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Is an EV right for you?

A Guide to Electric Vehicle Ownership, 2025-2026 Insights



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Published by The Custard Press



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About the author

I've spent over 10 years working in the energy sector — everything from tariffs, metering and EV charging to salary sacrifice schemes, renewables, solar PV, battery storage and air source heat pump design and installations.

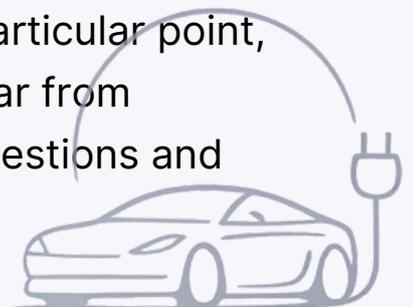
But more importantly, I've always had a genuine passion for research. I need to understand things fully. I want the facts, the numbers, the pros and cons, and the real-world details. Few things frustrate me more than making the wrong choice simply because I didn't have the information I needed.

So I dig deep. I look at things from every angle. And only then do I make a decision.

This is exactly why I started creating these guides — to save you the hours of reading, comparing, overthinking, and trying to make sense of conflicting opinions online. My aim is to give you clear, honest, practical answers to the questions most people have, and even some you may not have thought of yet.

In a world full of options but limited time and money, I want to cut through the noise so you can make confident, informed decisions. Each document focuses on one specific question. If a topic needs a deeper dive, I'll point you to another guide that covers it in more detail.

I genuinely value feedback, and I'm always looking to refine and improve these guides. All information included is accurate to the best of my knowledge at the time of writing and I earn no commissions. If anything feels unclear or you'd like further detail on a particular point, please feel free to get in touch. I'm always happy to hear from readers and to develop future editions based on real questions and experiences.



How to use this guide

This guide is split into simple, focused sections, each covering one part of electric vehicle ownership.

You can read it all the way through for the full picture, or dip into the sections that interest you most. If you're pressed for time, the table of contents will help you jump straight to what you need. Every section is written to be clear and easy to follow, giving you practical advice, useful insights, and real-world facts without too much of the confusing jargon.

Who is this guide for?

Anyone who is considering making the change into an electric vehicle and would like clear, concise, unbiased information.





The Shift to Electric: Why It Feels Uncertain

Switching to an electric vehicle isn't just a new car — it's a new way of thinking about driving. And any kind of change, especially around something as essential as transport, naturally creates uncertainty. That's why you're here, right?

For many people, the worry isn't actually about EVs themselves — it's about the unknowns:

- “Will I run out of charge?”
- “What if I can't find a charger?”
- “What if it doesn't suit my routine?”
- “Is it really cheaper?”

These questions are completely normal.

The truth is, once people understand how EVs actually work day-to-day, the anxiety almost always fades. In my work, I meet people who have made the switch every single day. I have to tell you that I have never met anyone who regrets it. In fact everyone loves it. What's also true, is they all had anxiety about the change too.

This guide is designed to give you clear answers, real data, and an honest view of what owning an EV truly looks like — the good, the bad, and everything in between.





What's Different About Driving Electric?

Going electric doesn't change where you drive — but it does change how it feels. Here are the biggest differences most new EV drivers notice straight away:

Smooth, quiet driving

No engine noise. No gear changes. Just steady, calm acceleration.

Instant power

Electric motors deliver torque immediately. This is not just about speed, but about being able to pull out of junctions with extreme confidence like you've not experienced before. Even smaller EVs feel quicker and more responsive than many petrol cars.

Regenerative braking

Lift your foot off the accelerator and the car slows itself, turning that slowing into energy. Many drivers end up loving “one-pedal driving.” This can be turned off in most cars, but you really do get used to it and it's worth getting comfortable with it. You can always experiment once you're more familiar with the car.

Charging instead of filling up

The main lifestyle shift is swapping petrol stations for plugging in — ideally at home.

Lower running costs

Fewer moving parts, far less maintenance, and potentially drastically cheaper “fuel” costs.





EV Myths vs Reality.

Here are the major concerns people usually have:

“EVs don’t go far enough.”

Reality: Most modern EVs offer 200–400+ miles real-world. Although your own mileage is key here, for the average UK driver doing 20–30 miles per day, that’s a full week (or 2) of driving on a single charge.

“I’ll constantly be searching for chargers.”

Reality: If you charge at home, public charging becomes something you rarely think about. Again this depends on your own mileage.

If you don’t charge at home, the strategy is different — but still manageable (covered later).

“EVs are expensive to run.”

