

TECHNICAL TIPS – “Wench With A Wrench”

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Do You Know Your A, B, C, D’s ?

Understanding the Miata Model Year Group Alphabet

Happy summer, Miata Friends! It’s finally here and I hope you have all gotten out and enjoyed beautiful top-down weather and checked your mid-summer maintenance reminders from last month’s column. ☺

PLEASE check your tire age per my article. This is the most overlooked important safety maintenance item. (No tires over 7 years old no matter how good the tread looks!)

Perhaps you have heard Miatas mentioned as “NA’s”, “NB’s”, “NC’s” etc. and wondered what the initials or reference meant (but were afraid to ask?). Someone just asked me about this recently so.....

I’m here to clear up the Miata Alphabet confusion for you. ☺

Miatas are commonly identified by their model build “generation years” with the letters **NA, NB, NC** and the latest being **ND** model years. These code letters are called “*Model Identifiers*” per the required standard VIN (Vehicle Identification Number) coding convention which you’ll find on your receipt of sale invoice, your vehicle registration from DMV and on a small tag usually found on the front of the dashboard on the driver’s side used to identify a specific vehicle.

The *Model Identifier* code is always the 4th and 5th position within the VIN.

Below is a VIN for a 2000 model year Miata:

JM1NB3538Y0153757

J = Country of Origin (Japan)

M = Mazda (manufacturer)

1 = Passenger Car (type of vehicle)

NB = M2 manufacturer’s model generation (2nd generation)

(The rest of the numbers and letters denote that it’s a convertible, engine size, city of manufacture, and other information about the car including a specific car number, the last 4 digits).

More Explanation:

To further explain: VIN’s that have the following *Model identifier* letters identify the generation and years of that generation manufacture:

NA = 1st generation 1990-1997 (only years with retractable headlights; NA sometimes also referred to as “Normally Aspirated” engine as opposed to turbo or super-charged engine))

NA6 = 1.6L engine in models 1990 – 1993

NA8 = 1.8L engine in models 1994 – 1997

NB – 2nd generation 1999 – 2005 (no retractable headlights)

NB1 – 1999 – 2000 small changes

NB2 – 2001 – 2005 (MazdaSpeed race model produced 2004 - 2005 only)

NC – 3rd generation 2006-2015 (flared fenders; larger engine, PRHT Power Retractable Hardtop introduced)

NC1 – 2006 – 2008

NC2 – 2009 – 2012 small cosmetic changes

NC3 – 2013-2015 small cosmetic changes

ND – 4th generation 2016- current model year (body redesign; Retractable Fastback introduced)

ND1 – 2016 - 2017 small body changes; slightly less HP)

ND2 – 2018 + small changes and Retractable Fastback introduced)

And finally, More Confusion: ☺

North American Miata owners sometimes refer respectively to their Miata generations as M1, M2, M3, etc., versus NA, NB, NC, etc. just to confuse the matter. But most commonly, you'll hear the various model generations referred to as NA, NB, NC and ND.

If you were talking to a Mazda Miata engineer and mentioned "M1", they'd probably have no idea what you were talking about. Say "NA" and they would. ☺

I hope this has helped you to learn your A,B,C's. ☺

Take care of your Miata and it will take care of you!

Zoom Zoom Safely!

Gail

DISCLAIMER

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