

Road REPORT

WORTH IT

Pricey cars earned generally higher marks from owners—but not all luxury cars scored well.

GREEN IS IN

Hybrid cars and electrics, such as the Tesla Model S, were tops in owner satisfaction.

TOP BRANDS

After Tesla, the leading brands were Porsche and Audi.



NOW, THAT'S SATISFYING

Our Annual Owner Satisfaction Survey polled subscribers on the cars that make them happy. Tesla was No. 1. See all of the winners on page 48.

Would You Buy Your Car Again?

Our annual owner-satisfaction survey asked that question. Drivers saying yes tend to have pricey cars. But 'fun to drive' counts for a lot, too.

OUR SUBSCRIBERS KNOW what they want: *everything*. They want fun cars with a touch of luxury that do what's expected.

That's what we found in Consumer Reports' annual owner-satisfaction survey, covering 350,000 vehicles from one to three years old.

We asked subscribers whether they would get the same car all over again, and to consider attributes such as styling, comfort, features, cargo space, fuel economy, maintenance and repair costs, overall value, and driving dynamics. Owners of a sporty, luxurious, or fuel-efficient hybrid or electric- or diesel-powered vehicle were most likely to answer "definitely yes."

With a single model that checks all of those boxes, Tesla Motors has built a rabid following since the car's 2012 launch, reflected in 98 percent of Model S owners saying they would definitely purchase it again. Not only is the Tesla roomy, comfortable, and a lot of fun to drive, but it also has low operating costs—returning the equivalent of 84 mpg (a consolation, of sorts, for the car's \$90,000-plus price).

Next-most-satisfying were four sports cars: The Chevrolet Corvette and a trio of German models from Stuttgart—the Porsche Cayman, Boxster, and 911.

Rounding out the top 10 were the Mercedes-Benz E250 BlueTec diesel, Porsche Cayenne SUV, BMW 328d (another diesel), muscular Dodge Challenger V-8, and Chevrolet Volt plug-in hybrid.

The unhappy car owner is rarer than you might think: Of the 280-plus models that we rated in the survey, only four vehicles had less than 50 percent of owners who would "definitely" purchase the car again.

Across all vehicles, the average satisfaction rate was about 70 percent.

And it seems our subscribers agree with our recommendations: All but two of the top 10 vehicles are "recommended" in



Consumer Reports' overall Ratings of cars we tested. The exceptions: the Porsche Cayman, which we haven't tested, and the Mercedes-Benz E250 BlueTec, which doesn't have sufficient reliability data.

When given a choice between traditional gas engines and alternative powertrains, owners rank hybrids, electric cars, and diesels as the most satisfying choices in almost every category in which they compete. The Chevrolet Volt and Toyota Prius topped our lists of compact cars, with 85 and 82 percent of buyers saying they would buy those

cars again. Among midsize sedans, the Honda Accord Hybrid and Ford Fusion Energi led the pack.

Fuel-efficient diesels also proved popular. The Mercedes-Benz E250 BlueTec diesel finished second to the Tesla among fuel-efficient cars, and 86 percent of BMW 328d buyers would buy another. Volkswagen's Passat, Beetle, and Jetta diesel variants also ranked high in their categories. In the pickup-truck category, all of the top scorers have diesel engines.

As far as fuel economy, it's about meeting expectations. Owners were as happy with Chevrolet Corvettes as with four-cylinder Nissan Altimas. People recognize what they are getting into; less than 10 percent of owners felt OK about their thirsty Nissan Titans and Ford heavy-duty pickups.

SUV buyers expressed a preference for spacious, capable vehicles that are pleasant to drive, easy to see out of, and as efficient as possible. That includes the Porsche Cayenne (87 percent) in luxury SUVs, Subaru Forester (83) among small SUVs, Toyota Highlander V-6 (82) in midsize SUVs, and Chevrolet Suburban and Tahoe and their GMC twins (84) in large SUVs.

You might think that more cargo space would be more satisfying. But it's more about perceptions. The smartly packaged Tesla was considered just as satisfying as beasts of burden such as the Suburban and Yukon XL. Hybrids with batteries that rob space in the trunk were the biggest disappointments. Only 18 percent of owners were very satisfied with the space in the Honda Accord Hybrid and just 7 percent with the Ford Fusion Energi.

But it turns out that prestige can take a backseat to value. Hyundai Equus buyers felt the most satisfied, with 88 percent saying they got what they expected for the price. Corvette owners felt they were getting exotic-car performance at a relatively budget price. But those who own the Range Rover Evoque, Mini Countryman, Infiniti QX70, and various iterations of the BMW 3 Series found the least value for their money—those models satisfied barely 50 percent of owners.

How Cars Compare

Luxury cars are more satisfying on the whole, our subscribers report. When we broke down owner-satisfaction results by brand, the six most satisfying makes were all luxury brands, led by Tesla. Perhaps it's no surprise, too, that

Porsche, Audi, Mercedes-Benz, Lexus, and Jaguar owners felt that they've made it and bought the car of their dreams.

The top-scoring mainstream brands were Subaru, Ram, Dodge, Chrysler, Honda,

Chevrolet, and Mazda.

Not all luxury brands proved very satisfying; Cadillac, Acura, and Infiniti all ranked in the bottom half. The least satisfying brands were Buick, Hyundai, Kia, Nissan, and Mitsubishi.

