

Brake pads.

– Author: Bill Gregory

When you first start drivers education, your stock brake pads are OK, however, you'll find shortly that combined street and drivers ed events leads to a significantly shortened pad life. As an upgrade, there are several brands (Hawk, Performance Friction, and others) of high performance street pads that can be used for both street and track. Pagid, Ferodo, Performance Friction, Hawk, and others, make race pads which can be used as a combination street/track pad too. Track pads do tend to be noisier (can you say "squeeeel") and produce more brake dust than some of the street-only pads. After this, you move into pads that are really only for the track, as they have a specific heat range that they operate in - that means they don't work well on the street where your rotors are usually cold (as compared to being heated up at the track). Of course you can always run street pads on the street and swap them out for your drivers ed event. When you get new pads, make sure you understand if any specific break-in procedure is needed. Some, like Performance Friction, don't need any break-in done, and others, like Pagid, definitely do. If the pads need breaking in, and you don't do this, you can experience "green fade" where, as your pads heat up for the first time, binders and glue in the pad material boil out, turning to liquid on the rotor. Firm brake application without commensurate slowing down - yikes! Also, if you find yourself attending drivers ed events with some regularity, it doesn't hurt to bring an extra set of your favorite pads with you to the track, in the event you wear your existing pads down to 40%-50% of the original thickness and need to replace them.

Written by Bill Gregory for the "Challenge", monthly publication of the Connecticut Valley Region, Porsche Club of America.