

ROTOR SEASONING & PAD BEDDING

Street or Light Track Applications

What proper "Rotor Preparation" is all about:

The first step in preparing the brake system for duty is to "Season" the rotors. The most visible effects are that of burning the machine oils from the surface of the iron and establishing a wear pattern between the pad and rotor. The most complex task it performs is that of relieving the internal stresses within the material. If you've ever poured water into a glass of ice, and noticed the ice cracking, then you've witnessed, first hand, the effects of internal stresses. The rotor casting and cooling processes leave the rotor with internal stresses.

By gradually heating the material, the crystalline matrix will reconfigure to relieve these internal stresses. After these stresses are relieved, the rotor is ready to accept the heat of bedding pads. Heating the rotors before they are fully seasoned can result in material deformation due to the unrelieved internal stresses in the material. This deformation may cause a vibration from the brakes.

Rotors need to be gradually elevated to "race" temperatures before any severe use. A "nibble," or slight vibration, normally indicates rotors that were heated too quickly.

After initial "Seasoning," when running your car at open track events or serious canyon carving, you should use the first lap of a session (or first couple of miles of open road), to warm the brakes as well as the engine, gearbox, etc. Where an engine turns chemical energy into motion, the brakes turn that motion into thermal energy...and lots of it! And where there is no cooling system for the brakes as there is in the engine, and there's not, the brakes could use the courtesy of a warm-up lap.

Remember to ALWAYS WARM THE BRAKES before any heavy use! It is also considered mandatory to run air ducts to the eye (center) of the rotor on any car used on track or in actual competition.



ROTOR SEASONING PROCEDURE

The following represents the minimum recommended "Seasoning" process. If your situation offers any opportunity to perform preliminary "Seasoning" outlined in Step 2, below for a longer period of time, this will generally render even better performance and increase further long term rotor life

Zinc-plated rotors will require 300-500 stop-and-go miles to properly burn zinc off in pad swept area. Use the brakes to the same extent that you used the stock brakes. **DO NOT TEST PERFORMANCE OR ATTEMPT HEAVY USE UNTIL ALL ITEMS OUTLINED HAVE BEEN COMPLETED.** It is imperative that excessive heat is not put into the rotors at this stage. They need temperature-cycling to relieve the internal stresses. ****Note:** Zinc plated rotors (optional performance upgrade) need a couple of extra days of driving to wear through the plating before "Seasoning" will actually begin.

After completing 300-500 miles of driving, find a safe location where the brakes can be run to temperature. Your goal is to gradually increase brake temperatures with progressively faster stops.

- Start by performing (4) stops from 60 mph to 15 mph, as you would in the normal course of driving.
- Next, perform (4) medium effort pedal stops (about 50% of maximum stopping force) from 60 mph down to 15 mph. Follow this with (5) minutes off freeway driving with LITTLE to NO BRAKING to allow the rotors to cool.
- Next, perform (4) medium-hard effort pedal stops (about 75%) from 60 mph down to 15 mph. Follow this with (10) minutes of freeway driving with LITTLE to NO BRAKING to allow the rotors to cool.
- Park the car and allow the brakes to cool down overnight to ambient temperature. You are now 50% done with the rotor "Seasoning & Bedding" procedure. Proceed to STEP 4 the following day.

Return to the safe location where the brakes can be run to temperature.

Ensure the brakes are warmed to full operating temperature

- Perform (4) medium effort pedal stops (about 50%) from 60 mph down to 15 mph. Follow this with (5) minutes of freeway driving with LITTLE to NO BRAKING to allow the rotors to cool.
- Next, perform (4) medium-hard effort pedal stops (about 75%) from 60 mph down to 15 mph. Follow this with (10) minutes of freeway driving with LITTLE to NO BRAKING to allow the rotors to cool.
- Now, make (6) HARD pedal stops from 60+ mph down to 15 mph, or until the rotors have reached an operating temperature between 900°F and 1,100°F. Every effort should be made to perform this procedure without locking a wheel. Follow this with (10) minutes of freeway driving with LITTLE to NO BRAKING to allow the rotors to cool.

Let the brake system cool off overnight so that it will be ready for pad bedding.



PAD BEDDING PROCEDURE

The Importance of Bedding Brake Pads:

The friction material in semi-metallic pads is held together by an organic binder, usually a type of phenolic material. As the pads get hot, the binder boils and burns, from the top surface of the pad. Once this burning or "Bedding" takes place, the friction material makes proper contact with the rotor. Some race/performance pads are designated as "pre-burnished" from the manufacturer. In our experience, these pads still benefit from "Bedding." "Bedding" pads establishes a wear pattern between the pads and rotor. Some pads deposit a layer of carbon on the surface of the rotor. They need that layer of carbon to perform at peak efficiency.

Bedding Metallic or Carbon/Metallic Pads-(NEVER "drag" the brakes)

Note: Never "Bed" pads on rotors which have not first been "Seasoned". Always allow a substantial coast down zone when bedding pads that will allow you to safely drive the car to a stop in the event of fade.

- Perform (2) repeated light to medium stops, from 65 to 10 mph, to bring the rotors to temperature.
- Perform (2) heavy stops, back to back, at a point just pending wheel lock or ABS actuation, from 65mph to about 5 mph.
- Drive for (5) to (10) minutes to create cooling airflow, without using the brakes if at all possible.
- Perform (3) light stops in succession.
- Perform (8) heavy stops, back to back, at a point just pending wheel lock, from 65 mph to about 5 mph.
- Drive for (10) minutes to cool the rotors, without using the brakes if at all possible.

NOTE

Metallic brake pads need high temperatures to keep the pad "Bedded". If you drive the car for a period of time without using the brakes extensively, you may need to "Bed" the pads again. This is not a problem. Simply repeat the procedure.

When switching from any performance or other Carbon Metallic pads to semi-metallic brake pads (something we do not recommend), you will need to wear through the layer of carbon that the performance pads have deposited on the rotor surface. The new pads won't grip well at all, until this layer of carbon is removed. Racers should "Bed" a few sets of pads at a time.

In the event you need to change brake pads during a race, you MUST use a set of "Bedded" pads. Racing on "non-bedded" pads leads to a type of "fade" caused by the binding agents coming out of the pad too quickly. This is called "green fade". These binders may create a liquid (actually a gas) layer between your pads and rotors. Liquids have a very poor coefficient of friction. This condition is the reason for reverse slotting or cross-drilling rotors, as it allows a pathway for the gasses to escape