

# High remarks for hybrid cars

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QUESTION: Describe the different types of hybrid cars and how they are improving fuel efficiency. What are other pros and cons of driving a hybrid?

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Remarks for Hybrid Cars It is no secret that one of the most popular trends in today's society is "going green" to help the economy, save the world, and so on. It is also no secret that gasoline prices have steadily increased over the years, and four dollars a gallon does not exactly agree with our wallets.

In an effort to "go green" and save money on gasoline, hybrid cars have recently become a great option for those interested in getting high gas mileage and saving lots of money... or so they think. Although hybrid cars have high gas mileage and extend the time between visits to the pump, reviewing the raw facts about hybrid cars while asking the question "Do hybrid cars seem like a money-saving solution?" is a wise decision. While there are many different kinds of hybrid cars, they all share one common trait: a traditional, gasoline-powered motor and a new electric, battery-powered motor are both found within the vehicles.

These vehicles use both motors at different times when on the go: the electric motor powers the vehicle when going less than 40 miles per hour, while the gas motor powers the vehicle at speeds greater than 40 miles per hour. While the functions of both motors may seem unimportant to some, consider stop-and-go rush hour traffic. Not only does the electric motor reduce smog levels due to its exhaust-free trait, but it also helps to save gasoline that is wasted when frequently pressing the accelerator.

Another plausible scenario to consider is living in a small town where the speed limit rarely exceeds 40 miles per hour; traveling through these towns

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on electric energy can save gallons of gas, giving our wallets time to become more plump between each visit to the pump. The efficiency of hybrids are found in the vehicles' aero dynamics, weight reduction, and less powerful gas engine, making hybrid cars the most gasoline efficient vehicles on the market; these vehicles get an outstanding average of 48 to 60 miles per gallon.

Although hybrid cars seem like the most logical way to go, a closer look at the cons of these vehicles can make anyone think twice. Because hybrids have both a gasoline-powered motor and a battery-powered motor, they are more likely to break down or malfunction due to the complexity of the system as a whole. These malfunctions can easily put the vehicle in an auto shop, causing an inconvenience on our schedules and our wallets. While hybrid cars do save gas when caught in stop-and-go traffic or driving through low-speed areas, the total savings aren't exactly tremendous.

Comparing a Honda Insight (hybrid car) and a Honda Civic (regular car), the annual difference between the fuel bills is only \$230. While this may seem like a decent amount to save each year, take a closer look at the price of the two cars. Because hybrid cars are new, popular, and " money savers" (such as the Honda Insight), they costs a significant amount more than the standard cars equipped for saving gas (such as the Honda Civic); hybrid cars range from about \$19, 000 to \$25, 000, while gas-saving cars range from \$14, 000 to \$17, 000.

People purchase these cars because the companies who sell them claim to save the consumers a fortune in gasoline expenses, however this doesn't seem to be the case when closely looking at these numbers. Over a ten year

time period, a hybrid car would save approximately \$2,300 in fuel expenses, but this amount of money fails to cover the payment difference for the car itself as opposed to a regular, strictly gasoline car (the difference between the cars being anywhere from \$5,000 to \$8,000). Hybrid cars also claim to get anywhere from 48 to 60 miles per gallon, which is a plus.

However, this gas mileage is only about 20% to 35% better than a gas saving vehicle; gas saving vehicles, such as the Honda Civic, still get a decent average of 36 miles per gallon. After reviewing the price difference between the hybrid and a gas saving vehicle, the inability of the hybrid to replenish the money difference between itself and gas saving vehicles, the small amount of savings the hybrid annually provides at the pump, and the minuscule difference between gas mileage, an answer shouldn't be difficult to reach: Do hybrid cars seem like a money-saving solution?