

# What are The Best Brake Pads: Ceramic or Semi-Metallic?



We all understand that stopping our vehicles is critically important. Fortunately, there are many different brake pad materials out there that do a fine job bringing our vehicles to a halt. Although, with so many options it can be difficult to choose which material is best suited for our specific driving style or type of vehicle. Here we take a look at two of the more common brake pad materials, [ceramic brake pads](#) and [semi-metallic brake pads](#), and highlight some considerations you should make when deciding between the two.

## Ceramic Brake Pads



Ceramic pads represent the latest in brake pad technology and were originally introduced on production vehicles in the 1980s. Ceramic pads are created from a blend of super-strong ceramic and copper fiber imbedded into the pad compound. Here's a quick breakdown of their pros and cons:

### **Pros:**

- They're quieter than semi-metallic pads
- They create less dust, keeping your wheels cleaner
- They last longer than semi-metallics

### **Cons:**

- They're not recommended for racing or heavy-duty towing
- They're generally more expensive than comparable metallic pads
- They generally cause more wear to brake rotors than metallics

## Semi-Metallic Brake Pads



Semi Metallic brake pads have been around for decades and as their name implies, are made with portions of metal fibers in the brake pad compound. High quality semi metallic pads contain fine metallic fibers, while cheaper pads will have larger, more coarse portions of metal imbedded into the compound. Here are the pros and cons of semi-metallic brake pads:

### **Pros:**

- Work great when cold, excellent for short trips and cold climates
- They're available in track-ready and heavy-duty towing formulations
- They're relatively less expensive than comparable ceramic pads
- They're typically easier on rotors than ceramics

### **Cons:**

- They're louder than ceramic pads
- They generate more black dust that sticks to wheels easier
- They don't last as long as ceramics

## **The Bottom Line**

As brake technology continues to evolve, more and more auto manufacturers are outfitting their autos with ceramic pads right from the factory. Ceramics are a great option if you're a regular commuter who doesn't run quarter-mile sprints or weekend warrior track days. Two great options are the [Posi-Quiet Ceramic Brake Pads](#) or [Hawk Performance Ceramics](#) along with a host of other pads listed below. Ceramics not only last a long time, but produce less brake dust, keeping your wheels looking sharp.

Although ceramics offer the latest technology, this doesn't necessarily mean they are the greatest pad for all conditions. The aftermarket brake world still holds metallic pads near and dear to their hearts with aggressive variations and mixed metallic compounds. Many performance companies like [Brembo Brakes](#) and [EBC Brakes](#) continue to offer semi-metallic pads because of their performance capabilities. In fact, many track pads are semi metallic, known for their great initial bite and consistent brake pedal feel, providing excellent driver feedback. Mated with [deluxe brake calipers](#) and [stainless steel brake lines](#), metallic pads can bring the speediest racers to a commanding halt.



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