



When is the right time to consider an electric vehicle? The answer is now. And why? Our tech guy Jon Mamonski reports on the key issues that have come together in a perfect storm for your petrol car

The cost of petrol – which will return to more than \$2 a litre by October this year
There is a fuel security crisis right now. Australia once had 20 refineries – now there are two – so almost all of Australia's fuel (91 per cent) is imported and according to the International Energy Agency (IEA) we only hold 32 days' supply instead of the required minimum standard 68 days. Should a foreign power intervene to our north – Australia would have no fuel within a month.
The way to think about how much it costs you to use your car is your total ownership cost including a) purchase price, b) fuel consumption, c) maintenance and d) your car's contribution to carbon emissions.
According to the Electric Vehicle Council of Australia, the operating costs of a zero-emission vehicle are about 75 per cent cheaper per kilometre when compared to a conventional internal combustion engine vehicle. The EVCA calculates that a petrol car costs around \$14 per/100 km and an

electric car costs \$4 per/100 km. Yes, the initial purchase price of an electric vehicle (EV) is steeper – \$55,000 to \$65,000 – but the ongoing costs are minimal.
The total cost of ownership including running costs and maintenance
To 'fill up' an EV is around \$7 for a full charge and to fill a petrol tank now for 40 litres of fuel is \$65. That will jump to \$80 by October this year. You'll need two full EV charges for the petrol tank equivalent – so that's \$14.
That's still 75 per cent cheaper than petrol. If you use an average of 2000 litres of fuel a year at a cost of around \$4000, your equivalent EV power cost will be \$1000 or almost nothing if you have solar power at home. Newer shopping centres also have EV chargers while you're going about your business.
Exhaust emissions and the cost to the environment
Think about your car's exhaust. The National Transport Commission reports that

Australian passenger cars on average emit 155g/km. EVs emit nothing.
The Electric Vehicle Council estimate service and repair costs for EVs to be 70 per cent cheaper per kilometre than traditional cars because there's a lot fewer moving parts.
Why aren't there more affordable electric cars in Australia?
Electric car sales have tripled in Australia since 2020 to 20,655 last year and electric cars now make up two per cent of all vehicles sold nationally, the Electric Vehicle Council reports. EV makers are focussing on countries with strict emission standards first.
Australia has no measures like electric vehicle sales targets, phase-out dates for internal combustion engine cars and fuel efficiency standards for new cars or incentives so it's time to take matters into your own hands and think seriously about making your next vehicle electric and forget standing at the petrol station filling the tank and watching your dollars flash by.

What's new?

Mini LED leads TV tech

TCL's X10 series Mini LED takes your viewing experience to a new level. The incredible resolution uses an increased number of independent pixel-sized LED light sources – each one precisely controlled to deliver a much smoother, uniform and brighter screen also enhanced by Dolby Vision and 4K HDR10+. Quantum Dot technology gives you pure, true-to-life images and all reproduced with an extraordinary 3D-like depth. With hands free voice control and access to all the major streaming and gaming services via Android TV and Google Play services. The TCL X10 is available in 65 inch (\$4699) and 75 inch (\$6999).



SONY earbuds let the world in

Dubbed the LinkBuds (\$320), this tiny set features an entirely open-wear style that lets outside noise in by design rather than relying on an ambient sound mode. And Sony didn't just build something that sits outside of your ear either. The company designed a circular driver that is entirely open in the middle – like a doughnut. The company also brought along some of the best features from the WF-1000XM4 buds – including Speak-to-Chat. This tool automatically pauses the audio when you start talking so you don't have to awkwardly tap when someone walks up for a quick conversation.

Quick text scan

The Scanmarker Air is a digital pen that uses optical character recognition – OCR – to transfer printed media to your computer, phone or tablet via Bluetooth. Simply drag the device across words, sentences or entire paragraphs – just as you would with a highlighter – and your scanned selection will appear on your word processor almost instantly. The Scanmarker Air also reads passages back to you using text-to-speech which may help you comprehend your source material better. Priced at \$208 on Amazon.



