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How Reliable are EVs?



The latest *Consumer Reports*
survey has the answer



This post is a summary of the latest reliability survey conducted by Consumer Reports.

Information was gathered from about 300,000 car owners on model years 2000 to 2024, and early 2025.

Keys to reliability



- This isn't a revelation: reliability is highly correlated with design changes.
- In other words, when manufacturers add new gizmos or introduces new engine designs, reliability tends to decline.
- That's why it's often wise to avoid buying new models until manufacturers get the kinks out.
- It's also the primary reason EVs are less reliable than internal combustion engines. So much is new, and new stuff is being added yearly.

Good news: EVs are getting better



The reliability gap between gas-powered vehicles and EVs and plug-in hybrids is closing.

It's not likely to fully close until EV designs stabilize.



- In Consumer Reports 2023 survey, on average, electric vehicles had 79% more problems than internal combustion engines (ICE). Ouch!
- In 2024, the gap has been nearly cut in half. EVs were reported to have only 42% more problems.
- That's still a big number, but it's still a major leap forward.
- Plug-in hybrids (PHEV) – which can travel short distances on only batteries – didn't fare as well. They had 70% more problems than ICE vehicles. Unbelievably, that was still half of what was reported in 2023. Double ouch!
- The reliability of gas-electric hybrids was on par with combustion engines.



The survey looked at a total of 22 brands.

For the first time since 2020, neither Toyota nor its luxury brand Lexus held the top spot.

The best



- The most reliable brand in the 2024 survey was Subaru.
- Lexus and Toyota didn't drop far. They took 2nd and 3rd.
- Rounding out the top 5 were Honda and its luxury brand Acura.
- The U.S. auto industry continues to trail Japan. The highest-ranked American car was General Motor's Buick at 11.



Rivian is a new company making its technology mostly unproven, including its powertrains.

Said Jake Fisher, head of Consumer Reports' auto test center, "It's expected that you're going to have issues when you have nothing to carry over" from previous models.

The worst



- Not surprisingly, an EV was rated the least reliable vehicle. For 2024 the brand with that dubious distinction is Rivian
- General Motor's Cadillac may want to rethink its tagline "Be Iconic" because the only thing its currently iconic for is the lack of reliability. It was the next to worst brand, and doesn't have being electric as an excuse.
- Rounding out the bottom five were GMC, Jeep, and a little surprising – Volkswagen.

But what about Tesla?

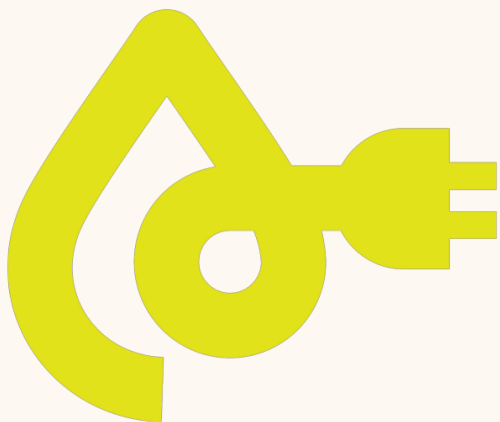


Perhaps Elon is preoccupied with getting to Mars and playing king-maker to worry about the quality of his signature company's products.

Then again, when you're worth \$400 billion and have a cadre of people who blindly follow you, why worry about anything.



- Tesla finished in 17th place. That's out of 22 models, so in this case, making the top 20 offers no bragging rights.
- The company dropped three spots from the 2023 survey.
- The good news is that there are only five more spots to drop.
- I will say again, Tesla will not survive as a car company, and this is just another example of why.



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