Rolling Noise: How Continental Is Making Tires Even Quieter

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Special tread design noticeably reduces rolling noise of Continental tires

- ContiSilent technology reduces interior noise for a much quieter, more comfortable in-car experience

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says Achillefs Tsotras, head of Continental's Tire-Vehicle Interaction department

Hanover, Germany, January 29, 2026. Continental is developing tires with exceptionally low rolling noise, helping to reduce overall traffic noise and improve comfort inside the vehicle. This is made possible by innovative technologies and tread designs. Alongside air pollution, noise is one of the biggest burdens for people and the environment – especially in urban areas. The World Health Organization (WHO) ranks traffic noise as Europe's second-largest environmental health risk. In megacities across Asia and Latin America, noise is a daily challenge. Reducing overall noise emissions is therefore crucial – and tire noise is no exception.

Tire noise typically becomes audible to the human ear at moderate driving speeds. At lower speeds, engine noise dominates. With the shift toward electric mobility – and the much quieter motors of electric cars and buses compared with combustion engines – the importance of low-noise tires has grown significantly.

> Noise, especially traffic noise from cars, buses and delivery vehicles, is a major burden for people and the environment. With tire technologies like ContiSilent and innovative tread

designs, we are actively reducing rolling noise without compromising safety," says Achillefs Tsotras, head of Continental's Tire-Vehicle Interaction department. "This makes every ride noticeably quieter, benefiting drivers, pedestrians, residents and the environment alike.

Continental places a strong focus on developing quiet tires without sacrificing safety or performance. Rolling noise occurs when tires come into contact with the road. The resulting sound is only audible within certain speed ranges – typically from about 30 to 50 km/h up to 80 to 100 km/h. The exact noise level depends on factors like road surface, drivetrain, tire type and driving style. Generally, at lower speeds, engine noise masks tire noise, while at higher speeds, wind noise tends to dominate.

Silent Pattern tread design reduces rolling noise

To specifically target tire noise audible to humans, Continental has developed the Silent Pattern tread design, which is already featured on the EcoContact 7 and EcoContact 7 S models. This tread is optimized for sounds that occur at around 50 km/h, the speed at which rolling noise is most noticeable. To reduce this noise, the spacing and angles of the tread blocks have been deliberately varied.

On conventional tires, evenly spaced tread blocks hit the road at regular intervals, producing an audible humming sound. By contrast, the irregular arrangement of the Silent Pattern blocks breaks up this regular rhythm, reducing the humming noise. In addition, the pattern is specifically tuned to cancel out noise emitted by the different tread elements – similar in effect to noise-canceling headphones. The result is reduced road traffic noise in urban areas, making busy streets noticeably quieter for pedestrians and residents.

ContiSilent: special foam inside the tire absorbs noise

To reduce noise inside the vehicle and enhance comfort, Continental offers its ContiSilent technology. This can reduce rolling noise in the vehicle cabin, caused by air vibrations inside the tire, by up to nine decibels. Since the human ear perceives a 10-decibel reduction as halving the volume – regardless of the surrounding noise levels – ContiSilent has a major impact on driving comfort.

The ContiSilent technology uses a special, ultra-light polyurethane

foam applied to the inside of the tire during production. This foam absorbs part of the tire's vibrations, preventing them from reaching the vehicle interior. Driving performance, fuel efficiency, load capacity and top speed remain unaffected. Designed for summer tires, ContiSilent is available on various products, including the ultra-high-performance SportContact 7.

Continental offers a wide range of tires engineered for low rolling noise. Examples include the Conti Urban NXT developed for city buses and the EcoContact 6 Q summer tire for passenger cars. In the van segment, the VanContact A/S Eco stands out as a quiet, safe and efficient tire, meeting the highest EU labeling standards for rolling resistance, wet braking and external rolling noise (A/A/A). When shopping for tires, customers can easily identify low-noise options by checking labels – such as the EU tire label – which clearly indicate noise levels in decibels.

Technology, Innovation & Original Equipment

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