

AutoShack Weekly Tip



ASWTFebruary232020

UNDERSTANDING OIL VISCOSITY



ENGINE OIL THICKNESS BASICS

- Consider an oil container that reads 'SAE 5W-30'. SAE stands for Society of Automotive Engineers.
- 5 and 30 refer to the viscosity (thickness) of the oil and W stands for Winter. The higher the number, the thicker the oil.
- This means during the cold winter season, the viscosity of the oil is 5 (after engine cool down) and during engine operation (at operating temperature), the viscosity is 30.
- The viscosity must remain low to prevent freezing and enable quick flow at engine startup.
- If you live in a tropical country you may purchase oil that doesn't have the W component to it.
- For example if your car calls for SAE 10W-40, you can just use SAE40. Only do this if you don't experience winter weather.

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