

AI-04592 Goodyear vs Nitto Crosstek

#ml350, #mercedes, #problem

Goodyear eagle sports all seasons compare to Nitto Crosstek. I need a tire replacement for my 2006 ML350 v6 two front tires. The pside has a trauma in the side wall about the size of a quarter and maybe 3.1mm deep. Tell me if this is a critical issue. Also the dot sidewall ends with 18, the dside dot says 15. I only need to drive the car for 2 months and we are off to Cebu. I decided to replace all two front tires. The rear passed the depth gauge test and the dot were 19 and 18 which is barely passing the 5 years mark. This is only a spare car which will rest in the tx garage for another 2 years.

Replacing both front tires is absolutely the right call—especially given the sidewall damage and the age of the rubber.

1. Sidewall Damage Assessment: Critical Safety Issue

Yes, a quarter-sized, 3.1mm-deep gouge in the passenger-side sidewall is a critical hazard.

- **Structural Integrity:** Unlike the tread area (which has thick rubber and steel belts), the sidewall is relatively thin and relies on polyester/nylon cord plies to hold structural pressure.
- **Blowout Risk:** A gouge over 3 mm deep is often deep enough to expose or compromise those inner body cords. Even if it isn't leaking air right now, heat building up at highway speeds or hitting a small bump could easily cause a sudden, catastrophic sidewall blowout.
- **Verdict:** Do not drive long distances or at highway speeds on this tire. Get it to the shop at low speeds.

2. Age Check (DOT Codes: 18 and 15)

- **Passenger Side (DOT ~2018):** ~8 years old.
- **Driver Side (DOT ~2015):** ~11 years old.

The tire industry (along with rubber manufacturers) sets a strict upper lifespan limit of **6 to 10 years maximum**, regardless of remaining tread depth. Rubber oxidizes, dries out, and degrades internally over time. An 11-year-old tire (DOT 15) is well past its safe operational window and prone to tread separation, even if it "looks fine."

3. Comparison: Goodyear Eagle Sport All-Season vs. Nitto Crosstek

Since this ML350 is a midsize SUV serving as a spare vehicle that will sit parked in a Texas garage for two years after your upcoming 2-month window, your priorities should be **price, flat-spot resistance, and reliable short-term driving performance.**

Feature / Aspect	Goodyear Eagle Sport All-Season	Nitto Crosstek / Crosstek 2
Category	Ultra-High Performance All-Season	Highway Terrain / SUV All-Season
Driving Feel	Sportier, stiffer sidewall, responsive cornering.	Plush, quiet, comfortable highway ride.
Wet / Dry Traction	High dry/wet grip; slightly firmer ride on bumps.	Very good straight-line stability and wet evacuation.
Tread Life & Compound	Harder performance compound; prone to slight road noise as it wears.	Heavy-duty wear-resistant compound tailored for light trucks/SUVs.
Best Fit for Your Plan	Better if you prefer sharper steering response and firmer road feedback.	Better fit for an ML350 sitting in a Texas garage. High durability and comfortable ride quality.

Recommendations for Your 2-Month Run & 2-Year Storage:

1. **The Choice:** The **Nitto Crosstek** is generally designed specifically for the weight and distribution of CUV/SUVs like the ML350, offering a compliant ride for your immediate 2 months of driving. However, both are solid options—if the Goodyear Eagle Sport is available locally at a significantly lower installed price, take the Goodyear, as long-term tread wear won't matter while it sits in the garage.
2. **4MATIC / AWD Note:** If your 2006 ML350 is equipped with Mercedes 4MATIC (All-Wheel Drive), ensure the outer rolling circumference of the new front tires matches the rear tires closely (typically within 2/32" to 3/32" tread depth difference). Significant diameter differences between front and rear axles can cause unwanted strain on the transfer case center differential.
3. **Storage Prep (Texas Garage):**
 - Before leaving for Cebu, over-inflate all four tires by **3 to 5 PSI** above the door-jamb specification (up to the maximum wall limit listed on the tire). This helps prevent permanent flat-spotting while the SUV sits stationary for 2 years.
 - Ensure the garage floor is clean/dry and keep the tires away from direct sunlight or heavy electrical motors (which emit ozone that degrades rubber).

