

AutoSock: What is acceptable wear and tear?

We cannot emphasise too often that AutoSock should only be used as a temporary measure to "get you moving again", to "get you out of trouble". AutoSock might well be used, for example, to get down to the main road in the morning, and to get back home in the evening, bearing in mind that it is standard practice for the local authorities to plough and salt the main roads, but not the side roads.

AutoSock are not in any way a substitute for winter tyres, although many people fit them to winter tyres when these no longer grip. Most people in the UK use them on summer tyres.

AutoSock are made of fabric, and are particularly likely to wear fast when driven on lumpy ice, or on tarmac. They will last much better when driven on soft fresh snow. How you decide to use them is up to you. With care they may last for several years, being used only as required, but they may be worn right out in one journey. This may be a nasty surprise, especially when you can't see what the surface is like under a top layer of freshly fallen snow.

AutoSock's guarantee covers manufacturing defects, e.g. bad stitching. It does not cover damage or wear. Some people may think that they have worn out much faster than expected, but the reality is that wear is directly related to the amount they are used, and the quality of the surface they are driven on. Small holes will appear sooner or later, even after one short journey, becoming larger with use.

These pictures show three AutoSock with three stages of wear:

1. These are two years old and have been used many times for commuting, including driving on tarmac. They have probably done about fifteen miles in all. They're in very good shape.
2. These are also two years old; they're getting towards the end of their life, although they still work very well. They are used a lot on tarmac, and are often just left on the car when there's snow on the ground. There are lots of small holes, some larger ones appearing, but there's no significant damage to the sides.
3. These are for local, very slow speed use only, or for extra use on the non driving wheels. The holes are now too big, and there's damage to the side mesh where they've snagged on something. They need replacing.

