How to Read a Tire Sidewall  
(P-Metric)

Above are examples of DOT Safety Standard Codes. "DOT" means the tires meet or exceed the Department of Transportation’s safety standards. "MA" is the code number assigned by the DOT to the manufacturing plant. "L9" is the tire size (in this case, P215/65R15). "ABC" is a group of symbols, optional with the manufacturer, to identify the brand or other significant characteristics of the tire. The "0301" means the tire was made during the 3rd week of 2001 (the first two numbers designate the week it was manufactured and the last two numbers indicate the year).
The Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) is the principal UN body studying and promoting economic cooperation and the improvement of economic relations among countries of Europe and North America. The ECE was created in 1947 by the UN Economic and Social Council and today brings together all European countries, as well as the United States, Canada, and Israel. The ECE, with its 54 members, was the first of five UN regional commissions.

The ECE has developed motor vehicle equipment requirements. When a tire bears the ECE symbol, this means it is ECE certified and approved to meet ECE standards for physical dimensions, branding requirements and high-speed endurance regulations.

The letter and number combination encircled represents the country originally receiving approval, such as E4 for the Netherlands and E2 for France. The first two digits that follow this code represent the Regulation Amendment Series under which the tire was approved, such as "02" for ECE Regulation #30. The other four or five digits indicate the tire type and tire size.

Not all tires can receive the ECE's approval. In order to be ECE certified, a tire must receive laboratory approval, meet testing requirements and have the plant where it was manufactured also pass inspection.