Car charging port for home

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Looking for home electric vehicle charging equipment and don"t really know where to start? Don"t worry, you"re not alone. There are a lot of EV home charging stations available today and most people don"t really know what features to look for in their search for the best home charging solution.

Before we start, we need to clarify some terminology. Electric vehicle supply equipment, or "EVSE," is actually the proper term for what many call "EV chargers" or "EV charging stations." The reason "charging station" is not the proper term is because the actual charging equipment is built into the car, and the EVSE really just provides a safe supply of electricity to the vehicle.

However, we"ve decided to use the term "charging station" or "charger" here because that"s what most people recognize the equipment as. Even the companies that sell EVSE refer to them as "chargers" or "charging stations" on their websites.

It"s also important to note this post is specific to the North American market. The electricity supply in Europe and most other parts of the world does not use a 120-volt supply as their standard household current like we do in North America. As such, there is no "level 1 charging" in Europe. Also, in Europe, the charging cable is often not tethered to the unit for level 2 charging, and thus, the equipment is very different than what is used in North America.

Every electric vehicle sold today comes standard with a 120-volt level 1 portable charger (above). These chargers can be plugged into a simple household outlet, and don"t require any special installation. Some manufacturers, like Tesla, for instance, come with a plug-in 120/240-volt Level 1/2 charger. These dual-voltage chargers can be used with either a 120-volt or a more powerful 240-volt outlet like what an electric dryer plugs into.

However, most manufacturers only provide a basic level 1, 120-volt charger, and offer a higher-powered level 2 unit for sale as an option. In order to recharge their EV faster, many owners choose to install a 240-volt electrical supply and level 2 charging station.

We mention this not to confuse, but to assure that any charging station you purchase in your native market will charge your electric car; you do not need to worry about buying the "wrong one". Additionally, while Tesla vehicles use a proprietary plug for level 1/2 charging, they can also use any other level 1 or level 2 charging station because Tesla provides an adapter with every car. These adapters allow Tesla to use charging stations with the non-proprietary J1772 connector.

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Level 1 chargers will deliver between 3 and 5 miles of range per hour to a typical electric car. Level 2 chargers increase the rate to a range of between 12 and 60 miles per hour. However, that number will be limited to how much electricity the car"s onboard charger can accept. The car is always in control of how much electricity it takes in, so you won"t damage the vehicle if you buy a charging station that can deliver more power than the car can accept. In fact, many people choose to buy a charging station that can deliver more power than their current EV can accept, so they"ll be ready if their next EV can charge at a higher rate.

There are low-powered level 2 chargers that are small and portable. Many of these are limited to a power delivery of 16-amps to 20-amps. These units will charge a typical EV at a rate of about 12 to 18 miles per hour. We"ll be doing a side-by-side comparison on those portable units soon, but today we"re going to focus on the best choices for medium-powered, wall-mounted charging stations.

The car is always in control of how much electricity it takes in, so you won"t damage the vehicle.

These units typically deliver between 30-amps and 40-amps and will charge a typical EV at a rate of about 25 to 35 miles per hour. Most of today"s wall-mounted level 2 charging stations come in both hard-wired and plug-in versions, which we"ll discuss later. But before buying a level 2 charger, there are a couple of things you should consider.

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