

WHEELS: *Tom K. of New Lebanon writes by e-mail: “We have two Toyotas (Corolla & Tacoma) and I need to replace the brakes. What's the advantage/disadvantage of using ceramic compared to regular materials? How does ceramic affect the rotors?”*

Halderman: Thanks for writing. The term ceramic is often a marketing term as most brake pad material contains ceramic powders. They are usually sold as a premium pad material and would be recommended for low noise and long life. The most important consideration is that you purchase brake pads that are offered by a major brand name, one that you know rather than a generic brand name. What would I do? I would purchase the brake pads from a Toyota dealer and ask for the genuine Toyota part and not a replacement pad. This means that I get the same formulation that came on the vehicle when new. It might cost a little more but I get all of the noise reduction shims and the special grease that needs to be applied too. Most other replacement pads do not include the shims and other hardware that might be needed when the pads are replaced. Some name brand pads also come with shims and hardware so check into this if you do not wish to purchase pads from a dealer. To me, this is the best approach to take. I hope this helps.