Reality: On an overnight EV tariff, you can charge 250–300 miles for roughly £4–£6. That’s dramatically cheaper than petrol, even with rising electricity prices.

	Cost for 250 miles	Cost for 300 miles
Electric (off-peak tariff)	£4–£5	£5–£6
Petrol car (average UK driver)	£43	£51
Diesel car (average UK driver)	£37	£45

“Batteries wear out quickly.”

Reality: Most modern EV batteries are proving far more durable than expected. Real-world data from brands like Tesla, Hyundai, Kia, BMW, Renault, VW and Nissan shows that after 5 years, most cars still retain 92–97% of their original capacity, with average degradation of just 0.5–1% per year. By 8 years, capacity typically remains at 85–92%, and even after 10 years many EVs still hold 80–90%, depending on mileage and charging habits. After 12–15 years, most still retain 75–85% — easily enough for everyday driving and far better than early myths suggested.





The First Big Question: Can You Charge at Home?

This is the moment most people discover whether their EV experience will be effortless... or simply needs a bit more planning.

If You CAN Charge at Home

Requirements (kept simple):

- Off-street parking
- A safe place to mount a charger
- Your property's electrics are suitable (most are)
- Permission if renting

Great news — you're in the best possible position

(I'll soon be releasing a full, dedicated guide on everything charger-installation related.)

If you can charge at home, EV ownership becomes incredibly convenient.

- No more petrol stations
- No more impulse junk-food purchases (unless you still fancy some — no judgement!)
- Your car fills itself while you sleep

And best of all...

Unlocking cheap overnight tariffs during off-peak hours, which also offers you those cheap prices for your home. Time to set timers on your washing, dishwasher and anything else you might want to save money on!

If you have solar, battery storage, or a heat pump, tariff optimisation becomes even more important — I'll likely have another guide covering all of that soon.





The First Big Question: Can You Charge at Home?

It's worth noting that many councils in the UK now allow homeowners to install a recessed cable gully across the pavement to safely run a charging cable to a car parked on the street. This avoids the previous trip hazard issue that prevented most on-street homeowners from charging at home.

How it works:

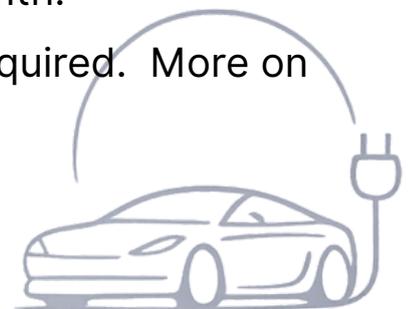
You or your installer creates:

- A narrow recessed channel cut into the pavement
- A flush-fitting cover (usually rubber or metal) that sits level with the pavement
- A cable from your home charger runs through the gully to your car
- When not in use, the cover seals the channel, keeping the pavement safe and accessible.

More councils are taking part, although some require prior approval, some don't and some are running trials. I'll have more details in my charger installation guide, but it's great that we are now finding solutions for those with no driveways!

Finally, there is another group of people who may sit somewhat in the middle. Those who can have a charger at home but do longer journeys than their range allows, either daily, once a week or month.

Here it will be using the public chargers as and when required. More on this later.





The First Big Question: Can You Charge at Home?

If You CAN'T Charge at Home

Not having a driveway or off-street parking doesn't automatically rule out an EV, but it does change the experience. Instead of "plug in and forget", you'll rely more on destination and public charging – a bit like treating chargers as your new petrol stations.

If you can't charge at home, most people make EVs work by combining:

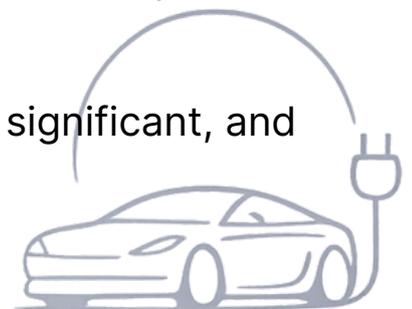
- Workplace charging – plugging in while you're at work
- Regular destinations – supermarkets, gyms, retail parks, hotels
- Local rapid chargers – for top-ups when you need them
- Occasional longer sessions – e.g. once a week instead of every night

For many drivers doing modest mileage, a single good charge each week can comfortably cover their needs.

When an EV can still work well without home charging:

- You have reliable workplace charging or a charger you use regularly (e.g. at a nearby car park)
- There are multiple public chargers within a short distance of home or work
- Your typical daily mileage is modest (for example 20–40 miles a day)
- You're happy to plan charging like you'd plan supermarket trips – not every day, but built into your routine.

