

Hybrid cars an investment for environmentally conscious buyers

 By [Jeff Osborne](#)

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Environmentalists have lamented the effects of gasoline-powered vehicles on our ozone layer and recommend that we reduce our emissions.



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One of the simplest solutions may be opting for a hybrid car. These vehicles are known for having a more positive effect on the environment and come in a variety of models that should satisfy the most discerning petrolhead.

The automotive industry has placed great emphasis on encouraging and developing the production of hybrid vehicles. The threat of a carbon emission tax in 2016 plus greater consumer awareness has created a market for greener vehicles.

More affordable

In South Africa hybrid models have exponentially over the last few years (albeit from a low base) and analysts believe that electric cars will account for 15% of worldwide passenger vehicle sales by 2025. 2010 saw record numbers of hybrid sales and now, five years down the line, we are starting to see second hand hybrid vehicles enter the market. This will make them much more affordable and accessible for the man on the street.

Hybrid cars are a good investment for environmentally conscious buyers. They do use less fuel, which is economical, and their emissions are much lower than petroleum fuelled cars. While the electric car is considered by some to be the greenest, South Africa's electricity problems (which also rely heavily on coal) do not make it viable or green due to the huge amount of power required to charge it.

In general, hybrid cars cost more due to extra batteries and electronics - the cost which is not necessarily recouped in terms of fuel savings. It would depend on the number of miles traveled, etc. However, if we do see a carbon tax introduced, companies and perhaps individuals that use hybrid cars might draw the benefit of government subsidies and rebates.

Popular models

As with all cars, the type of hybrid you opt for will depend on your driving style, your personal taste and your requirements, but there are a few popular models. The Infiniti Q50S Hybrid can accelerate to 0-100kph in less than 5.5 seconds and hit a top speed of 250kph, while using about 6.2L/100km with CO2 emissions of less than 145g/km, which is great if you love speed. The Lexus CT200h has one of the best fuel economy ratings in its segment is at 4.1L/100km and the Porsche Cayenne S is entirely free of emissions and noise up to 60kph.

Of course these cars don't come cheap - most of the models available retail for more than half a million rand. If you are looking for something more affordable, I'd look into the Honda Jazz or Toyota Auris Hybrids. They are both very practical and versatile choices.

An added benefit of hybrid cars is that they not only reduce smog in the atmosphere, but also noise pollution. We're definitely moving into an era of clearer fuel and more fuel efficient cars, which is why it's important to keep hybrid cars in mind.

ABOUT JEFF OSBORNE

Jeff Osborne heads up the Gumtree Automotive Team from their office in Johannesburg. Jeff has decades of experience in the motor industry and served as the CEO of the Retail Motor Industry for 13 years. Jeff is passionate about the automotive space, and is a keen classic car collector.

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