

Every time we perform a test in the magazine, we receive reader questions about our procedures. In the case of our most recent Solo tire test, the question that arrived most in our inbox was about tire pressure optimization. So here's how we did what we did.

When asked, nearly all tire manufacturers offer a starting pressure recommendation, so we always request starting pressures and alignment suggestions from the manufacturers. A manufacturer's pressure recommendations, however, will only get you in the ballpark; manufacturers are making recommendations based on generalities, not your particular car setup and surface conditions.

In some of our testing, we also use a car with a proven performance record. In those cases, we take into consideration the pressures used on that car in Solo competition. If you're starting from scratch, ask a competitor with a similar car and setup what pressures they run.

Once equipped with a starting pressure and a car with a set alignment, a series of test runs through the Solo course allows us to learn the course and scrub tires - at the same time, we use a probe pyrometer to check tire temperatures at the tire's belt package. We then adjust tire pressures to optimize the contact patch as needed. If the outside of the tire is the hottest spot (which is typically the case), we increase tire pressures in no more than 2psi increments, then retest. If the middle or the inside of the tire is the hottest, we decrease tire pressures. We continue this process until the inside-to-outside temperature spread is no more than 50 degrees F, with an ideal spread closer to 20 degrees F. Follow these steps, and soon you'll know your Solo car's ideal tire pressures, too. 🏁

UNDER PRESSURE

How we prepare for our Solo tire tests

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