In these situations, the running cost savings can still be significant, and you avoid the faff of petrol stations.





The First Big Question: Can You Charge at Home?

No home charger? Things to check before committing

It's worth doing a quick reality-check in your area:

- How many chargers are there nearby?
- Check supermarket car parks, council car parks, retail parks, gyms, workplaces. Use an app called PlugShare or similar. They have all the details of local charger, speed of charge and user reviews. Google maps now also has live charger locations with number of available chargers. it's a fantastic tool
- Are they usually available at the times you'd realistically charge – evenings, weekends, after work
- What speeds are they?
 - 7–22 kW: good for topping up while you shop/work
 - 50 kW+ rapid / ultra-rapid: good for quick top-ups or longer trips
- What are the prices like?
- Public charging is usually more expensive than home tariffs, but still often cheaper than petrol or diesel, especially if you use slower AC chargers rather than rapid ones for most of your energy.





The First Big Question: Can You Charge at Home?

When an EV might not be the right choice (for now):

It's better to be honest here. An EV may be frustrating if you can't charge at home and:

- There are very few chargers near you and they're often busy or broken
- You drive high mileage and rely solely on expensive rapid chargers.
- You're not willing to spend any time planning charging stops.

In those situations, it might be worth waiting a few years until local infrastructure improves, or choosing a plug-in hybrid as a stepping stone.

The bottom line:

Having home charging is the ideal scenario, but not having it doesn't automatically rule out an EV. If you have reliable places to plug in regularly and you're comfortable treating charging as part of your normal routine (like doing the weekly shop), an EV can still work very well – just with a slightly different rhythm to your driving life.





Charging 101

When you break it down, the biggest difference between an electric car and a petrol or diesel one is simply how it's fuelled. Everything else is still four wheels in motion, doing exactly what a car is meant to do — just more quietly and efficiently.

Charging an EV is far less complicated than it first appears. Instead of visiting a fuel station, you “refuel” by plugging the car in — either at home, at work, or at one of thousands of public chargers across the UK. Think of it like charging a phone: you top up while you sleep, work, or shop, and the car is ready whenever you are. The speeds vary depending on the charger, but the principle is always the same — plug in, and the car takes care of the rest.

To clarify: kWh (kilowatt-hour) is a measure of energy — it's the size of your car's battery, similar to how a fuel tank might hold 60 litres. In contrast, kW (kilowatts) is the power a charger can deliver at any moment. So a 50 kW charger can add up to roughly 50 kWh of energy in one hour. In reality, speeds vary because chargers don't always output their maximum rate, and your car will slow the charging automatically as the battery gets close to 80–90% to protect its long-term health.





Charging 101

Types of Charging: Slow, Fast, Rapid

Slow Charging (2–3 kW)

- Usually a 3-pin plug at home or very low-power public posts
- Adds around 6–8 miles per hour
- Best used only when no other option is available

Fast Charging (7–22 kW)

- Home chargers & most public destination chargers
- Adds around 25–75 miles per hour
- Ideal for overnight charging or topping up while parked

Rapid Charging (50–150+ kW)

- Motorway service stations & major hubs
- Adds 100–200 miles in 20–40 minutes
- Used primarily for long journeys

How Long It Actually Takes

Charging times can vary due to reasons other than the charger, such as:

State of charge (SOC)

- Cars charge faster when empty and slower when nearly full.

Maximum speed your car can take

- A 150 kW charger is wasted if your car only accepts 100 kW.





Charging 101

Real-world example:

A typical EV today (60–70 kWh battery):

- Home charger: 0–100% in 7–10 hours (overnight)
- Rapid public charger: 10–80% in 20–35 minutes

What Affects Charging Speed

Charging speed varies depending on:

- Temperature – Batteries charge slower when very cold
- Charger type & condition – Not all public chargers deliver peak power
- Your car's limits – Each EV has its own max AC & DC rate

To summarise:

Most of the time your car charges while you sleep or go about your day, so it's always ready when you need it. Chargers come in three main types (slow, fast, and rapid), each offering different speeds, but the process is always the same: plug in and let the car manage the rest. Real-world charging times vary slightly depending on temperature, charger quality, and what your car can handle, but modern EVs make it all automatic and effortless. Once you understand these basics, and establish your routine, the whole concept becomes surprisingly simple, and many drivers find it far easier and more convenient than filling up with fuel ever was.





