

Top 10 Tips to Discuss with Your Dealer when Buying an Electric Vehicle

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Electric vehicles are not a new idea. They have been around for over a century. The first electric car was a six-passenger vehicle that maxed out at a whopping 14 mph and made its debut in 1890. At the time it wasn't much more than an electric wagon. Many believe this helped spark conversations about electric vehicles. Over the next decade, electric vehicles began to gain popularity. As technology advanced, motor vehicles became much more in demand and were available in steam, gasoline, or electric. Electric vehicles quickly gained popularity in urban areas. They were quiet and easy to drive, they did not give off smelly exhaust, and were perfect for short trips around the city. Traveling outside of a city typically meant poor road conditions that were not ideal for electric vehicles. Although vehicles have drastically changed throughout history the main question remains whether an electric vehicle fits a customer's lifestyle.

As consumers explore the many options related to purchasing a new electric vehicle, there are a host of concerns and issues that should be investigated before purchase. With more than 100 years of experience in helping consumers buy new cars, dealerships continue to be the best source of information for the consumer. The following are 10 tips or discussion items that a new EV buyer should discuss with their dealer.

Practicality and Usage

Whether or not an electric vehicle (EV) is the right choice for you and your family will come down to several

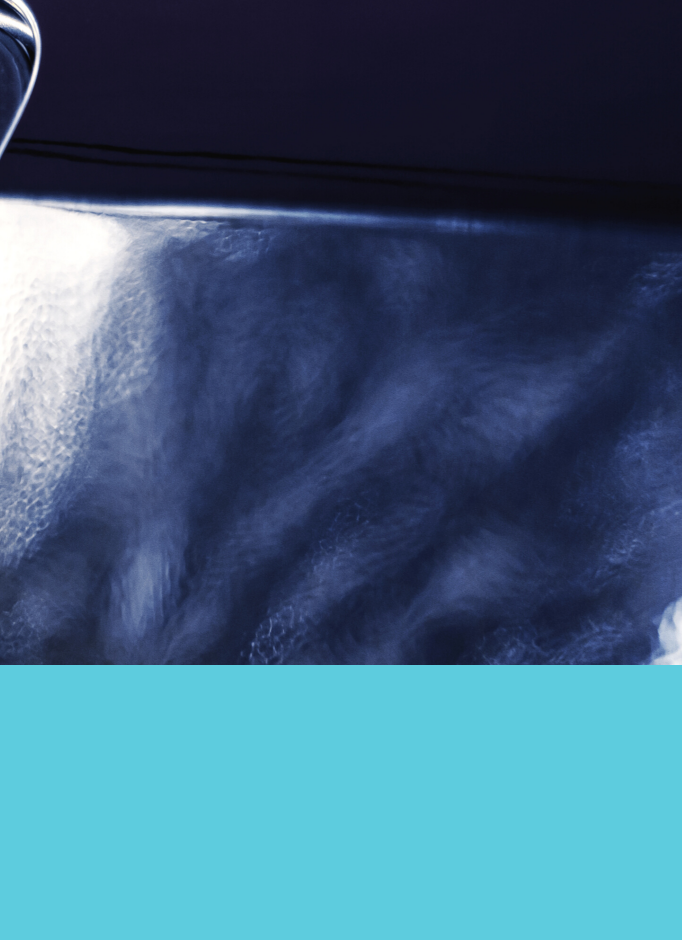
considerations including costs, your location, the size of your family, your daily commute, and the resources you must devote to a fully electric vehicle. Dealers can provide an array of solutions if they fully understand your future uses for the vehicle.

Plug-In Electric vs. Hybrid Technology

If you are environmentally conscious and like the idea of an electric vehicle but are not convinced a fully electric vehicle is the right choice for your lifestyle, consider a hybrid gas/electric automobile. Today's hybrid/electric vehicles may be more efficient than a similar vehicle that were manufactured only a few years ago. With the evolution of new technologies that are critical to hybrids/electric vehicles, your local dealer will be able to explain the significant differences and benefits that exist in today's available plug-in or hybrid vehicles.

Availability of Charging Stations

This issue can be especially problematic when traveling long distances. Despite emerging technology highlighting nearby charging stations, EV owners could end up stranded. This may not be a problem if you live in a major metropolitan area, but many Americans do not have a reliable infrastructure around them to support an electric vehicle. Additionally, the installation of an at-home charging station could be cost-prohibitive for some. Be sure to talk to your dealer about the time required to charge the vehicles. Charge times vary from 30 minutes to 4 hours.



manufacturers will continue to work with other key stakeholders to address the "health" of the battery the ability to quickly charge the battery, and the ability of the battery to hold a charge despite adverse situations.

Negotiate the Price of the Vehicle

While electric vehicles may be great for the environment, they also can cost the consumer a significant amount of money. Many consumers have noble aspirations when buying environmentally friendly, electric vehicles, but the price tags of EVs might not be financially feasible to the average consumer. Today's manufacturers are working diligently to close the cost difference between today's electric vehicles and today's internal combustion vehicles.

Additionally, as with the purchase of any vehicle, consumers are urged to shop the internet for the best prices and best features and negotiate with the dealer for the best price for the vehicle.

Additional Costs related to EVs

With a gas-powered car, there are essentially four expenses which include purchase price, insurance, gas, and maintenance. However, with an electric vehicle, the costs include purchase price, insurance, maintenance, charging station purchase, installation, and maintenance, as well as electricity bills, battery replacement, and public charging station costs. These expenses should be discussed with your local dealer as part of the process of buying a new electric vehicle.

Hardware and Software Upgrades

Electric vehicles contain a lot of technology and this technology needs to be updated regularly. Some companies automatically upgrade vehicle technology without charging owners. Others may charge fees for significant upgrades. Make sure you know the situation with technology upgrades before buying any EV and inquire whether there is a cost for this service.

Rebates and State Tax Credits

Depending on where you live, some costs may be offset by rebates and tax credits offered by your State or Local government. Some provide financial incentives to own an electric vehicle and others do not. Financial incentives depend on which state/province/country you live in. While the rebates and tax credits can be lucrative and save EV owners thousands of dollars, they are subject to change. For these reasons, it is important to talk to your local dealer about available financial incentives when considering buying an electric vehicle.

As with the purchase of any vehicle, consumers are urged to explore the many options and concerns related to owning a new electric vehicle. Additionally, local new car and truck dealers offer the best resources to the consumer for the many issues related to owning, operating, and serving your next electric vehicle.

Annual Maintenance Costs

Electric vehicles are sophisticated and packed with some of the latest technology but can also be expensive to maintain and fix in the event of a breakdown. Calculating the cost of maintenance on an electric vehicle is an important part of the due diligence process. You might save money on gas and oil changes, but those costs can shift to other places.

Driving Range

The driving range is the most critical consideration related to buying an electric vehicle. Dealers and industry analysts agree that the main issue keeping people from purchasing an electric vehicle is the distance that the cars can drive before running out of battery power and needing a charge. Talk to your dealer about the vehicle's range and what factors may impact it.

Battery Life and Battery Technology

While many automakers claim that their batteries are good for more than 500,000 miles, or the life of the electric vehicle, battery technology is still evolving and will continue to change in the coming years. Issues such as extreme temperatures, overcharging and power surges will continue to be researched by vehicle manufacturers in the days ahead. Likewise,