

Advertorial

Four ways electric car drivers in Singapore can take charge of their motoring

Is it really less convenient to recharge an electric vehicle than to refuel a normal car? We examine this and other myths about battery power.



The extended range of newer EVs like the Hyundai Kona Electric and a growing network of charging stations are helping to make range anxiety a thing of the past for owners. Photos: Hyundai

An electric vehicle (EV) is a new kind of car, so keeping it running is best done with a new kind of mindset: Charging at your convenience instead of refuelling when absolutely necessary.

Drivers of cars that use fossil fuels tend to wait until the fuel tank is nearly empty before filling it up. EV drivers who adopt the same approach may end up giving themselves an unnecessary case of range anxiety.

But what if drivers treated EVs like their smartphones? EV drivers are finding that topping up their cars whenever they have the chance to do so – instead of waiting until the battery is nearly flat – is the way to go.

EV drivers can easily check the location of charging stations online and work these into their daily routine, since stations are located in shopping malls and office spaces.

Their cars are always ready to run, so range anxiety is not an issue. In fact, the average EV driver doesn't even need to plug his car in every day. Some EVs have such a long range that charging almost becomes an afterthought. For instance, the long-range version of the Hyundai Kona Electric can cover 482km on a single charge.

In 2018, the [average annual mileage](#) of cars in Singapore was 17,500km – about 48km a day. This means a Kona Electric could last over one week between charges. Imagine if your smartphone could do that?

Nevertheless, when you do need to top up an EV, where can you actually get it done?

Here are four ways EV drivers in Singapore can take charge of their motoring.

AT HOME, OR AT WORK

Having a charging station at home, or a shared one at work, is the most convenient way to power an EV. It can always be topped up and ready to go.

Charging an electric car takes place at two rates: Trickle (with alternating current or AC) and rapid (with direct current or DC). AC charging will top up an EV in a few hours, depending on the size of its battery, while a DC charger can do the same in less than an hour.



EV charging can be incorporated into owners' daily routines, like when they're at work or shopping, so their cars are charged and ready to go.

If you have the space for your own charger (or regular access to one), you can simply use an AC charger every few days to slowly refill your EV's battery while it's parked. One perk: Using the EV point in a car park can be like having your very own reserved spot.

PUBLIC CHARGING STATIONS

Are there enough charging stations in Singapore? Yes, with more on the way. The nation's electric grid operator SP Group is building a comprehensive network and by the end of this year, it aims to have 1,000 points around the island. It has already built more than 200 and more than 50 of these are DC fast chargers that can top up an EV in about 30 minutes. SP Group is not alone in this, as other industry players are also planning to build more charging points in Singapore.

Singapore's EV population stood at 1,120 cars at the end of 2019, which means that Singapore EV drivers actually have access to a large number of charging points, and this number is also set to increase.

In his recent Budget speech, Finance Minister Heng Swee Keat announced that the government, working with the private sector, aims to deploy up to [28,000 chargers](#) at public car parks across the island. The initiative is part of plans to have all vehicles in Singapore run on cleaner energy by 2040.

FUELLING STATIONS

Even traditional energy companies recognise that EVs are a practical reality that are here to stay.

For example, Anglo-Dutch energy giant Shell has installed fast chargers at 10 of its petrol stations in Singapore, and is currently building more Shell Recharge points.

Each of its 50kW DC fast chargers can get EV drivers going again rapidly – it would take 20 minutes to top up a Hyundai Kona Electric's battery by about 50 per cent. For most drivers in Singapore, this would provide enough range for about a week's driving. Even if an EV driver had no access to a public charger elsewhere, stopping by a Shell Recharge for a weekly top-up is not too different from filling up with petrol once a week.

EMERGENCY CHARGING

Some car companies offer emergency charging services to EV drivers. These work as a roadside assistance service: Motorists with a flat battery call a helpline and a service vehicle with a backup power source arrives to charge your EV enough to get it to a charging point. It's like borrowing a powerbank when your smartphone is flat.

But it seems EV drivers in Singapore almost never run out of battery on the road, at least in the case of Hyundai distributor Komoco Motors. The firm was among the first in Singapore to commit to electrification, having introduced its electrified range in 2018. Since then, it has received just one call to its emergency charging helpline.

And it turns out that the call was something of a false alarm; the customer was merely curious to see what the service would be like.

If emergency charging is meant to solve an EV charging shortfall, it seems to be a solution to a problem that doesn't really exist.

Visit [Hyundai Singapore](#) to find out more about its range of EVs, hybrids and petrol-engined cars.

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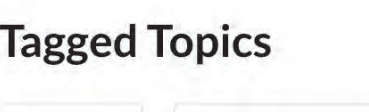
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