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OUR BEST ALL-SEASON TYRE NAMED

Auto EXPRESS

**BRITAIN'S BEST-SELLING
WEEKLY CAR MAGAZINE**

DRY TESTING



WET TESTING



SNOW TESTING



WINNER

CONTINENTAL ALLSEASONCONTACT

Continental has created a strong performer in the AllSeasonContact, with good results in the wet, even better scores in the snow, and low resistance helping your fuel bills.





ALL-SEASON TYRE TEST 2020

The UK's variable weather makes it a prime market for all-season tyres, but which set should you choose?



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AE BOOMING sales mean that all-season tyres are not just the focus for drivers looking to deal with extreme conditions, but also producers, who are updating or expanding their ranges to meet demand. The pace of change means that several new tyres have been launched since our test started in early March, too.

Our all-season test faced the same challenges as our winter one, so although our snow and wet tests were completed before the pandemic struck Europe, quarantine requirements meant we had to forego our usual dry handling assessment. However, while this has a greater role in all-season tyres than for winter designs,

it's still not a key performance area. To ensure we still had a set of useful results, proving ground staff completed dry braking and cabin noise tests on our behalf.

We return to the popular 225/45 R17 size here, and bought samples to ensure we tested what you can buy. Goodyear and Hankook supplied their samples, but we later ensured these were the same as those on sale by comparing wet braking results with purchased sets.

There's been a change of focus in some all-season tyres, with a greater emphasis on wet and dry performance at the expense of snow grip. Continental, with its new generation of all-season tyres, took the win when we last tested this size. Will it prevail again, or will the more winter-focused tyres succeed?

SNOW TESTING



CURTAILED While our snow tests were completed, dry testing was restricted

DRY TESTING

WET TESTING

WHAT WE TESTED



WE bought what the maker specified in terms of speed and weight ratings. Speed ratings covered V (up to 150mph) to Y (up to 186mph). We've included each tyre's EU label, too, with A being the best for economy (RR) and wet grip (WG). The pass-by noise figure (N) is in decibels, and the lower it is, the better.

Continental AllSeasonContact
 RATINGS: 94 V RR: C WG: B N: 72

Cooper Discoverer All Season
 RATINGS: 94 W RR: C WG: B N: 70

Goodyear Vector 4Seasons Gen-3
 RATINGS: 94 W RR: C WG: B N: 70

Hankook Kinergy 4S2
 RATINGS: 94 W RR: C WG: B N: 70

Michelin CrossClimate+
 RATINGS: 94 W RR: C WG: B N: 69

Vredestein Quatrac Pro
 RATINGS: 94 Y RR: E WG: B N: 71



RIGOROUS
 Our test equipment helped us to accurately measure performance

HOW WE TESTED

WE SNOW We broke new ground this year with our winter testing because, despite returning to Ivalo in northern Finland once again, we were at a new facility – Hankook’s Technotrac. It’s next door to the Test World facility we used with the Korean producer in 2016, and features two handling circuits plus areas for straight-line tests.

We used the 1,200m flat handling track, which combined long sweeps that allowed the tyre’s balance to be assessed, with tighter sections testing lateral grip and traction on lock. Average lap times provided the result. Traction and braking were combined into one test, timing how long it took to accelerate from 12-31mph and then the distance taken to slow to 6mph. An average of several runs was used.

WET It was back to the familiar surroundings of the Contidrom near Hanover, Germany, for wet testing. No need to learn the handling track here because we’ve completed hundreds of laps around the circuit, which weaves its way through trees inside the banked oval. Average times from a series of laps formed the result.

On the way to the handling track we timed 10 laps around the wet circle, which provided a measure of pure lateral wet grip. The site’s rail system ensured that every stop in the braking test was done on same piece of tarmac. We measured the distance taken to stop from 50mph, and did a series of runs to get a result.

The rail was used again for straight aquaplaning, where the car was accelerated with one wheel in 9mm of water. The speed where the tyre in the water was spinning 15 per cent faster than the other – the point where control is lost – was measured over multiple runs. The water depth dropped to 6mm for the lateral test, where the car was driven at increasing speeds around a large

tarmac circle with one section flooded. Lateral g-force was measured until all grip was lost through the flooded track.

