentially, a clincher tire is made of almost two different parts: the outer casing and a smaller inner tube. This type of tire differs from the other two primarily by the way that it connects to the wheel rim.
Instead of needing to be glued, taped, or otherwise adhered and sealed to the wheel rim, the clincher type of road tire is designed simply to hook onto the wheel rim. This is incredibly convenient and makes changing a flat tire much easier than with the other types of road tires.

Clinchers are the easiest of the three to change if you get a flat mid-ride. For most riders, it takes less than 10 minutes to get everything together by the roadside. That is if you have a repair kit with you.
The one downside is the vulnerability to flats especially if you're biking with lower tire pressure.

Clincher tires come in two varieties: folding and non-folding.
Folding clinchers are lighter and easier to transport and change. Non-folding clinchers are heavier and a bit more awkward to carry around.

Pros: Cheaper, plenty of tire choices, and easy to fix.
Cons: Vulnerable to pinch flats.

Tubular Road Bike Tires

Tubular tires or 'sew ups' don't have beads, making them lighter than clinchers. A tubular is sewn around a tube and glued to a special rim. Because the tube is sewn inside the tire, it's just a single piece (while a clincher is two). After mounting a tubular tire on the rim, you'll need about 24 hours for the glue to dry. Some athletes choose tubulars because they have a higher inflation limit and in turn, lower rolling resistance. They also have a higher thread count and won't wear as quickly. In practice, this can provide a great many benefits to the rider which is a large part of why it is the type of tire of choice for professional road bike riders.
Tubular road tires are often the most durable on the road due to the fact that the inner tube's position within the casing protects it further from internal puncture threats. Tubular tires are also known for providing many riders with what they consider to be a superior feel though this is an entirely subjective perception and does not in any way demonstrate an evidentiary advantage. That said, one of the best qualities about a tubular road tire is that they can still be ridden if they get a flat. So long as the adhesive does not separate the casing from the wheel rim, you can keep riding a tubular tire which is important for long distance training or marathon competitions.

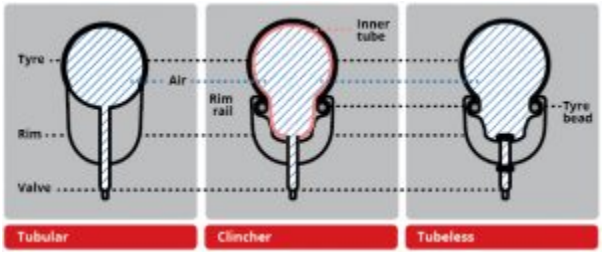
Still, some athletes prefer to avoid sew ups because of the challenge of changing a flat. The glue makes the tire harder to get off, and you'll need to replace the entire tire to get moving again. Because of this, clinchers are typically regarded as the more convenient option. Others are adamant about the benefits of sew ups and

opt to use protective sealants before and/or during the race if needed.

Pros: Minimal rolling resistance.
Cons: Hard to replace if you get a flat mid-ride.

Tubeless Road Bike Tires

When it comes to mountain biking, tubeless tires are typically used. The bead locks into the rim but no inner tube is necessary; air is pumped directly into the tire. Because they use lower air pressure, these tires provide better traction. While pinch flats aren't possible (there's no tube to pinch), any significant impact or force on a tubeless tire can cause damage or release of air.



The main thing to remember about tubeless road tires is that they do not deal with stress to the wheel rim as well as tubular or clincher tires do.

To have the proper sealing on your tubeless tires, you need a tubeless compatible rim, a special valve, and an optional sealant.
Compared to clinchers, tubeless tires aren't as vulnerable to flats as clinchers. And, with tubeless tires, you have the advantage of inserting a spare tube if the sealant fails to the seal the flat.

Pros: Low rolling resistance due to the absence of inner tubes.
Cons: Tire choices are limited, but are still growing.

Rolling Resistance

I've talked about rolling resistance in the previous section when comparing the different types of tires.

But what exactly is it?
Air and rolling resistance are the two main forces that work against you as a cyclist on the road.

Rolling resistance occurs from the tire flexing where it touches the road. The tire's rubber and casing flex and un-flex, and some of the energy needed to flex the tires is absorbed in the process and turned into heat.

This process is more obvious for bigger forces and energies such as your car tires. If you ever notice your tires heat up this is the reason.

What affects rolling resistance?
A number of factors affect this resistance such as your tire's width, treat thickness and material, casing thickness and material and tread pattern. I'll speak a little more about these factors in the following sections.

