

What does ev mean

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From the day it was announced, back in March 2016, the Tesla Model 3 has been billed as the car to take electric vehicles mainstream.

Starting at \$35,000, it has a claimed 220 miles of range, is fitted with all of the hardware necessary to drive fully autonomously (Tesla says), and might one day be spoken about by historians in the same breath as the Ford Model T and Citroen 2CV.

At least, that was the case two years ago. Now, as Model 3 production finally speeds up and there's a chance it might be available in the UK and Europe by the very end of the year, Tesla finds it no longer has the EV market to itself.

This gives us the perfect opportunity to take stock and evaluate the current situation with electric cars.

Fundamentally, electric cars work in broadly the same way as ones powered by petrol, diesel or even hydrogen. There is a fuel source, a drive unit, and a gearbox to provide motion forwards and backwards. Above this there are passenger and luggage compartments.

Electric vehicles (EVs) are still cars, and anyone who has driven an automatic vehicle will feel immediately at home behind the wheel of one.

There is a distinct lack of engine noise, of course, and the initial acceleration of EVs is often greater than that of an similarly sized internal combustion car. Or, in the case of the Tesla Model S P100D, EVs can literally be the quickest accelerating cars on sale today.

Due to their huge weight, the batteries of EVs are fitted to the floor. This not only offers a large and mostly flat space for the cells to sit, but also helps to lower the car's centre of gravity.

Although they weigh comfortably over two tonnes, the Tesla Model S and Model X offer decent handling because of the heavy battery being low down.

They, like other EVs, also benefit from extra cabin space thanks to there being no transmission tunnel between the seats.

The biggest different between internal combustion engine (ICE) and EV cars during everyday driving is the latter's regenerative braking system, which captures kinetic energy (caused by the forward motion of the car) and feeds it into the battery whenever you lift off the accelerator.

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EVs still have a brake pedal, but it can be used less often due to extra retardation caused by the regen system.

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