

FAQs on E-Cars and Hybrid Vehicles

What is an E-Car (Electric Car)? An electric car is an automobile that is powered by one or more electric motors, using electrical energy stored in rechargeable batteries or another energy storage device.

What is a hybrid car? A hybrid car is one that uses more than one means of propulsion. At the moment, that means combining a normal petrol or diesel engine with an electric motor.

What is a Hybrid Electric car? A hybrid electric vehicle (HEV) is a cross between a hybrid car and an electric car so has both electric and conventional means of power.

What is a plug in hybrid car? This is a hybrid car which provides a way to plug the battery into an electrical outlet for recharging while parked.

Are E-Cars/Hybrid Cars safe? Electric Vehicles (EVs) must undergo the same rigorous safety testing and meet the same safety standards required for conventional vehicles sold in Europe as well as EV-specific standards for limiting chemical spillage from batteries, securing batteries during a crash, and isolating the chassis from the high-voltage system to prevent electric shock. In addition, one safety concern specific to EVs is their silent operation so vulnerable road users such as pedestrians or cyclists may be less likely to hear an EV than a conventional vehicle.

Can E-Cars be used on the Motorway? Please contact the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport [DTTAS](#) or at Locall No. 0761 001 601 for clarification on this issue.

Which manufacturers offer E-Cars/Hybrid Cars? Please click [here](#) for a list of E-Cars/Hybrid cars available.

Where can I charge my electric/hybrid car? A list of charging points for e-cars currently on the market is available [here](#).

How do I charge my E-Car/Hybrid car? Please refer to your owner's manual or contact the original manufacturer. There are also a series of YouTube videos available which outline how to charge an electric vehicle. These can be viewed [here](#).

I want to import a hybrid/E-car. What are the steps? Please contact [Revenue](#) who are responsible for the importation of vehicles into Ireland. They will explain the process involved and what documentation is required.

Do e-cars/hybrid vehicles have to be tested? Yes. The National Car Test (NCT) currently tests hybrid/electric vehicles. They also assess the Electro Magnetic Compatibility (EMC) of the vehicle. For more information on how these vehicles are tested, please refer to the [NCT Manual](#).

Is motor tax more expensive on electric vehicles due to weight of battery than on commercial vehicles that are taxed according to unladen weight? What is the legislation? To determine motor tax rates for a particular vehicle type (including electric vehicles) please visit [motor tax online](#). Here you can calculate the tax rate for a particular type of vehicle by either entering the vehicle registration number or entering a basis of assessment.

Do I need to have special insurance for an Electric/Hybrid car? Please contact your insurance provider or [Insurance Ireland](#)

What is AVAS (Acoustic Vehicle Alerting Systems) on electric vehicles? Electric and electric-hybrid vehicles which are almost silent (particularly at low speeds) present a danger to vulnerable road users (e.g. cyclists and pedestrians) particularly those with visual or hearing impairments. AVAS is a system which emits an automated sound to alert vulnerable road users to the approaching vehicle.

Do all electric/hybrid vehicles have to be fitted with AVAS? Under EU Regulation ([EU No 540/2014](#)), the fitment of Acoustic Vehicle Alerting System (AVAS) to pure electric and hybrid electric vehicles becomes mandatory from 1st July 2019 for new types of vehicle and from 1st July 2021 for all new vehicles. Any AVAS systems that are fitted voluntarily ahead of these dates must comply with the applicable requirements (set out in [EU No 540/2014](#)).

What are Alternatively Fuelled Vehicles (AFVs)? AFV's are vehicles which use non-traditional fuel sources as a means of powering the vehicle. For example; electricity consumed in all types of electric vehicles, hydrogen, natural gas, including bio-methane, in gaseous form (Compressed Natural Gas – CNG) and liquified form (Liquified Natural Gas – LNG), Liquid Petroleum Gas (LPG), mechanical energy from on-board storage/on-board sources, including waste heat etc.

What regulations govern electric cars/motorbikes used on Irish roads? Electric cars and motorbikes (or hybrid versions) are all considered to be mechanically propelled vehicles and therefore must adhere to the same laws that apply to other Irish vehicles, namely:

[S.I. 190 of 1963 – Road Traffic \(Construction, Equipment and Use of Vehicles\) Regulations, 1963](#)

[S.I. 5 of 2003 – Road Traffic \(Construction and Use of Vehicles\) Regulations, 2003](#)

[S.I. 189 of 1963 – Road Traffic \(Lighting of Vehicles\) Regulations, 1963](#)

[S.I. 157 of 2009 – EC \(Road Vehicles Type Approval\) Regulations, 2009](#)

[S.I. 158 of 2009 – EC \(Road Vehicles Entry into Service\) Regulations, 2009](#)

[S.I. 614 of 2015 – EU \(Two or Three Wheeled Vehicles and Quadricycles Type Approval\) Regulations 2015](#)