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Hybrid Car – good for the environment and good for my wallet?

As my last car grew older, my kids would often ask, “will your next car be electric?” They know of my passion for new technologies and that I am concerned about our environmental footprint. I also try to be frugal and have been known to hold onto a car for many years. Late in 2018, it was time and I bought a hybrid. I wasn’t quite ready to make the financial and personal commitment to a fully electric car but thought that the opportunity to go from 26 mpg to something on the order of 40+ mpg would be a net positive and a step in the right direction. I would burn less gas, reducing my carbon footprint, and ultimately saving money. If my math was correct, the savings on gasoline should pay for the additional expense of the hybrid in about 2 years.

I’ve had the car for about a year and I am concerned about lesser performance during Michigan’s cold winters. Last January, shortly after my purchase, my mileage was noticeably lower than it was over the summer. I suspect that it is a cold-weather effect rather than a “breaking in period” as the dealer had suggested. That’s something they don’t tell you when you are shopping for a hybrid. Some friends with full electric vehicles tell me they’ve had the same experience – battery performance appears to suffer in colder weather.

While burning less gas, I am still burning some and, as [this video](#) shows, there are also concerns about the environmental impact of extracting the lithium used in the batteries of hybrids and fully electric cars. There is no automobile that is fully “green” – just different shades along a spectrum. Last night we discussed that our next cars would likely be fully electric.



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