

Complete EV Buying Checklist

Your Ultimate Guide to Purchasing Affordable Electric Cars Under \$30,000

Pre-Purchase Research Checklist

Budget Planning

- ☐ Set maximum budget including taxes, fees, and registration
- ☐ Research federal tax credit eligibility (\$7,500 for new, \$4,000 for used)
- ☐ Check state and local EV incentives in your area
- ☐ Calculate utility rebates for EV purchases
- ☐ Factor in home charging equipment costs (\$300-\$1,500)
- ☐ Compare financing options (EV-specific loans often have better rates)

Vehicle Selection Criteria

- ☐ Determine daily driving range needs (most people drive <50 miles/day)
 - ☐ Identify must-have features (heated seats, cargo space, etc.)
 - ☐ Research vehicle reliability ratings and owner reviews
 - ☐ Compare warranty coverage (8-10 years for battery is standard)
 - ☐ Check manufacturer's service network in your area
 - ☐ Verify parts availability and typical repair costs
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For Used EV Purchases - Battery Health Assessment

Essential Questions to Ask Dealers/Sellers

- ☐ "What is the current battery capacity percentage?"
- ☐ "Has the battery been replaced or serviced?"
- ☐ "Can you provide a battery health report?"
- ☐ "What's the remaining battery warranty coverage?"
- ☐ "Has the vehicle been in any accidents affecting the battery?"
- ☐ "Are there any active recalls or service bulletins?"

Physical Inspection Points

- ☐ Check for unusual battery drain (should lose <5% per day when parked)
- ☐ Test charging speed at different charge levels
- ☐ Verify all charging ports work properly

- ☐ Look for corrosion around charging components
- ☐ Check for battery cooling system leaks (if applicable)
- ☐ Test regenerative braking functionality

Documentation to Request

- ☐ Battery capacity test results
 - ☐ Maintenance records
 - ☐ Charging history (if available)
 - ☐ Previous owner contact for battery performance questions
 - ☐ Any battery warranty transfers or extensions
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Charging Cost Calculator Worksheet

Home Charging Costs

Your Local Electricity Rate: _____ cents per kWh

Vehicle Battery Size: _____ kWh

Cost for Full Charge: Battery Size × Electricity Rate = \$_____

Cost Per Mile: Full Charge Cost ÷ EPA Range = \$_____ per mile

Monthly Driving Cost Comparison

Your Monthly Miles: _____ miles

EV Monthly Cost: Monthly Miles × Cost Per Mile = \$_____

Gas Car Comparison: Monthly Miles ÷ MPG × Gas Price = \$_____

Monthly Savings: Gas Cost - EV Cost = \$_____

Annual Savings: Monthly Savings × 12 = \$_____

Insurance Comparison Template

Companies to Contact

- ☐ Current insurance provider
- ☐ Tesla Insurance (if available in your state)
- ☐ Progressive
- ☐ State Farm

- ☐ Geico
- ☐ Local/regional insurers

Questions to Ask Each Company

- ☐ "Do you offer EV-specific discounts?"
- ☐ "What's the coverage for battery replacement?"
- ☐ "Are charging equipment and cables covered?"
- ☐ "Do you cover rental cars during charging on road trips?"
- ☐ "What safety feature discounts apply to this vehicle?"

Rate Comparison Chart

Company	6-Month Premium	EV Discount	Total Cost	Notes
	\$	\$	\$	
	\$	\$	\$	
	\$	\$	\$	

Federal and State Incentive Tracker

Federal Tax Credits (2025)

- ☐ New EV Tax Credit: Up to \$7,500 (income limits apply)
- ☐ Used EV Tax Credit: Up to \$4,000 (income and price limits apply)
- ☐ Must be purchased from licensed dealer for used credit
- ☐ Vehicle must meet final assembly requirements

State Incentive Research

Your State: _____

Available Incentives:

