

TIPS FOR CHOOSING A NEW CAR

Choosing a greener car can have a direct financial benefit for you as well as helping to conserve our environment for all Australians and future generations. Buying a vehicle that is more fuel efficient can save you thousands of dollars on fuel bills and many tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions over the vehicle's life.

As a new car buyer there will be a range of factors that are important in making your final choice of vehicle. As a major financial investment and a decision that will be with you for a number of years, it is important to purchase the car that best meets your needs.

Assess your needs carefully. In doing so, consider your day-to-day transport requirements, eg. passengers carried and cargo capacity required, and match these requirements to a vehicle that can provide them (or a good compromise).

You may wish to draw up a list of the features you want in a car. Then think about what other factors will influence your decision, and add these to the list. How important is each of these in coming to your final decision?

Consider how often, if at all, you may need certain features, such as off road capacity or a larger engine for towing. These features may come at an extra financial cost and an extra cost to the environment. Given that many of these costs will be ongoing for the life of your car/s, it is important to make the right decision.

Research all possibilities, ask friends/family about cars, visit car dealers to look at various models and search the Internet for relevant websites, including those set up by manufacturers, motor magazines, and motoring clubs, etc. Ask questions! If there are any 'car terms' you don't understand, now is the time to ask.

Before buying a new vehicle, refer to the Green Vehicle Guide ratings. Detailed information helps identify individual vehicle models, including the make, model and variant name, engine and transmission, body style, seating and fuel type. Further information to help you compare each vehicle's impact on the environment includes the - Greenhouse Rating (based on CO2 emissions); Air Pollution Rating (based primarily on emission standards); an overall 'Star' Rating (a combination of the Greenhouse Rating and Air Pollution Rating); and Fuel Consumption (in L/100km). You can use the Green Vehicle Guide to identify the vehicle with the highest ratings which meets your needs.

Remember, larger cars and those with bigger engines often consume more fuel, which not only increases your fuel bills, but increases the level of greenhouse gas emissions. Commercial style vehicles and large off road vehicles are usually built to less stringent emission standards than "regular" passenger cars, so produce more air pollutants. If you are in a showroom, look for the Fuel Consumption Label on the front windscreen, which provides information on fuel consumption and greenhouse emissions from the vehicle.

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