

Metzeler motorcycle tyres: A tradition of high technology Leader in tyre engineering for over a century.

As one of the world's eldest motorcycle tyre manufacturer, Metzeler has been producing tyres for two-wheel vehicles since **1892**, and its history goes hand in hand with the history of motorcycles. From the introduction of new materials to the development of innovative tread designs and compounds, the German company has always been on the leading edge for technical innovation and superior quality and performance of its tyres.

One of the early milestones in the history of Metzeler is the "Prismator", a motorcycle tyre that quickly became a best seller in the German market during the bike boom of the **1920's**.

Metzeler success formula was based on the tyre's revolutionary V-shaped pattern design and prism-shaped tread blocks designed for better handling and directional stability. At that time, this was an important factor for the overall performance level of motorcycle considering the relatively poor chassis characteristics and the rough road surfaces.

Back in **1933**, the company produced the world's first tyre made using synthetic rubber, which offers much better grip than natural rubber thanks to its better chemical properties. This pioneering development further reinforced Metzeler leading technological know-how. Even nowadays the tread compounds of racing and super sport tyres are made nearly exclusively from synthetic rubber.

In the years of the German "economic miracle" following World War II, motorcycle sales boomed and Metzeler launched a series of successful tyres including the "Block C" and "Rille 12". Motorcyclists were impressed by the products' high mileage and safe handling characteristics. The technical knowledge gained at the time by Metzeler technicians thanks to the competition tyres played an important role in the development of high-performance tyres and this will be a consistent characteristic throughout the years.



In **1969**, the motorcycle industry experienced a quantum leap with the introduction of the Honda CB 750 Four. Following the huge success of this revolutionary model, more and more manufacturers started introducing powerful "big bikes" into the market. Relying on years of leading engineering experience, Metzeler was the first one to fulfil this new market trend, supplying a new generation of products developed specifically for high speed performance: the ME 11 set a new benchmark in the market.

From the early **1970s to the mid-1980s**, Japanese motorcycle manufacturers led the rush towards maximum engine power and bigger capacity. Metzeler anticipated this trend in the early **1970s** and started engineering low-section tyres, as the only technical solution allowing improving the handling characteristics of this new generation of bikes.

In the late **1970s**, cast aluminium wheels were introduced in the market. These made it possible to use tubeless tyres that, besides being easier to fit, offer much better handling thanks to the reduced weight resulting in improved bike controllability and responsiveness. As early as **1978**, the Munich-based

company had launched the first tubeless models ever manufactured in Europe, including the "Rille 14 TL (= Tube Less)" and the "Block C7 TL".

In **1980** Metzeler started a large-scale research program to develop future generations of wide tyres pattern designs. In 1982, Metzeler introduced the "ME 33 Laser", the first tyre with a revolutionary tread pattern design, developed with transversal grooves instead of the usual longitudinal ones providing the best performance in terms of drainage, handling easiness, cornering and braking stability. Word spread quickly about this groundbreaking new front tyre, making the "Laser" one of the biggest technical and commercial success stories in the industry.

Following the huge market success of the ME 33 Laser front tyre, Metzeler engineers started working on the development of an equivalently high performing rear aiming for maximum stability under load conditions. The result of this was the introduction of the MBS (Metzeler Belt System) technology with the Perfect ME99A2, combining a standard x-ply carcass with an additional aramid-fibre belt. This dramatically improved straight-line stability, steering precision and mileage.

Furthermore in **1986**, Metzeler introduced the innovative ME 1, the world's first rear tyre to feature a purely transversal tread pattern design.

In the mid-eighties, the company started the use of silica into the compounds. Following successful race track tests, Metzeler introduced the first CompK sport tyres to the market providing superior grip and faster warm-up.

In the late eighties, bike manufacturers began to increasingly tailor their models to individual market segments, further differentiating their models. In response to this diversification, Metzeler significantly expanded its product range and offered high performance tyres for almost every bike in the market. In order to meet the demands of increasingly powerful sport bikes, Metzeler introduced the ME Z1, the world's first radial rear motorcycle tyre with steel belt technology, in **1992**.

One main advantage of the steel belted radial tyre is the outstanding dimensional stability at high speeds. Metzeler engineers applied the superior design advantages of zero-degree steel belt technology to other motorcycle segments. In 1994, steel belt technology was used for tyres like the Enduro 4, a product specially designed for heavy enduro touring bikes.

In **1994** Metzeler proved the superior performance level of its technological solutions setting a new 24 hrs world record with ME Z1 and ME Z2. This is just a further indication of the technical superiority of Metzeler tyres and the high production quality of its factory in Breuberg, Germany that, not surprisingly, has been certified to DIN EN ISO 9002 norms since 1995.

In **1996**, Metzeler proudly launched the new ME Z4 touring sport tyre, the world's first zero-degree steel belted complete set. The outstanding front wheel stability of the ME Z4 clearly sets a new performance benchmark in the growing segment of Sport Touring bikes.

Since **1998**, Metzeler presented a new product line specifically developed for heavy touring bikes, choppers and cruisers: the ME 880 Marathon. A special version of this tyre

was launched in **2000**, the ME 880 Marathon "XXL". The amazing 240 mm width of the XXL made it the widest tyre in the world at that time. Despite the tyre's enormous width, the steel belt provides smooth and safe handling.

Early **2001** marked the introduction of the second generation of Metzeler zero-degree steel belt technology with the Rennsport. Instead of evenly spacing the steel belts, the Rennsport has been the first product featuring differentiated spacing of the belt wires across the contour, improving handling and cornering stability.



Following the growing performance level and the bike differentiation on the Sport Touring market, Metzeler introduced the Roadtec Z6 in **2003**: a new generation of high performance Sport-Touring tyres setting a new market reference. Exceptional grip on wet and dry, cold and hot is one of the key features of this product. Again, this was achieved through another technical breakthrough: a new extrusion process called FCM (Fine Carbon Matrix) guarantees an enhanced distribution of silica and carbon components of the compound.

In **2004**, Metzeler introduced its latest technical innovation with the Racetec. This is the first Metzeler tyre made using a revolutionary, fully automated robotized manufacturing technology. Additionally, this new supersport racing tyre features specific tensioning of the steel belt, the third generation of steel belt. The Racetec benefits of minimal tolerances, highest uniformity and top quality that immediately proved its advantages on the racetrack, "making it easier to go faster" and allowing Metzeler to win all the championship in which it competed.

In **2005** Metzeler introduces the Lasertec: "classic style, new technology". A brand new sport-touring x-ply tyre designed for easy handling, safe road performance and added grip reserves on both wet and dry for all mid-size motorcycles and pre-vintage bikes, featuring the latest technology in tyre casing and tread compounds combined with Metzeler's most successful and appreciated pattern designs: ME 33 Laser and ME55A Metronic.

After more than 100 years of motorcycle tyre development, Metzeler continues its proud tradition of product innovation. In the new millennium, the German brand continues to offer motorcycle riders all over the world high-tech tyres, with outstanding quality, developed for the best riding on every bike.