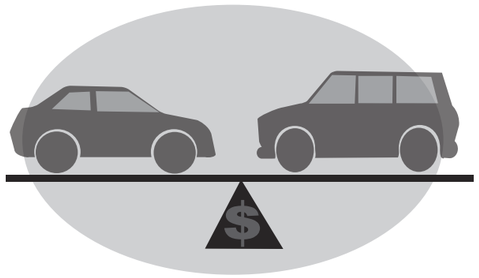
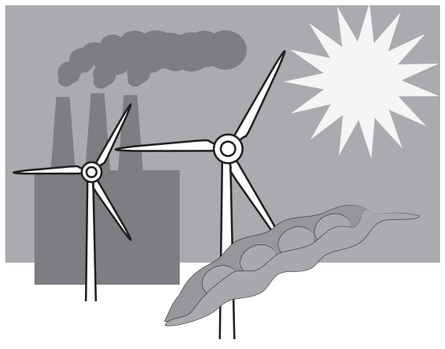
So Now It's Up to You



Costs in Dollars. Electric vehicles currently cost more to purchase than combustion cars. A 2011 Nissan Leaf costs about $35,000, while a Toyota Corolla is in the $18,000 range and the Honda Civic Hybrid cost about $25,000 (Consumer Reports, 12/8/11). However, initial cost is not the only thing to consider when purchasing a vehicle. Electric vehicles have lower overall fuel costs and lower routine maintenance costs. You never have to change the oil on an electric vehicle because it doesn't use any. For consumers who have a place to plug in and whose commute is within the range of an electric vehicle, it may be an excellent option. Some electric vehicles even qualify for tax incentives.

Costs to the Environment. It's more than just direct cost to you that factors into the decision between electric and combustion. There is the cost to the environment. Each step in the process of designing, building, using, and disposing of a car has an environmental impact. For combustion vehicles this comes mostly from burning gasoline, which releases carbon dioxide and other gases into the atmosphere. If more cars were electric, the air quality could improve. There would be fewer red and yellow breathing days, helping people with asthma and other breathing issues.



There is also an environmental cost for electric vehicles. They use electricity, which is most often produced by burning fuels like coal and oil. Power plants are generally not located in urban areas, so people may not consider this cost. The good news is that power plants can use renewable fuel sources like the sun, wind, or water to reduce environmental impact. Since electric vehicles use their energy more efficiently than combustion engines, even an electric vehicle that is charged by a power plant that uses fossil fuels has a lower environmental impact overall.

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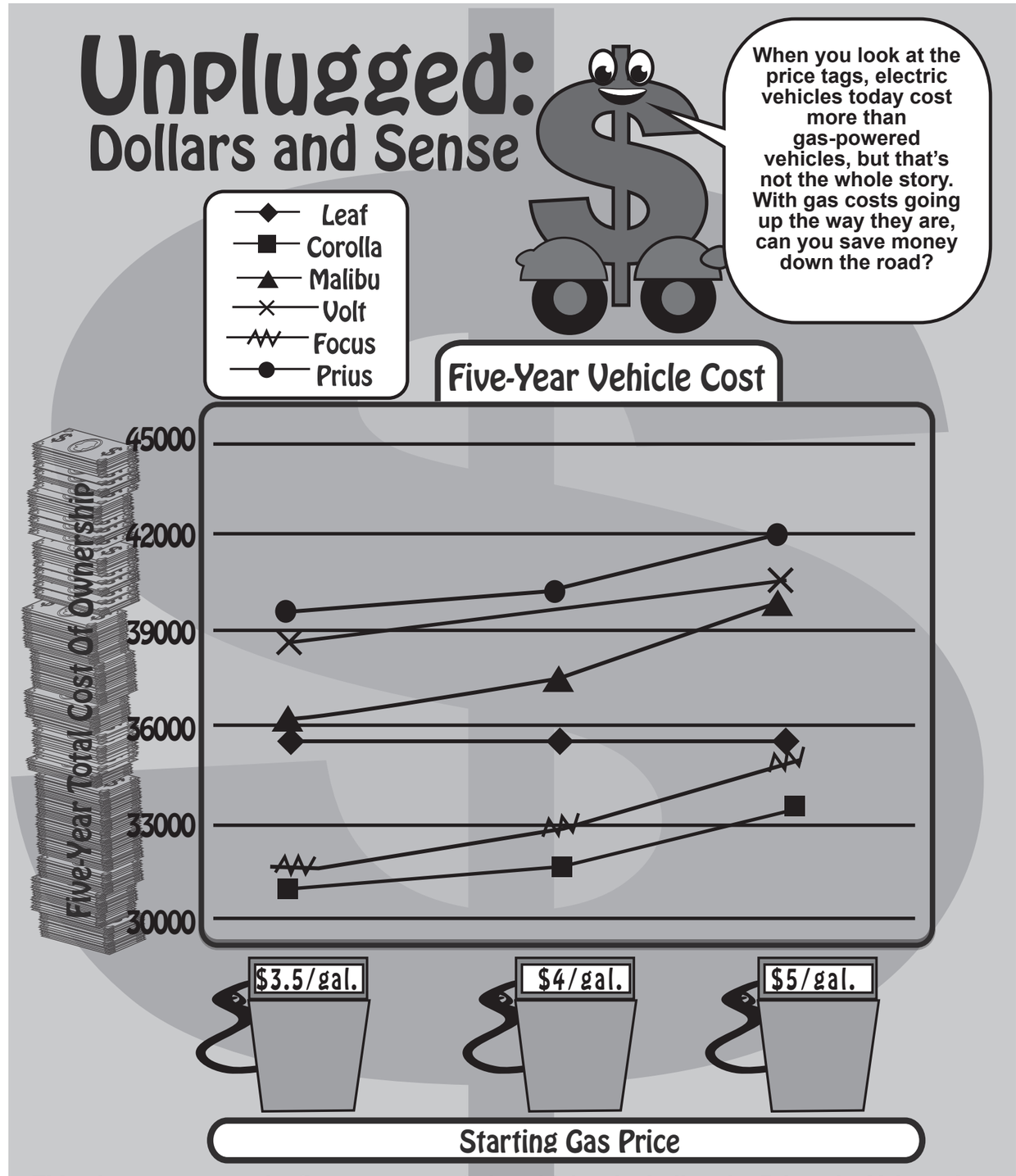
Unplugged: Dollars and Sense