DRY No handling tests this year thanks to travel restrictions, but proving ground staff completed braking, measuring the distance taken to stop from 62mph. An average of stops was used to get the result.

ROLLING RESISTANCE Key for fuel economy, this measures, to industry standards, the force required to roll a weighted tyre. To see a one per cent change in fuel consumption requires around a five per cent movement in rolling resistance.

NOISE Unlike the EU label, which measures pass-by noise using specially sealed cars to

focus on what the tyre generates, our test focused on cabin levels. This year it was measured at 62mph on smooth tarmac.

PRICE We used online tyre retailer and multiple Auto Express test winner Black Circles to provide our fully fitted prices. The figures are what it charged at the time of writing; if it does not stock a tyre, the cost is what it would charge. Price plays a small role in the overall ranking, because our test prioritises performance and safety.

Picking a winner

TO reflect the UK’s weather, snow performance was 10 per cent of the overall result, with wet representing 50 per cent and the remainder split between the other tests.

Essentially we converted the results into percentages. These were then added together, with weighting in each category designed to ensure tests with a wide performance difference did not have undue influence on the result. We also focused on the safety-critical tests – braking and handling. In each tyre’s results, the winner was rated at 100 per cent and the rivals ranked relative to that benchmark.

“A rail system ensured that every stop in the braking test was on the same piece of tarmac”



FINDING A TYRE FOR ALL SEASONS

Our 2020 test was slightly curtailed by the pandemic, but we still put our contenders through their paces where it mattered

DRY TESTING



TESTING TIMES
 While our evaluations in the dry were restricted, we still gathered a comprehensive set of results in the snow and wet to find our all-season champion

SNOW TESTING



NOISE TESTING



WET TESTING



6 Vredestein Quatrac Pro



SPORTY
 Vredestein's offering is geared towards the performance car market, but a lack of grip pegged back its scores



Overall 96.9%

Price **£110.21**

Snow braking	88.3%	6th
Snow traction	91.6%	6th
Snow handling	94.9%	6th
Straight aquaplaning	92.3%	6th
Curved aquaplaning	75.8%	5th
Wet braking	97.6%	5th
Wet handling	98.5%	5th
Wet circle	100%	1st
Dry braking	91.9%	5th
Rolling resistance	81.7%	6th
Cabin noise	99.7%	3rd

WE SAY...

THE one-time go-to all-season tyre producer has been overtaken by rivals and needs to work on snow performance and fuel economy.

Blackcircles.com says...

NOT a very high-selling model – but customers who do buy are happy with the tyre, leaving reviews that highlight its wet grip and scoring it 4.8 out of five overall.

ME THE Dutch tyre maker dominated the all-season sector when it was a much smaller market, and it returns to our test here for the first time since 2016.

The Quatrac Pro is designed for the performance end of the market, and our 17-inch tyre is the starting point for the range. That focus on high performance and tarmac grip with an asymmetric tread

(the only one here) may have been behind its relatively poor showing.

On snow it finished some seven per cent behind the pace-setting Continental and needed three more metres to stop in the braking test. The lack of grip was evident behind the wheel, where it moved more easily than rivals and lacked balance, with the front pushing wide until it gripped,

provoking the rear to slide. It was closer to the pace in the wet, where it scored a surprise win in the close circle test.

In braking it was around a metre behind the winning Hankook, but a match for most rivals. It was similar story on the handling track, where it felt secure, but a touch behind its rivals. A poor fuel economy result ensured it finished sixth.

5 Cooper Discoverer All Season

QUIETEST
 Cooper's tyre proved to be the quietest in our noise test, yet its on-track performance was a step behind the best



Overall 97.1%

Price **£82.25**

Snow braking	96.4%	3rd
Snow traction	91.9%	5th
Snow handling	96.8%	3rd
Straight aquaplaning	95.6%	3rd
Curved aquaplaning	95.3%	2nd
Wet braking	92.7%	6th
Wet handling	93.7%	6th
Wet circle	95.1%	6th
Dry braking	98.4%	2nd
Rolling resistance	88.4%	4th
Cabin noise	100%	1st

WE SAY...

