

Driving has a much smaller carbon footprint than flying. And even if relying on coal-fired power, electric vehicles (EVs) cause less pollution than comparable internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles. Despite automakers expanded EV offerings, “range anxiety” still dissuades many consumers from buying one. Some drivers who know many EVs have the same, 300-mile range of an ICE model worry that they won’t find chargers when and where needed when they take road trips. Or they dread downtime while charging.

We offer these tips for EV road trips if you’re shopping for a new automobile:

1. Download the [PlugShare app](#). (You can access its detailed charger information via computer, too, but an iOS or Android phone or web-enabled tablet is invaluable when on the road.) Set its filter to the types of chargers compatible with your EV.
2. Plan to charge at night as you sleep, especially if you don’t have access to Level 3 or super-chargers or will be venturing far beyond interstate highways. More and more hotels and campsites offer EV-charging to guests. They might not tout their chargers prominently on their web sites, but you can find them on PlugShare. Just in case, carry a long, heavy duty extension cord in your EV trunk or frunk.
3. Be flexible. Ensure your passengers accept that charging is an itinerary priority. If you’re supercharging—typically requiring 25-45 minutes—eat a meal, take a walk, bring a good book or catch up on email or phone calls. If you must charge at slower rates during the day, look for ways to make it fit your schedule: have a picnic, take a hike, visit a museum or see a movie.
4. Take it easy and mind speed limits. Range miles \neq actual road miles. Just as ICE drivers who habitually jump-start and ignore speed limits get fewer miles from a gallon of fuel, gentler driving habits allow you to cover more miles in an EV.
5. Set your EV to maximize regenerative braking, which recaptures power as you travel downhill and decelerate. In hilly areas, regenerative braking and driving at the speed limit will allow you to extend your range significantly.
6. Avoid letting the charge on your EV’s battery drop below 20%. It’s hard on the batteries and you could get stuck in traffic. Only charge above 90% when on a road trip, as that last 10% takes the longest.
7. Use space heating only if you lack heated seats or they’re insufficient in winter.
8. Carry a bicycle pump and pressure gauge. Check your tires’ inflation (when they’re cold). If they lack the minimum pressure shown on their sidewalls, adjust as needed.