

Best ev charger uk 2023

If you're making the switch to an electric or plug-in hybrid car, you'll find life much easier with a dedicated EV charger at home. They represent a major investment, with even the cheapest likely to cost around ?1,000 once fitted. But compared with using a three-pin plug, they're safer, more convenient, faster and may actually pay for themselves over the course of a few years by allowing you to take advantage of cheaper overnight energy tariffs and renewable electricity from solar panels.

While all will do the same basic job of getting power into your car, there is a bewildering array of features and options from the increasing number of home wallbox chargers on offer. They vary wildly in price too, and here we've compared seven of the top models to help you pick the right one for your needs.

Before ordering a home electric car charger, think about what features you'll need and ensure you are "futureproofing". If you want to change your car or fit renewable energy in the next few years, you won't want to have to pay for another unit.

Tethered chargers have the charging cable attached and are more convenient, but tend to be more expensive and bulkier. They'll also not be able to accommodate different types of charging connector, which could be crucial if you currently have a car like an older Nissan Leaf and might want to upgrade in the future.

If you have solar power integration at home the charger can be told to only take the "free" energy being generated by your panels and won't top your car up from the grid. All of the chargers we tested had built-in timers which let you take advantage of cheaper overnight electricity tariffs as well.

Some wallbox chargers have built-in screens, which show the settings and the energy being supplied. While this is easier than using an app, it can also be unsightly on the front of a house at night and may attract unwanted attention.

The features you need will determine which kind of home EV charger is best for you, but we were after the best combination of value, quality, style and usability.

We were looking for features that make using the charger every day easier, including a slick smartphone app to control and check the charging. As well as the overall price, we looked at the cost of upgrades, such as longer cables and solar integration. Given that installation costs vary according to the house, we are quoting the unit costs only. You should budget between ?300 and ?400 for a basic installation.

Finally, we took the charger's looks and size into account. This may not be crucial if the unit will be mounted out of sight in a garage, but could make a real difference if it's fitted to the front of your house.

Ordering a Simpson & Partners charger is almost as exciting as choosing a new car. The basic price of £599 buys you three colour choices, but upgrade to the £759 Plus and you open up 13 choices of metal front, which can combine with different lids. For an extra £50 you can have an unusually long 6.8-metre tethered cable.

A 10m length is available for £100. The charger is beautifully made and user- friendly. The price soon adds up if you want features such as solar compatibility and a courtesy light, but it still looks reasonable value and is the charger we'd want at home.

The One is a really well specified charger that is packed with features. Uniquely it allows users to be given a PIN to unlock it, so the cost can be assigned to a particular person. This could be handy in a shared house or communal car park.

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