A WELL balanced tyre that struggles to match the performance of the top tyres, but is the one to pick if ride comfort is your priority.

Blackcircles.com says...

AT the time of writing Blackcircles.com doesn't currently hold stock of this tyre, so we are unable to provide any insight into the tyre's popularity or performance with our customers.

ME AS with the Vredestein, this was launched in 2019 as Cooper followed rivals by adding an all-season tyre to its European range. And there was little to choose between the pair in this test.

Like the Quatrac Pro, the Discoverer scored one win, this time in the closely matched cabin noise test. It also proved adept in the deep-water aquaplaning tests

where it finished second and third. But results in shallower depths saw it at the bottom of the pack and the worst performer across all wet tests by a clear margin. It needed more than two metres more to stop than the test-winning Hankook.

The lack of grip could be felt on the front track where the tyre had a decent balance, although this was at lower speeds than its

rivals. It was more effective on snow where it was fourth best, albeit a step behind the leaders. It took a podium in braking, but again the good handling balance was achieved at lower speeds than the best.

A podium in our sole dry test wasn't enough to keep it in touch with the front runners or improve on its 2019 result, where we saw similar characteristics.

4 Michelin CrossClimate+



PERFORMER
 Michelin sacrificed snow grip for better performance in mixed conditions, and it was impressive in the dry



Overall 98.8%

Price **£105.00**

Snow braking	93.6%	4th
Snow traction	100%	1st
Snow handling	97%	2nd
Straight aquaplaning	92.4%	5th
Curved aquaplaning	64.9%	6th
Wet braking	98.8%	4th
Wet handling	98.6%	4th
Wet circle	98.6%	4th
Dry braking	100%	1st
Rolling resistance	90.6%	3rd
Cabin noise	98.1%	5th

WE SAY...

LACKED the wet performance we've seen before, but it still starred in the dry and continued to impress on snow.

Blackcircles.com says...

WITH more than 8,000 customer reviews for the CrossClimate range and sizes up to 20 inches, these tyres are extremely popular and consistently rated very highly, at 4.7 out of five.

ME IF there was one tyre that would be most affected by our inability to complete the dry handling test, it was this 'summer tyre with winter capability'.

Michelin has sacrificed outright snow performance to focus on more common wet and dry conditions, but its winter capability is still mightily impressive given the nature of the design and its dry performance – rival

engineers have admitted they're not quite sure how Michelin does it.

There are no grip-boosting sipes in the conventional sense, yet the tyre's performance on snow was often better than traditional winter-style designs. It was an impressive third at the handling track, with a very stable rear and good traction out of turns on lock – a problem for many

tyres. Overall it ranked third on the white stuff, matching the new Goodyear.

That good balance and traction carried over to the wet track, but it was further off the pace than we've seen before. Deep water was its biggest drawback, with a poor result in the lateral test hurting its overall score. We can't wait to try the recently announced third-generation version.

3 Hankook Kinergy 4S2

RAINMASTER
 As with Michelin, Hankook sacrificed snow grip, this time for improved performance in the wet



Overall 99.6%

Price **£87.50**

Snow braking	92%	5th
Snow traction	95.8%	4th
Snow handling	96.6%	4th
Straight aquaplaning	100%	1st
Curved aquaplaning	100%	1st
Wet braking	100%	1st
Wet handling	99.6%	3rd
Wet circle	98.5%	5th
Dry braking	98.3%	3rd
Rolling resistance	87.2%	5th
Cabin noise	98%	6th

WE SAY...

A TYRE well suited to UK conditions with strong performance in the wet, although snow grip and fuel economy need attention.

Blackcircles.com says...

ALTHOUGH some sizes come with label scores that could be improved, customers have been very happy with the tyre – scoring it 4.7 out of five and commending its winter performance.