Tire makers spend a lot of time analyzing these factors to reduce rolling resistance.

Materials

The sheer number of material used for the best puncture resistant road tyres is vast with each major manufacturer designing their own proprietary blend. This means that very few puncture resistant road tires will carry the same ingredients unless they are made out of some generalized mono or triple compound. That said, even the generic compounds of puncture resistant road tires are significantly more durable and get better mileage than your average road tire and will certainly provide more durability when compared to a speed road tire.

One thing to keep in mind regarding the materials of a puncture resistant road tire is that there will often be different layers. Aside from the fact that the puncture resistant road tire's main body is already made out of one of the innumerable compound formulae, puncture resistant road tires are often reinforced with one or more additional layers of protection or support. Sometimes the layers can be localized to a specific part of the tire to provide protection to a specific area of the tire that might otherwise be left unprotected and act as the veritable chink in the armor.

With the additional layers of protection, each layer can and often is made out of a different material. In this case, you will often need to choose between strength and flexibility as the materials used for reinforcement are fibrous in nature and must balance the two qualities, though certain materials with incredible torsion strength, like Kevlar, are sometimes used for professional road tires. That said, the materials used for these components are generally synthetic in nature and judged on their thread count.
For the actual composition, all puncture resistant road tires will include some amount of rubber though the actual amount can vary a great deal being less than half of the compound's composition. The remaining amounts of material will generally be used to fine tune how the rubber responds and what specifically it is best at.
For instance, there are additives used in different types of road tires to give them their specialized function. It is already fairly well-known that a puncture resistant road tire and a sprinting road tire will contain different materials in the compound of their tire, but even within the puncture resistant road tire market, there can be significant differences in the specific approach and intended strengths of a given puncture resistant road tire.

One puncture resistant road tire may use an ingredient that is designed to prevent the rubber in the road tire from breaking down to increase the mileage. However, deciding to favor the mileage of the puncture resistant road tire over other qualities means that you will ultimately be forced to sacrifice in some other aspect as there is no compound found yet which is universally the best at all things.
As such, when choosing a puncture resistant road tire, it is important to ignore whatever terms the manufacturer uses to sell the compound and instead focus on what does that compound do best. For all of the major manufacturers, this is not too terribly difficult as they pride themselves on specializing their product lines, so each type of rider in all settings can find the best puncture resistant road tire for their needs.

Bike Tire Size and Width

The recommended size and pressure for a tire are both usually listed on the edge of the wheel. For example, a typical road bike tire might be 700x23 and 700x25. In this case, 700 is the diameter and 23 is the width (in millimeters). While the wheel diameter must match the diameter of the tire you purchase, you can typically select a smaller or larger width based on your preferences. Generally a narrow tire will have less rolling resistance but will also offer less comfort. These are best for cyclists who want something more lightweight that allows them to ride faster. They are generally around 20-23mm, with 23mm being a popular option for training and racing. Wider tires are generally between 25-28mm (35mm for gravel) and optimal for longer training rides or commuting when you want increased durability and a more comfortable ride.

Pressure Capacity

The pounds per square inch (psi) varies by tire size and is listed on the outer wall of the tire. On a road bike, a maximum (like 120 psi) is listed. You'll want to get as close to this maximum as possible. (Most floor pumps have a gauge to tell you the exact psi as you're pumping.) With mountain bikes, it can be a range (for example, 35 to 65 psi). Normally you'll want a lower psi with a mountain bike because this enables the tires to absorb shock when riding on rough terrain. A rule of thumb: lower pressure = more traction. A narrower tire (as used on a road bike) needs more pressure. Higher tire pressure enables you to ride faster with less effort, but also provides less traction. If you inflate the tire too much you'll have less stability and are more likely to blow the tube. If you inflate the tires too little, you can have issues with pinch flats. The weight of the cyclist is also important to note. In general, a lighter cyclist will require a lower psi, and conversely a heavier cyclist will require a higher level of air pressure.

Tread Pattern

If you've ever ridden a motorcycle you understand the importance of tread patterns and how it can keep you safe while riding.
Unlike a motorcycle, when you're biking on concrete it doesn't matter what grip shape the designer has carved into the tread.