- ☐ State tax credit/rebate: \$_____
- ☐ Local utility rebate: \$_____
- ☐ Municipal incentives: \$_____
- ☐ HOV lane access: Yes/No
- ☐ Reduced registration fees: \$_____
- ☐ Free/reduced parking: Yes/No

Income Requirements Check

- ☐ Federal AGI limits: \$300K joint/\$150K single (new), \$150K joint/\$75K single (used)
 - ☐ State income limits (vary by state): \$_____
 - ☐ Household size considerations: _____
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Maintenance Schedule Template

Monthly Checks

- ☐ Tire pressure and tread depth
- ☐ Brake pad wear (EVs use brakes less due to regenerative braking)
- ☐ Charging cable condition
- ☐ Software updates available

Every 6 Months

- ☐ Cabin air filter inspection
- ☐ Windshield washer fluid
- ☐ Battery coolant level (if accessible)
- ☐ Tire rotation

Annual Maintenance

- ☐ Brake system inspection
- ☐ Battery health check
- ☐ Charging system inspection
- ☐ Software/firmware updates
- ☐ 12V battery replacement (typically every 3-5 years)

What You DON'T Need

- ☐ Oil changes
 - ☐ Spark plug replacement
 - ☐ Transmission service
 - ☐ Timing belt replacement
 - ☐ Exhaust system maintenance
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Road Trip Planning Guide

Pre-Trip Preparation

- ☐ Download charging network apps (PlugShare, ChargePoint, Electrify America)
- ☐ Plan charging stops every 150-200 miles

- ☐ Identify backup charging locations
- ☐ Pack charging adapters if needed
- ☐ Check weather forecast (cold reduces range by 20-30%)

Essential Apps for EV Road Trips

- ☐ PlugShare - Community-based charging station locator
- ☐ ChargePoint - Major charging network
- ☐ Electrify America - Fast charging network
- ☐ A Better Routeplanner (ABRP) - EV-specific route planning
- ☐ Your vehicle's manufacturer app

Emergency Kit for EVs

- ☐ Portable 12V tire inflator
 - ☐ Jumper cables for 12V battery
 - ☐ Emergency charging cable (120V)
 - ☐ Charging network membership cards
 - ☐ Roadside assistance contact info
 - ☐ Paper maps (in case phone dies)
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Final Purchase Checklist

Before Signing Papers

- ☐ Test drive in various conditions (city, highway, parking)
- ☐ Verify all electrical systems work
- ☐ Check charging port functionality
- ☐ Confirm final price includes all incentives
- ☐ Review warranty coverage details
- ☐ Understand return/exchange policy

Documents to Obtain

- ☐ Title and registration
- ☐ Warranty documentation
- ☐ Owner's manual and charging guide
- ☐ Maintenance schedule
- ☐ Emergency contact numbers
- ☐ Charging network account setup info

First Week of Ownership

- ☐ Set up home charging routine
 - ☐ Download manufacturer's app
 - ☐ Register for charging network accounts
 - ☐ Schedule first maintenance check
 - ☐ Contact insurance to finalize coverage
 - ☐ Join local EV owner groups/forums
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Money-Saving Tips

Best Times to Buy

- ☐ End of model year clearances (September-November)
- ☐ End of calendar year for tax benefits
- ☐ End of manufacturer's fiscal quarters
- ☐ When new model updates are announced

Negotiation Points for Used EVs

- ☐ Battery capacity report results
- ☐ Remaining warranty coverage
- ☐ Charging equipment inclusion
- ☐ Recent maintenance records
- ☐ Multiple vehicle comparison pricing

Long-Term Savings Tracking

Purchase Price: \$_____

Less Incentives: -\$_____

Net Purchase Price: \$_____

5-Year Fuel Savings: +\$_____

5-Year Maintenance Savings: +\$_____

Total Cost of Ownership: \$_____

This checklist is designed to help you make an informed decision when purchasing affordable electric cars under \$30,000. Print this guide and take it with you when shopping to ensure you don't miss any important considerations.

Remember: The best EV for you is the one that meets your daily driving needs, fits your budget, and comes from a manufacturer with good local service support.

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