ME WHILE the Michelin is unashamedly aimed at performance in the wet and dry, Hankook has set similar, if not quite as extreme, targets for the Kinergy 4S2.

As we saw last year in 16-inch form, this Hankook is weakest when there's snow on the ground. It only managed to outperform the struggling Vredestein in our northern Finland tests. It was close behind the

Cooper, but the dry-focused Michelin also had the better of it. Initial front grip was good around the handling track, but it dropped away as the lock increased.

The Kinergy was much more effective in the wet and at warmer temperatures, and topped our wet tests by a narrow margin. It aced the deep-water tests with two victories and managed to maintain

that form at shallower depths – while we were waiting for the front to hook up on snow, it was sharp and lively in the wet.

It also had a stable rear, despite a strong front end. It was good on the brakes, too, triggering the ABS less than many rivals. In dry braking it was third, but a poor rolling-resistance result meant it just missed the runner-up spot.

2 Goodyear Vector 4Seasons Gen-3



CONSISTENT
With nine podiums out of 11 tests, it's clear that Goodyear knows how to produce an all-season tyre



Overall 99.7%
Price **£110.03**

Snow braking	96.6%	2nd
Snow traction	98.6%	2nd
Snow handling	96.5%	5th
Straight aquaplaning	99.2%	2nd
Curved aquaplaning	88.2%	3rd
Wet braking	99.3%	2nd
Wet handling	99.9%	2nd
Wet circle	99.9%	2nd
Dry braking	91.2%	6th
Rolling resistance	95%	2nd
Cabin noise	99.9%	2nd

WE SAY...

IT didn't follow up its predecessor's win, but the Vector 4Seasons had good performance in poor conditions and improved economy.

Blackcircles.com says...

LAUNCHED this year, this tyre looks set to add to the great reputation of the range – its predecessor was a popular tyre, with a score of 4.7 out of five from more than 800 reviews.

IT'S little to choose between this latest Vector 4Seasons and the Hankook, with the choice depending on your priorities. The Goodyear retains the snow ability of its 2019 test-winning Gen-2 predecessor, although it lost out to Continental on the white stuff this year. It did have a clear advantage over the Hankook with a pair of runner-up spots in

braking and traction, but there was no podium on the handling track. Here it lacked the balance of the best, with front grip unable to match the stable rear. It narrowly gave best to the Hankook across the wet tests, but had good results in both deep and shallow water. It was a match for the Continental and felt similar on track with a strong front matched by a

stable rear with good braking. In poor conditions it had the edge over the Hankook. It was a different story in the dry, where it was last while the Korean tyre was among the best. The biggest difference over its predecessor was in fuel economy. The new tyre was second, while the Gen-2 was sixth in 16-inch form last year.

1 Continental AllSeasonContact

SURPRISE
It's designed to deliver a strong performance in wet and dry conditions, but the Continental impressed on snow



Overall 100%
Price **£103.94**

Snow braking	100%	1st
Snow traction	98.5%	3rd
Snow handling	100%	1st
Straight aquaplaning	94.5%	4th
Curved aquaplaning	77.6%	4th
Wet braking	98.9%	3rd
Wet handling	100%	1st
Wet circle	99.3%	3rd
Dry braking	92.2%	5th
Rolling resistance	100%	1st
Cabin noise	99%	4th

WE SAY...

ANOTHER win for the AllSeasonContact, which yet again manages a balance across all disciplines. A great all-rounder.

Blackcircles.com says...

THIS tyre has been praised by those who buy it – many reviews focus on the impressive wet grip and low noise levels, giving it an overall score of 4.7 out of five.

CONTINENTAL was a latecomer to the all-season party once it had set aside its policy of changing tyres for the seasons. But it has been competitive from the off and this victory backs up a debut win and second spot last year. It could be seen as a less extreme CrossClimate with more of a focus on dry and wet grip than many of its rivals. That

didn't stop it dominating the snow tests, though, with no rival getting within two per cent of its results. It was easy to see why from behind the wheel, with lots of grip and traction backed by a great balance. It was a touch behind the Hankook and Goodyear in the wet, where it was better in shallow rather than deeper water. It particularly struggled in the curved test,

where it finished a way off the Hankook. It was good to drive on the handling track, though, with a stable rear and grip being maintained well as the lock went on. The dry was its weakest area, finishing around four metres behind the pace-setting Michelin. But add a top score for fuel economy and you have another victory for the German producer.