⚡ 0%-100% reality

“Battery Buffers” & Why 0–100% Isn’t Real

EV batteries are designed with built-in buffers to protect long-term health. This means:

- When your car says 0%, it actually still has a safety buffer
- When it says 100%, it’s not truly full
- Charging slows down dramatically after 80% to protect the battery

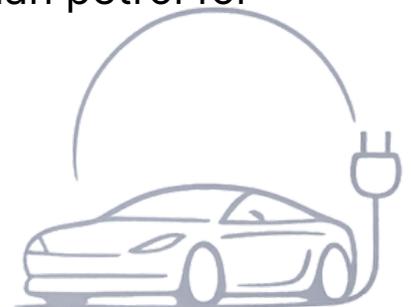
This is why car manufacturers, reviewers and rapid chargers quote 10–80% times instead of 0–100%.

It’s also why most EV drivers don’t bother going above 80% at public chargers unless they’re on a long trip.

Typical Weekly Charging Pattern for Normal Drivers

For an average UK driver doing 120–150 miles per week:

- Home charger:
 - Plug in 1–2 nights per week
 - Battery can stay between 20–80% most of the time
 - Often cheaper to charge than running a petrol car by a huge margin
- No home charger:
 - 1–2 public fast charges per week
 - Or one rapid top-up every 7–10 days
 - Costs more than home charging but still cheaper than petrol for most.





Public Charging: What It's Really Like

Most people massively overestimate how often they'll need to use public charging.

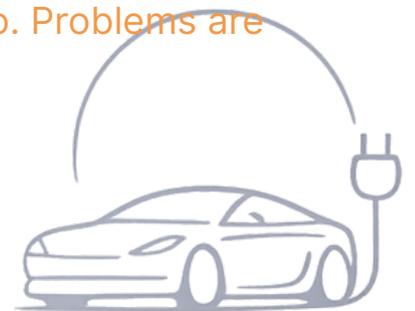
In reality, for anyone with a home charger, public charging usually makes up just 5–10% of their total charging, and often even less. Public charging is mainly for longer journeys, and the experience is far more straightforward than many expect. A typical rapid charge stop is 20–35 minutes, which lines up naturally with a toilet break, coffee stop, or stretching your legs.

Choosing the right networks helps too. Charging providers like Gridserve, InstaVolt, Osprey, Ionity and Shell Recharge consistently score well for reliability. A few apps make life much easier, including Zap-Map, PlugShare, Bonnet, Octopus Electroverse and more.

Costs vary depending on location and charger type, but rapid DC chargers usually fall between 60–85p per kWh, while AC destination chargers are often much cheaper.

Public charging is not something you rely on daily. It's something you use occasionally, in predictable moments, and almost always alongside something else you were already going to do.

I wouldn't be thorough if I didn't tell you that there are public chargers that occasionally aren't functioning when you get there. Always try and leave yourself 30-50 miles when you know you'll need a public charge. The charging infrastructure has grown incredibly fast and continues to do so. Problems are becoming the rare exception.





What You Don't Pay For: EV Running Costs

What You Don't Pay For With an EV:

Owning an EV means saying goodbye to a range of regular motoring costs:

No oil changes, no exhaust repairs, no spark plugs, no timing belts, and no gearbox servicing — because EVs simply don't have these parts.

Fewer moving components mean fewer things to maintain, and that often translates to lower long-term running costs.

As we've covered, electricity can also be far cheaper than petrol or diesel, especially with an overnight EV tariff. And as battery technology improves, long-term maintenance continues to fall. This guide doesn't cover the full financial picture, but if you want to dive deeper into total cost of ownership, salary sacrifice, company-car benefits, leasing vs PCP, or long-term running costs, I have a separate guide dedicated entirely to that topic. With a home charger, it really can be hugely financially beneficial, even with the pay per mile tax due from 2028.





What EV is right for me?

Well now that's the fun bit isn't it? There are so many choices and most manufacturers are now making purpose built electric cars. There are some fantastic options to suit every requirements you might have. Like most things in life, there are usually some trade-offs and compromises but overall, there are some brilliant cars out there, and many more to come.

I would recommend checking out TopGear's list of the best 20 electric cars on sale in 2025. It gives a great insight into what is out there.

We have owned several electric cars and currently have 2 on the drive. If you'd like me to do a guide on the ones I'd recommend for various requirements, let me know. If I get enough requests I'll get to work. I know about most of the cars already, I just can't help myself!





Technical jargon juicer

kWh — The size of the battery; like the “litre size” of a fuel tank.