This chart compares the five-year cost of six vehicles, including the Prius, the Volt, and the Leaf. When starting gas prices are higher, the difference between the five-year cost of ownership for combustion vehicles and electric vehicles gets smaller. (adapted from edmunds.com/tco.html)

Should I Buy the Midsize Electric Car?

Fuel Economy...
Since the car doesn't use gas, this is measured in MPGe -- miles per gallon equivalent. 99 MPGe is the average of how the car does in the city and on the highway.

Energy Consumption...
This car uses 34kW-hrs -- not gallons -- every 100 miles.

Driving Range...
You can drive 99 miles on a fully-charged battery.

You Save...
This savings is because you don't have to buy gas.

Charge Time...
It takes 8 hours to charge the car's battery.

Greenhouse Gas Rating...
Since this car doesn't burn gas or emit carbon dioxide, it gets a perfect rating.

Annual Fuel Cost...
This is the cost on your electric bill where you plug in.

EPA DOT **Fuel Economy and Environment** — Electric Vehicle

Fuel Economy
99 MPGe — Midsize cars range from 10 to 99 MPGe. The best vehicle rates 99 MPGe.
combined city/hwy: 99 | city: 103 | highway: 95 | 34 kW-hrs per 100 miles

Driving Range
When fully charged, vehicle can travel about... 99 miles
Charge Time: 8 hours (240V)

You save **$9,600** in fuel costs over 5 years compared to the average new vehicle.

Annual fuel cost **$600**

Fuel Economy & Greenhouse Gas Rating (tailpipe only): 10 (Best)
Smog Rating (tailpipe only): 10 (Best)

This vehicle emits 0 grams CO_2 per mile. The best emits 0 grams per mile (tailpipe only). Does not include emissions from generating electricity; learn more at fueleconomy.gov

Actual results will vary for many reasons, including driving conditions and how you drive and maintain your vehicle. The average new vehicle gets 22 MPG and costs $12,600 to fuel over 5 years. Cost estimates are based on 15,000 miles per year at $0.12 per kW-hr. MPGe is miles per gasoline gallon equivalent. Vehicle emissions are a significant cause of climate change and smog.

fueleconomy.gov
Calculate personalized estimates and compare vehicles

Smartphone QR Code™

Wow, look at the difference in the fuel costs! But will I be able to find a charger every 99 miles? Wouldn't that be great to have a perfect greenhouse gas score?

Should I Buy the Gas-Powered Small SUV?

Fuel Economy...
26 miles per gallon (MPG) is the average of how the car does in the city and on the highway.

You Save...
This savings compares the car to other gas-powered vehicles.

Energy Consumption...
This car uses 3.8 gallons of gas every 100 miles.

Annual Fuel Cost...
This is how much you spend at the gas station.

Greenhouse Gas Rating...
This car burns gas and gives off 347 grams of carbon dioxide per mile.

EPA DOT **Fuel Economy and Environment** — Gasoline Vehicle

Fuel Economy
26 MPG — Small SUVs range from 16 to 32 MPG. The best vehicle rates 99 MPGe.
combined city/hwy: 26 | city: 22 | highway: 32
3.8 gallons per 100 miles

You save **$1,850** in fuel costs over 5 years compared to the average new vehicle.

Annual fuel cost **$2,150**

Fuel Economy & Greenhouse Gas Rating (tailpipe only): 7 (Best)
Smog Rating (tailpipe only): 6 (Best)

This vehicle emits 347 grams CO_2 per mile. The best emits 0 grams per mile (tailpipe only). Producing and distributing fuel also creates emissions; learn more at fueleconomy.gov.

Actual results will vary for many reasons, including driving conditions and how you drive and maintain your vehicle. The average new vehicle gets 22 MPG and costs $12,600 to fuel over 5 years. Cost estimates are based on 15,000 miles per year at $3.70 per gallon. MPGe is miles per gasoline gallon equivalent. Vehicle emissions are a significant cause of climate change and smog.

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The sample labels are from epa.gov/otaq/carlabel. You will find them on all new vehicles starting with the 2013 models.