

Wheels: A question from Roger says, “I'm well aware that multi-viscosity motor oils like 5W-30 are supposedly thinner at cold temperatures (5W) and thicker at higher temperatures (30). Why is it you're supposed to heat up the engine before draining the oil. Heat it up and the oil is thicker, right? Why not cool it off before changing then? Any help would be appreciated. Thanks.”

Halderman: Good question. The answer is in the testing procedures. The first number (SAE 5W) is tested at 0 degrees F and the last number is tested at 212 degrees F. The “W” in SAE 5W-30 means winter and this indicates that the 5W part was tested at 0 degrees F. Therefore, it would seem that the oil is thinner when cold but in reality the oil is a lot thicker when cold. I hope this helps.

