

2009 Escape Special Features

NEW TIRE HELPS ROLL BETTER FUEL ECONOMY INTO FORD ESCAPE, MERCURY MARINER FOR 2009 MODEL YEAR

The 2009 Ford Escape and 2009 Mercury Mariner are rolling out a new set of tires for improved fuel economy.

These two fuel-efficient and environmentally friendly SUVs boast a projected 1 mpg fuel economy improvement for both four- and six-cylinder models, thanks in part to a new set of 16-inch Michelin Latitude Tour low-rolling-resistance tires.

Ford and Michelin collaborated to optimize the tires' mold design and implement a new-generation tread stock for the new Latitude Tour tire. Low-rolling-resistance tires are part of a multifaceted Ford approach to improving fuel economy. Other initiatives include the introduction of energy-efficient, six-speed automatic transmissions and more fuel efficient engine technologies.

The P235/70R16 tires are standard for all Escape and Mariner models, including hybrids.

A five-spoke, 16-inch by-7-inch cast aluminum wheel design is offered as standard equipment on Escape XLS and XLT. Hybrid models have a unique design with a different five-spoke pattern. Higher specification models, such as Escape Limited and Escape Limited Hybrid, feature a standard bright machined aluminum wheel in a six-spoke, 16-inch by-7-inch design.

Mercury Mariner I-4 and V-6 models feature a six-spoke, 16-inch by-7-inch painted aluminum wheel, while Premier and Premier V-6 models offer a 12-spoke machined aluminum wheel design.

In addition to improved fuel economy, the new tire is quieter, and Ford engineers say it delivers more precise handling, responsive steering and helps shorten braking distances. Escape and Mariner drivers also will notice reduced road noise and tire wear as well as better performance in wet and snow conditions.

Because tires are the only part of the vehicle in direct contact with the road surface, they need to be specifically designed for each vehicle, providing optimum balance between vehicle dynamics and tire performance.

Developing tires is a lengthy process, as improvements to one feature, such as wear, will affect another, such as steering. The new tire design for Escape and Mariner is the result of extensive development and testing. By the end of this process, Ford and Michelin had developed a tire that could meet Ford's stringent targets, including the main goal of lowering rolling resistance.

The technical partnership between Ford and Michelin highlights a mutual corporate goal: becoming more sustainable within the auto industry.

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About Ford Motor Company

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