

Tesla Model 3 isn't only affordable EV on market

September 27 2017, by Cameron Rogers



This photo provided by Tesla shows the 2017 Tesla Model 3, a compact electric sedan that offers two levels of range. It's the newest model from Tesla and slots below the Model S sedan in the company's lineup. (Courtesy of Tesla Inc. via AP)

The Tesla Model 3 has captured the interest of both mainstream car buyers and electric vehicle enthusiasts alike. The Model 3's combination of sleek styling, long range and semiautonomous driving features gives the Model 3 an "it" factor that's hard to resist. But with a base price of \$35,000, limited availability, and many of its most desirable features on

the options list, the Model 3 isn't for everybody.

For buyers who are interested in an electric vehicle but don't want to wait around for the Model 3, several great alternatives are available now at a similar price point. Some have shorter ranges while others lack the latest driver assistance features, but if you're interested in an electric car that won't take as long to arrive, these EVs are worth a look.

2018 NISSAN LEAF

The Nissan Leaf was a game-changer when it debuted in 2011, so hopes are high for the redesigned 2018 model. The Leaf still doesn't have the long-range abilities of the Model 3 and Chevrolet Bolt, but its low base price gives it a level of attainability that most competitors can't match. In addition to its new look, the 2018 Leaf boasts a larger battery pack that increases maximum range from 107 miles to an estimated 150 miles. A more powerful electric motor bumps output from 107 to 147 horsepower for improved performance.

Two new features set the Leaf apart from its rivals. The first is called e-Pedal. It allows drivers to bring the Leaf to a complete stop merely by lifting off the accelerator. It makes for a one-pedal driving experience that eases fatigue in heavy traffic.

The second feature, called ProPilot Assist, combines several driver aids to provide a semiautonomous driving experience. Available on SV and SL models, ProPilot Assist maintains a set distance between the Leaf and the car in front, keeps the Leaf centered in its lane and steers through corners. Nissan notes that it's called ProPilot "assist," so drivers still need to keep their hands on the wheel and their eyes on the road.



This photo provided by BMW shows the 2017 BMW i3, a small luxury hatchback with rear-hinged secondary doors to provide easy access to the back seat. It's a bit more expensive than rivals, but its strong, lightweight construction and a cabin decorated with exotic and sustainable materials justify its high price tag. (c quadrat photography/Courtesy of BMW of North America LLC via AP)

Base price: \$30,875

Range: 150 miles (manufacturer estimate)

Recharge time: 8 hours on a 240-volt charger

Availability: On sale early 2018 nationwide

2017 CHEVROLET BOLT

The Chevrolet Bolt EV is the Model 3's closest rival. Not only can it travel 238 miles on a single charge—besting the standard Model 3's estimated range by 18 miles—it's also one of the quickest EVs on this list, needing just 6.8 seconds to hit 60 mph from a dead stop. It's priced similarly to the Model 3, but the Bolt EV has a solid list of features for that price and is widely available at Chevrolet dealers nationwide.



This photo provided by Nissan shows the 2018 Nissan Leaf, a redesigned version of one of the most popular electric vehicles ever produced. It goes on sale in early 2018, with a starting price just under \$31,000. (Courtesy of Nissan North America Inc. via AP)

Base price: \$37,495

Range: 238 miles (EPA estimate)

Recharge time: 9 hours on a 240-volt charger

Availability: On sale now nationwide

2017 HYUNDAI IONIQ

Like the Leaf, the Hyundai Ioniq EV offers solid range at a low starting price. It also has upscale cabin materials, which feel more substantial and durable than what others in the class use. The restrained interior also has a practical design, a bonus for buyers who want an EV that still feels like a conventional car.



This photo provided by Hyundai shows the 2017 Hyundai Ioniq, which Edmunds highlights as one of the more enticing new EV choices. Despite the car's low sticker price, the interior feels more expensive than those of many cars in this class. But the Ioniq is currently only available in California. (Courtesy of the Hyundai Motor America via AP)

Base price: \$30,335

Range: 124 miles (EPA estimate)

Recharge time: 4 hours on a 240-volt charger

Availability: On sale now, California only

2017 VOLKSWAGEN E-GOLF

The Volkswagen e-Golf takes the Golf's impressive handling and solid construction and adds an EV powertrain. Numerous improvements for the 2017 model year include an updated battery pack with increased range, a more powerful motor, a higher top speed, exterior styling changes, and the addition of a midpack Limited Edition trim.



This photo provided by Volkswagen shows the 2017 Volkswagen e-Golf, one of the standouts in the compact EV class. Based on the excellent gas-powered Golf hatchback, the e-Golf offers a comfortable ride and plenty of usable cargo space. (Courtesy of Volkswagen of America Inc. via AP)

Base Price: \$31,315

Range: 125 miles (EPA estimate)

Recharge time: 5.3 hours on a 240-volt charger

Availability: On sale now, select states

2017 BMW i3

BMW's i3 stands out in more ways than one. Its funky styling hides a frame made of carbon-fiber-reinforced plastic, making it extremely tough yet lightweight. Inside, its cabin is decked out with natural materials, including real eucalyptus wood trim and leather treated with olive tree leaf extract. The i3 is sold with a choice of two battery sizes: the base 60-amp-hour version with 81 miles of range or the 94-Ah version with 114 miles of range. The 94-Ah model is also available with a small gasoline engine to further extend the i3's range when the battery runs out.



This photo provided by General Motors Co. shows the 2017 Chevrolet Bolt, one of just two affordable EVs with more than 200 miles of range. Unlike the Tesla Model 3, the Bolt is readily available at dealerships across the country now. (Jessica Lynn Walker/Courtesy of General Motors Co. via AP)

Base price: \$43,395

Range: 81 to 114 miles (EPA estimate)

Recharge time: 4-5 hours on a 240-volt charger

Availability: On sale now nationwide

EDMUNDS SAYS: You don't have to wait for a Tesla Model 3 to get an

affordable EV with more than enough range to handle your everyday commute.

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