

Installation

Installing a set of aluminum wheels is far from difficult, as it's similar to any other wheel you may use. The important thing to remember is to take your time and do the job right. When you're done, you'll be rewarded with a set of wheels and tires that perform well throughout the time you run them.

The first thing I always do is scuff the wheels in the area where the tire bead will rest. A small piece of 200-grit sandpaper, or something similar, will work just fine. What you are doing is to provide a good surface for the CA glue to adhere to when you glue the tire to the rim in the next step. Be careful, and take your time. You want to scuff the wheel up in the appropriate location, but you want to avoid scratching any other area of the wheel so it continues to look good once you've mounted it.

While some may skip this scuffing step with limited success when using plastic rims, I feel it's absolutely crucial to perform this procedure with aluminum rims. I don't care to have a tire slip off of the rim during an important race, I'm sure that most of us would feel the same.

Once the wheel is prepped, it's time to begin the install. I first belted the tires with a strip of duct tape as shown.



Lets go over that first. While you want a nice soft tire to expand and grab the ground upon takeoff, there can be a drawback in most cases. This is tire-ballooning, and results when a tire spins so fast that the tire itself swells to double its normal size. While this may be interesting to see, it can greatly reduce the amount of traction the tire has with the ground. So, unless you just like putting on a show, it's in your best interest to limit this.

One of the tried and true methods to prevent this is to use tape on the inside of the tire. I'll use duct tape for this, but some other tapes will work as well. Another example is strapping tape that has the nylon fibers in it. You'll want to avoid masking tapes which will tear, and electrical tapes which will stretch.

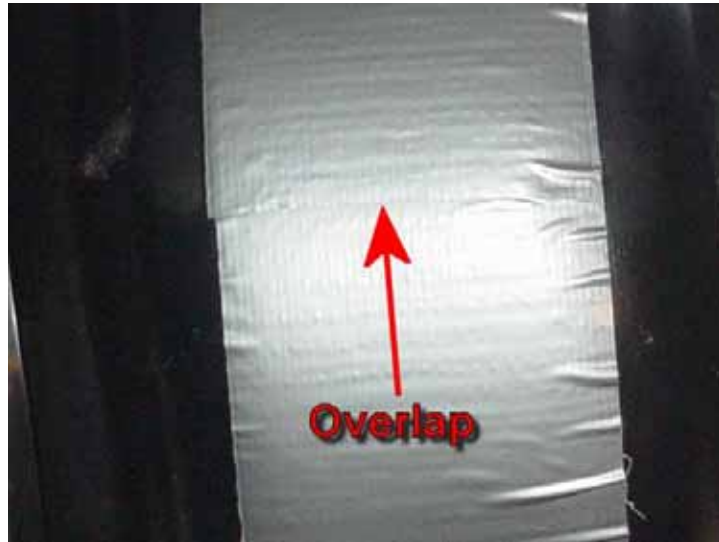
First you'll want to turn the tire inside out as shown here. Clean the surface so the tape will stick. Some tires have a release agent left over from the mold.



Then lay out a long section of tape and roll the tire over it. You should try to keep the tape spaced the same all the way around the circumference of the tire, as this will help keep a proper balance when the tire is in motion.



Allow the tape to overlap itself, and then make sure it's sealed well to the tire.



Flip the tire back to its normal shape.



Some foams come stuffed inside the tire for shipping. When you take them out and set them on the table. If they are lumpy, they will stay lumpy in the tire. Run them under hot water and ring them out. They will be nice and round now.

Insert the foam into place, making sure they were centered and not bunched up inside the tire.



Now that everything is ready, CLEAN the wheel and the tire with rubbing alcohol or brake cleaner from the auto parts store. The oil from your hands will hinder the glue from sticking.



Once the tire was ready, I glued it to the wheel with some MEDIUM CA glue using a small plastic applicator that one of my local hobby store carries.



I find it's easiest to glue all of one side of the wheels and tires, and then start back over with the first one you did and glue the other side. This usually allows plenty of time for the glue to cure before you handle it again.



You're now ready to mount your wheels and tires onto your truck and go Racing.

SPI Racing Wheels