Regenerative braking — The car recovers energy when the electric motor reverses its role and becomes a generator, creating resistance that slows the car down while converting that kinetic energy back into electricity to recharge the battery.

One pedal driving — Works alongside regen braking, as you take your foot off the accelerator, it starts to slow the car down, meaning most of the time, you don't have to move your foot to use the brake pedal. Don't worry, your reflexes for emergency braking are still ready!

LFP vs NMC — Two types of battery chemistry; LFP lasts longer & charges to 100%, NMC offers more range.

AC vs DC — AC is slower charging (home & destination). DC is rapid public charging.

CCS — The most common rapid-charging connector in the UK. It's the name for the shape of the plug on the cable/on your car.

Smart charging — With home chargers, automatically charges when electricity is cheapest/greenest if plugged in.

Preconditioning — Warming or cooling the battery before charging for optimal speed. This means if your car is set to go and find a charger (most EV's will do this for you, suggesting a list of local options) it will get the battery ready to get you up to super speeds faster.





Technical jargon juicer

WLTP — The official range test used in Europe (usually optimistic).

State of charge (SOC) — The % of battery filled.

Peak vs sustained charging — The brief maximum charging rate (in KW) vs the average rate over the charging session.

Real-world range — What you actually get day-to-day, not the brochure number. For example, a manufacturer might state 405 mile range WLTP, but in the real world of every day driving, you'll likely get 360 miles. However, I've found some manufacturers to be very accurate. Your range will fluctuate depending on how you drive (town driving is easy on the battery, vs motorway at 70mph will deplete it faster) and also use of air-con/heating.

Summer/winter range — Warm weather gives more range; cold weather reduces it. For example, your car might display 400 miles at 100% in summer vs 350 miles in winter.

Battery degradation — Small yearly loss of capacity (typically 0.5–1% per year).





Decision Aid Tables

Home charger

Question	If YES	If NO
1. Do you have a driveway or guaranteed off-street parking?	Perfect – home charging will be effortless. → Go to Q2	Public charging section applies → use Table B
2. Do you drive under 150 miles on a typical day?	EV is an extremely strong choice	Go to Q3
3. Do you regularly do long motorway trips (250+ miles) in a single stretch?	Choose an EV with 250–300+ mile real-world range, plan for some rapid charging	If you do loads of miles, EV still works but plan and calculate for rapid charging
4. Can you charge overnight at cheap rates (Intelligent Go etc.)?	Your running costs will be exceptionally low (£4–£6 per 250–300 miles)	EV still economical but not as optimal. With a smart meter you can access these rates
5. Do you prefer convenience over stopping at fuel stations?	EV is ideal – car fills itself every night	What’s that? You don’t like convenience?
6. Are you okay with spending 20–30mins rapid charging on long journeys?	EV is fully suitable for all UK driving	If no, choose EV with longest range or consider hybrid/petrol
7. Do you have a predictable routine (work hours, school runs etc.)?	EV fits perfectly with home charging	EV still works – just choose larger battery



Decision Aid Tables

No home charger

Question	If YES	If NO
1. Is there dependable public charging near your home or workplace?	Good foundation – go to Q2	EV not recommended unless workplace charging exists
2. Do you drive under 60 miles per day?	EV works well using 1–2 public charges per week	Go to Q3
3. Can you charge at work at least 1–3 times per week?	EV becomes highly viable	Go to Q4
4. Are you comfortable doing one 30–40 min rapid charge per week?	EV is doable, especially with a >60 kWh battery	EV may cause inconvenience → consider hybrid/petrol
5. Are rapid chargers reliably available in your area?	EV is suitable with planning	EV viability depends heavily on your mileage and location
6. Are you okay with rapid charging costing more than home charging?	EV is practical and still often cheaper than petrol	Petrol/hybrid may be more cost-efficient
7. Will you mainly charge during weekly shopping, gym visits, school runs?	EV becomes easy with habit stacking	EV may feel like added effort



Future Milestones

Key Developments Ahead

This section outlines the **key milestones** shaping the future of electric vehicles. We will explore significant phases, including advancements in battery technology, the expansion of charging infrastructure, and the integration of autonomous driving features. Each phase highlights critical actions that will drive the evolution of EVs, making them more accessible, efficient, and user-friendly for consumers in the coming years.

Phase 1

Next-Gen Batteries

Phase 2

Infrastructure Expansion

Phase 3

Autonomous Driving

Phase 4

Regulatory Advancements

Phase 6

Technological Integration

Phase 5

Consumer Adoption

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Published by The Custard Press