Continental lifts the crown RESULTS

DRY BRAKING

1st	Michelin	100%
2nd	Cooper	98.4%
3rd	Hankook	98.3%
4th	Continental	92.2%
5th	Vredestein	91.9%
6th	Goodyear	91.2%

ROLLING RESISTANCE

1st	Continental	100%
2nd	Goodyear	95.0%
3rd	Michelin	90.6%
4th	Cooper	88.4%
5th	Hankook	87.2%
6th	Vredestein	81.7%



WITH the popularity of SUVs, where sharp handling isn't a priority, and our more extreme weather, there's no ignoring the new-found importance of all-season tyres. Your choice will depend on the weather you deal with and your vehicle. For Vredestein, its Quatrac Pro is aimed at faster cars and it struggled in our snow and wet tests. US maker Cooper edged ahead thanks to a win in the cabin noise assessment and a good dry result. Michelin will rue the loss of our dry handling tests, although it didn't deliver the wet performance we've seen in the past, either. Goodyear and Hankook were closely matched, with the former better in snow, the latter best in the dry. However, it's the Continental that has the best mix of grip in poor conditions, plus fuel economy.

"There's no ignoring the new-found importance of all-season tyres"

SNOW BRAKING

1st	Continental	100%
2nd	Goodyear	96.6%
3rd	Cooper	96.4%
4th	Michelin	93.6%
5th	Hankook	92.0%
6th	Vredestein	88.3%

SNOW TRACTION

1st	Michelin	100%
2nd	Goodyear	98.6%
3rd	Continental	98.5%
4th	Hankook	95.8%
5th	Cooper	91.9%
6th	Vredestein	91.6%

SNOW HANDLING

1st	Continental	100%
2nd	Michelin	97.0%
3rd	Cooper	96.8%
4th	Hankook	96.6%
5th	Goodyear	96.5%
6th	Vredestein	94.9%

STRAIGHT AQUAPLANING

1st	Hankook	100%
2nd	Goodyear	99.2%
3rd	Cooper	95.6%
4th	Continental	94.5%
5th	Michelin	92.4%
6th	Vredestein	92.3%

CURVED AQUAPLANING

1st	Hankook	100%
2nd	Cooper	95.3%
3rd	Goodyear	88.2%
4th	Continental	77.6%
5th	Vredestein	75.8%
6th	Michelin	64.9%

WET BRAKING

1st	Hankook	100%
2nd	Goodyear	99.3%
3rd	Continental	98.9%
4th	Michelin	98.8%
5th	Vredestein	97.6%
6th	Cooper	92.7%

WET HANDLING

1st	Continental	100%
2nd	Goodyear	99.9%
3rd	Hankook	99.6%
4th	Michelin	98.6%
5th	Vredestein	98.5%
6th	Cooper	93.7%

WET CIRCLE

1st	Vredestein	100%
2nd	Goodyear	99.9%
3rd	Continental	99.3%
4th	Michelin	98.6%
5th	Hankook	98.5%
6th	Cooper	95.1%

CABIN NOISE

1st	Cooper	100%
2nd	Goodyear	99.9%
3rd	Vredestein	99.7%
4th	Continental	99.0%
5th	Michelin	98.1%
6th	Hankook	98.0%

OVERALL

1st	Continental	100%
2nd	Goodyear	99.7%
3rd	Hankook	99.6%
4th	Michelin	98.8%
5th	Cooper	97.1%
6th	Vredestein	96.9%

1st Continental AllSeasonContact

CONTINENTAL has created a strong performer in the AllSeasonContact, with good results in the wet, even better scores in the snow, and low resistance helping your fuel bills.

