Electric car kw numbers

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Electric vehicles are, in many ways, simpler than conventionally powered cars in that they have far fewer moving parts or things that can go wrong.

However, anyone new to EVs would be forgiven for being a little confused at all the numbers relating to their power, battery capacity and how long they take to charge, as their respective units of measurement all contain a reference to kilowatts (kW).

The car''s power is fairly straightforward and refers to the electric motor''s maximum output. This is measured in kilowatts (or 1000 watts) just like a normal internal combustion engine (ICE). The higher the kW figure, the more oomph you''ll get at the expense of energy consumption.

As the following list shows the power ratings of EVs aren''t too different when compared with similarly-sized and performing ICE vehicles.

The total battery capacity of an EV is measured in kilowatt-hours (kWh or kW-h). This rating tells you how much electricity can be stored in the battery pack. It''s a unit of energy just like calories and one kWh is equal to 3600 kilojoules (or 3.6 megajoules). Unlike kW, it is not a unit of power.

Lower-powered EVs require a smaller capacity; for example the Nissan Leaf stores 40kWh and the Hyundai Kona Electric 64kWh. The Porsche Taycan Turbo S meanwhile stores a maximum of 93.4kWh.

If all these cars had the same electric motor (and thereby the same maximum amount of power drawn from the battery at any given time) the Porsche would have the longest driving range because of its higher capacity.

However, the Porsche has a 560kW motor that''s designed for high performance and that comes at the cost of driving range, which is about 405 kilometres. But the Hyundai Kona Electric has a 557km distance range, even though it has a smaller battery capacity, because its motor is less powerful.

Like how ICE vehicle fuel consumption is measured in litres per 100km in highway, urban and combined settings, EV efficiency is rated by the number of kWh consumed over 100km.

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