Mazda6



Chevrolet Corvette
Stingray

HYBRIDS/ELECTRIC CARS

Make & Model	Definitely Buy Again
Tesla Model S	98%
Chevrolet Volt	85
Honda Accord Hybrid*	85
Ford Fusion Energi	84
Toyota Prius	82
Lexus ES 300h Hybrid	81
Toyota Avalon Hybrid	80
Ford C-Max Energi	79
Toyota Camry Hybrid	78
Nissan Leaf	77
Toyota Prius V	77
Ford Fusion Hybrid	74
Lincoln MKZ Hybrid	74
Toyota Prius C	73
Honda CR-Z	72
Ford C-Max Hybrid	70
Toyota Prius Plug-in Hybrid	69
Honda Civic Hybrid	68
Volkswagen Jetta Hybrid	66
Lexus CT 200h	66
Hyundai Sonata Hybrid	60
Kia Optima Hybrid	56

COMPACT CARS

Make & Model	Definitely Buy Again
Mazda3 (2.5L)*	79%
Mazda3 (2.0L)*	77
Volkswagen Beetle TDI	76
Volkswagen Jetta TDI	72
Toyota Corolla*	71
Kia Forte*	70
Dodge Dart (2.0L)	70
Honda Civic Coupe	70
Fiat 500L*	69
Volkswagen Beetle (2.0T)	68
Dodge Dart (1.4T)*	68
Subaru Impreza	68
Kia Soul*	67
Chevrolet Cruze (1.4T)	65
Honda Civic Sedan	65
Scion xB	63
Volkswagen Jetta (1.8T)*	61
Hyundai Elantra Sedan	60
Hyundai Elantra GT	57
Chevrolet Cruze (1.8L)	56
Ford Focus	54
Volkswagen Jetta (4-cyl., nonturbo)	51
Nissan Sentra	47

SUBCOMPACT CARS

Make & Model	Definitely Buy Again
Fiat 500	64%
Chevrolet Sonic	62
Chevrolet Spark	62
Nissan Versa Note*	60
Smart ForTwo	58
Toyota Yaris	57
Hyundai Veloster	56
Mazda2	56
Hyundai Accent	55
Ford Fiesta	51
Kia Rio	46
Nissan Versa Sedan	42

COUPES AND CONVERTIBLES

Make & Model	Definitely Buy Again
Audi S5	79%
Audi A5	77
Honda Accord Coupe (V6)	75
BMW 4 Series*	75
Honda Accord Coupe (4-cyl.)	74
Volkswagen Eos	73
Mercedes-Benz E-Class Coupe & Convertible	71
Lexus IS Convertible	70
Infiniti Q60	68
BMW 6 Series	62

MIDSIZE CARS

Make & Model	Definitely Buy Again
Mazda6*	81%
Volkswagen Passat TDI	80
Honda Accord Sedan (4-cyl.)	76
Honda Accord Sedan (V6)	73
Ford Fusion (2.0L EcoBoost)	71
Kia Optima (turbo)	70
Ford Fusion (1.5L EcoBoost)	68
Toyota Camry	68
Volkswagen Passat (1.8T)*	65
Chevrolet Malibu (4-cyl.)	64
Kia Optima (4-cyl.)	62
Ford Fusion (4-cyl., nonturbo)	62
Nissan Altima	59
Volkswagen Passat (V6)	56

SPORTY CARS

Make & Model	Definitely Buy Again
Chevrolet Corvette Stingray*	95%
Porsche Cayman	91
Porsche Boxster	91
Porsche 911	88
Dodge Challenger (V8)	86
Chevrolet Camaro (V8)	84
Mazda MX-5 Miata	84
Mercedes-Benz SL	80
BMW Z4	80
Audi S4	78
Fiat 500 Abarth*	74
Dodge Challenger (V6)	73
Scion FR-S	71
Subaru BRZ	71
Mercedes-Benz SLK	70
Chevrolet Camaro (V6)	70
Honda Civic Si	69
Ford Focus ST	68
Nissan 370Z	66
Hyundai Genesis Coupe	58

LUXURY COMPACT CARS

Make & Model	Definitely Buy Again
BMW 328d (diesel)*	86%
BMW 335i	76
Lexus IS 250 Sedan*	73
Audi A4	71
Volvo S60	71
BMW 320i, 328i (AWD)	68
Lexus IS 350 Sedan*	68
Cadillac ATS (V6)	67
BMW 320i, 328i (RWD)	66
Infiniti G Sedan	65
Buick Regal	64
Buick Verano	63
Cadillac ATS (turbo)	63
Volkswagen CC	62
Mercedes-Benz CLA 250*	61
Acura ILX	57
Cadillac ATS (4-cyl.)	56
Infiniti Q50 (V6)*	54

LUXURY MIDSIZED/LARGE CARS

Make & Model	Definitely Buy Again
Mercedes-Benz E-Class Sedan (diesel)*	88%
Audi A7	84
Audi A8	84
Audi A6	84
Cadillac CTS (V6)*	83
Lexus LS	81
Mercedes-Benz E-Class Sedan (V8)	81
Mercedes-Benz S-Class	81
BMW 5 Series (V8)	81
Hyundai Equus	80
Lincoln MKZ (V6)	80
Porsche Panamera	80
Lexus ES (V6)	79
Mercedes-Benz CLS	78
Jaguar XJ	77
Mercedes-Benz E-Class Sedan (V6)	75
Jaguar XF	74
Lexus GS (V6)	74
Volvo S80	73
Lincoln MKZ (4-cyl., EcoBoost)	71
BMW 5 Series (6-cyl.)	70
Infiniti Q70	68
BMW 5 Series (4-cyl.)	68
BMW 7 Series	66
Lincoln MKS	66
Cadillac XTS	66
Acura RLX*	59

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The number of hybrids and electrics that topped their categories. Those are the Toyota Prius C subcompact, the Chevrolet Volt compact, the Honda Accord Hybrid midsize sedan, and the Tesla Model S.

*Data based on one model year only.