

Wheels: An e-mail from Gayle says, “In January, my steering wheel was pulling to the right. I needed new tires anyway, so I replaced the Bridgestone Potenza tires with Michelin Harmony tires, hoping that would take care of the problem. Instead, the steering wheel began immediately pulling to the left. So I had a wheel alignment done through the dealer where I bought the car new. The dealer said that they could not fix the problem, it was bad tires. So, I went back to the tire place and had them replace both rear tires per the dealer’s written statement. The problem continued, and worse, my ride was not as smooth as before. I then took the car back to the dealer for a second alignment with the same results. They said that the most recent new tires were bad as well.

I find it hard to believe that 4 out of 6 brand new Michelin tires are bad and causing my alignment problem. What do you think if going on, and what should I do to fix this?”

Halderman: You are right; this does sound as if there is another problem that has not been located. Some ideas to consider:

1. The brakes could be sticking on one side due to a stuck caliper or defective rubber brake hose.
2. The suspension could be worn, causing a problem even though the alignment is OK.
3. The wheels could be bent, causing a problem.

You didn’t mention if the tires were switched from one side to the other. Often this helps locate a bad tire or rim.