Name your poison

A company called Cana has revealed what it's calling the planet's first "molecular beverage printer". The idea is that – using a single cartridge of flavorings – the machine can mix one of thousands of different beverages – including juice, soft drinks, iced coffee, sports drinks, wine and cocktails. With Cana One – designed to sit on a kitchen benchtop – you'll be able to select a drink from a wide range of beverage types and brands using a touchscreen. You can customise the levels of alcohol, caffeine and sugar. While it's only available in the US at the moment eventually it will cost around \$699 plus you'll pay for the device's concoctions on a per-drink basis. Each will cost between 50 cents and \$5 and promises to be lower than retail.



Teams certified Dell headset

Collaborate with ease anywhere with this Teams certified Dell Premier Wireless ANC headset which offers active noise cancellation and smart sensors that automatically mute and unmute your call. You can take calls all day, hassle-free with superb audio clarity and high-quality stereo sound. The on-demand active noise cancellation feature allows you to block out ambient noise and stay focused on your conversations. Switching off the active noise cancellation feature gives you the option to stay connected to your surroundings, even with your headset on. Available from Dell for \$319 and it pairs perfectly with the award-winning Dell UltraSharp WB7022 webcam at \$379.



Smart watch for serious golfers

TAG Heuer has introduced a Calibre E4 Golf Edition with some matching upgrades to your experience on the fairway. Most notably the on-watch map interface shows more of the course and your game including the distances for the target and tracking shot. You can also expect automatic shot tracking when you swing at the tee if you're determined to perfect your drive. If you pair with an iPhone, you can also use TAG Heuer's iOS app to share 3D videos of your best shots. A bargain at \$3450 with 3 Titleist golf balls.



Daytime projectors

Like your TV and movies on a really big screen? LG is updating its CineBeam 4K projectors and the upgrades are good news if you tend to watch during the day. Both the HU715Q ultra-short-throw laser projector and the HU710P laser-LED hybrid promise better daytime viewing. The two also provide high 2,000,000:1 contrast ratios to provide more details in bright and dark video scenes. The HU710P peaks at 2000 lumens of brightness and is built for back-of-the-room projection at distances between three and five metres giving up to a 10-metre screen. No firm Australian pricing yet but expect to pay \$4000 to \$5000. Their sheer screen size and brightness might make them easier to justify as replacements for some premium large-screen TVs.



Laptop runs on phone chip

Intel has hogged the laptop 'System on a Chip' (SOC) market for years but mobile phones are now so powerful they can be used in laptops with some surprising benefits like long battery life and built in 5G comms. Lenovo says the ThinkPad X13s can last up to 28 hours on a single charge. And to make sure you have a speedy internet connection wherever you go, the laptop also supports 5G and fast WiFi. The expected price is \$1465.



The VW Combi van is back

After years of design work, the VW Combi is back, it's called the ID. Buzz and should be available in Australia in time for Christmas. With passenger and cargo versions its built on VW's Modular Electric-drive Toolkit (MEB) platform that's shared with other VW and Audi EVs. Initially it will be available as a RWD model with a 150kW/310Nm motor and an AWD coming later. Connected to a rapid charger, the ID. Buzz can be topped up to 80 per cent charge within 30 minutes. While we don't have any official range figures yet, the ID. Buzz's expected range is between 350-400km. Design-wise, the ID. Buzz's exterior pays homage to the original Type 2 microbus with a two-tone paint job, V-shaped bonnet and large VW emblems front and back. According to VW, the ID. Buzz has a carbon neutral manufacturing footprint.



Jeep electric scooter

Jeep's Razor is an adult e-scooter designed expressly for off-road use. It's not the fastest machine of its kind with a 20Km top speed but the combination of a wide design with 20cm, air-filled pneumatic tyres promises a comfortable and grippy ride on trails – at least those trails that don't ban vehicles. The RX200 should be available now through Amazon US for \$999 delivered and it's far more affordable than Jeep's \$7899 e-bike.