

What Brake Fluid Type Should I Use?



Beginning in 2006, HD switched to a DOT 4 Brake Fluid. DOT 4 fluid (as well as DOT 3) is glycol based while DOT 5 is silicone based. DOT 4 is tolerant to higher temperatures, but is more susceptible to moisture contamination, as well as corrosive to paint. DOT 5 is not as tolerant to high temps, but will generally not hurt paint and is NOT recommended for ABS braking systems.

Frequently Asked Brake Fluid Questions:

- 1 My Master Cylinder says to use DOT 4, The PM instruction sheet say DOT 5, what do I do?**

You may have an older instruction sheet. DOT 4 and DOT 5 are NOT compatible, never mix them! If your master cylinder specifies using DOT 4, please continue using DOT 4. PM Brake calipers are designed to work with both fluid types.
- 2 What Happens if I mix DOT 4 and DOT 5 Fluid?**

DOT 4 and DOT 5 brake fluids are not compatible and react to each other resulting in a build-up of viscous materials that can interfere with metering orifices within the brake system.
- 3 My brake system is completely new (master, lines and calipers), which fluid type should I use?**

Both fluid types have advantages and disadvantages. DOT 4 is more susceptible to water contamination (minute amounts of moisture is absorbed through the seals of all brake systems), but has a higher tolerance to the heat generated by braking. DOT 5 is not compatible with ABS systems, but will tend to resist moisture contamination and is generally not harmful to paint. The choice is yours, but once you have introduced a specific type into the system, you must continue to use it.