Threads per inch (tpi) are an important performance factor. These fabric threads run parallel around the tire between the beads. A thinner, more flexible tire will have a higher tpi. These tires will have lower rolling resistance, are typically a little lighter than average, and will conform to the road's surface. (This is especially important when cornering.) However, they're also more prone to damage than a tire with a lower tpi. A typical road bike clincher averages at about 120 tpi (the full range starts around 60 tpi and goes all the way up to 320 tpi on very high end clincher or tubular tires) with a single sheet of casing, while a mountain bike tire is about 60 tpi with two layers of casing, making them more resistant to damage. To make it simple: If you're looking for a high-mileage tire, a lower tpi is best. For better performance, a higher tpi is your best bet.

Tube Choice

Tubes can actually make a significant difference on your tire performance.
The thinner, lighter, and more flexible the tube, the less effect it will have on the rolling resistance.

What are your options for light tubes?
Most high-end racing tubes have latex tubes instead of black butyl rubber. Besides being lighter, latex tubes provide a bit of puncture resistance as they are flexible to stretch around a sharp object rather than being punctured by it. However, the downside is that latex lets out a lot of air so you will need to pump air into your tires every time you ride.

Another popular option is polyurethane, which has the advantage of being light like latex, but it actually retains air very well. The downside is that it's not as flexible as latex so it needs to be precisely matched to your tire size.

Weight

When you shop for a tire, you can read how much it weighs on its product description, but the tires are such as small part total bike weight and rider. The weight is so small that it would be hard to notice the difference while riding.

However, tire makers have embarked on their quest to make tires as light as they can, which reduces the rolling resistance and makes the tire feel faster on the road. To do this, manufacturers use light casing and thin tread rubber layers.

Of course, this means, very light tires are not very durable and can puncture very easily. Just be prepared to deal with changing flats more often if you upgrade to the lightest tires.

Folding or Rigid Tires

To add on to the previous section:
Nearly all have been made from Kevlar, which allows them to be folded for easy storage and transport. Kevlar is lighter than traditional steel wire bead tires, but its resistance to stretch can make folding tires harder to fit when it comes time to change a tire.

Puncture Resistance

There are many different subcategories of road bike tires, but few are as versatile and as good of an option for more riders then puncture resistant road tires. This group of road tires takes the smooth ride and long mileage of your standard road tire and reinforces the tire with various forms of protection to ensure that you do not get a flat from an external puncture.
To begin, tires come with different levels of puncture protection with an extra layer of material to help prevent punctures.

This extra layer is often called a puncture protection belt or TPI (threads per inch).

Threads per inch or tpi is often considered a good shorthand for judging how much puncture resistance a given tire has. However, it should be understood that the tpi only tells half of the story and should only be seen as that deciding factor if both puncture resistant road tires use the same materials and techniques. This is because not all protective materials are going to be equal.

For example, a kevlar layer that has a lower tpi than one made of polyester is still liable to provide better puncture resistance specifically because the material in question is that much stronger. Likewise, the way that the threads are then woven can add significantly more strength against punctures.
TPI is the grade of fabrics used to manufacture the casing of the tire.

A higher TPI means that the tire was made with finer threads, denser weave and a suppler tire, which leads to lower rolling resistance.

When You Need to Replace Your Tires

At some point, you'll need to replace your tires and sometimes it's hard to decide.

Some tires such as Continentals have Tire Wear Indicators on them. Often there are two holes on the tires and when they disappear, you know it's time to change your tires.

Don't fret if your tires don't have Tire Wear Indicators. All you need to do is look closely at your tires and be mindful of what type of surfaces you have ridden on.

Here are the most common signs to look for:

- A lot of cuts and grazes
- A flattish rather than curved contact patch. This would be common after you put a lot of mile and hours on your bike trainer
- Small crack lines

Conclusion

As we can see, there is no puncture resistant road tire which will be unanimously the best puncture resistant road tire for all riders. There are some riders out there who will need to contend with unpredictable city roads while other riders will have the relative peace and luxury of a little-used back road or two.

If you have no distractions to worry about, by far the best road bike tire we reviewed is the Continental Grand Prix 5000. While it is not necessarily the best in any given category, it does have the highest tpi count at 330 and is an all-around great puncture resistant road tire that can provide a modest improvement to all elements of your ride while still being nigh-impregnable.

On the other hand, if you find yourself forced to ride in chaotic city streets, we recommend the Continental Grand Prix 4-Season. While it may not necessarily achieve the greatest speeds that we saw, it is by far one of, if not, the most durable puncture resistant road tires that we saw with patented and focused layers or

protection at every point of the tire’s construction. It is also more reasonably priced than many other puncture resistant road tires we saw.