



Image: Getty. All rights reserved

Sep 29, 2023 09:00 BST

September finally sees an end to public rapid EV charging price rises

The cost of using rapid and ultra-rapid public electric vehicle (EV) chargers – which any driver making journeys beyond the range of their car has to pay – finally stopped rising in September with prices likely to begin falling within weeks, according to new data from [RAC Charge Watch](#).*

It currently costs an average of 71.41p per kilowatt hour (kWh) to ‘rapid’ charge an EV on a pay-as-you-go basis, up from 63.29p (13%) a year ago but – for the first time in 2023 – unchanged since a month ago. This means

drivers pay £36.56 to charge a family-sized electric car from 0% to 80%, which is most car's rapid or ultra-rapid charging limit, giving a range of around 188 miles.

The cost to use an 'ultra-rapid' charger – one that has a power output of at least 100kW and can provide hundreds of miles of range to many EVs in a matter of minutes – is only slightly more expensive than slower 'rapid' chargers at 74.81p per kWh, up from 63.94p (17%) compared to 12 months ago. Drivers needing to complete an 80% charge at one of these chargers have to pay £38.30, around double the comparative cost of charging at home.

However, with electricity prices finally falling the RAC expects to see a reduction in the prices charged by charge point operators (CPOs) in the coming weeks, making the cost to charge at both rapid and ultra-rapid devices cheaper than today.

It's still the case that charging an EV at home, which most EV drivers can do, remains incredibly good value with a driver on a standard variable domestic electricity tariff paying £15.36 for an 80% charge and £19.20 for a full charge. What's more, prices will start to fall from next week when a new energy price cap applies which will see an 80% charge drop to £13.82 and a 100% charge to just £17.28. Drivers on dedicated electric vehicle tariffs meanwhile can already pay significantly less to charge their cars – as little as £5-£6.**

Comparing the cost of charging a car with the comparative cost of filling one with petrol and diesel on a per-mile basis, the RAC's analysis shows that recent rises in fuel prices have had a notable impact. Drivers using rapid chargers currently pay around 20p a mile for their electricity, with those using ultra-rapids paying a penny more, while those running similarly-sized petrol and diesel cars pay 18p a mile.

RAC spokesman Rod Dennis said:

“The fact charging prices – whether at home or at a public rapid or ultra-rapid charger – appear to have finally peaked can only be good news for drivers, whether they're already lucky enough to drive an electric vehicle or are considering one as their next vehicle. It's imperative now that charge point operators (CPOs) reduce their rapid and ultra-rapid charging prices as soon as they can to show they're on the side of drivers.

“But there’s a clear role for the Government here too in keeping charging affordable, especially for drivers who don’t have the luxury of cheap charging at home. For this reason, we’re disappointed the Government has so far rejected calls from ourselves, the FairCharge campaign, the motor manufacturers’ trade body SMMT and from many others in the industry for the VAT rate charged on electricity bought from public EV chargers to be reduced to match the 5% charged to domestic households. Doing so would cost the Treasury relatively little but would see charging costs fall by around 9p per kWh, saving drivers around £6 for every 80% charge.

“Charging aside, there’s no getting away from the fact that the relatively high upfront cost of electric cars compared to their petrol and diesel counterparts remains a major reason why many more drivers won’t yet be considering the switch – something that the current cost-of-living crisis is compounding.

“With the Government pushing back the ban on the sale of new petrol and diesel cars from 2030 to 2035 it appears to be pinning its hopes entirely on manufacturers reducing vehicle prices in order to meet their EV sales’ obligations as part of the zero-emission vehicle mandate that comes in next year. But we continue to believe there is a very good case for a new plug-in car grant aimed at the more affordable end of the car market to be introduced to ensure as many drivers as possible benefit from the electric car revolution, as quickly as possible.”

Dr Euan McTurk, consultant battery electrochemist from Plug Life Consulting Ltd, said:

“We should see charge point operators (CPOs) starting to reduce charging tariffs soon. With commercial energy tariffs already starting to fall after last year’s unprecedented spikes, it won’t be long until CPOs will be paying less for electricity.

“It makes sense for CPOs to pass on those savings to drivers. If they lower their tariffs, not only will more drivers choose to use them, but even more drivers will be encouraged to switch to electric vehicles due to increased savings in running costs, thus increasing their customer numbers. So, passing on those savings makes as much sense to CPOs as it does to drivers, and it will happen as soon as possible.”

Founder of the FairCharge campaign Quentin Willson said:

“It’s a matter of credibility and trust that charge point operators pass on the price falls in wholesale electricity quickly to create consumer confidence and don’t behave like the road fuel industry with their now infamous ‘rock and feather’ pricing. Now would also be a good time to heed FairCharge’s multiple requests to both The Treasury and Chancellor to cut the 20% VAT on public charging in line with the domestic rate of 5%. FairCharge and the RAC have campaigned for this for the last two years and the Treasury knows that the cost would be relatively little. If the PM really is on the side of all motorists he could help lower EV charging costs immediately.”

The press office email address is press.office@rac.co.uk and media centre is at media.rac.co.uk. **Please note:** the press office is unable to help with individual customer enquiries - please visit the [RAC contacts page](#) to find the right contact.

About the RAC

The RAC, an iconic UK brand, provides complete peace of mind to more than 13 million private and business drivers, whatever their motoring needs. As well as its premium nationwide breakdown assistance service – with an expert branded patrol workforce attending more than two million breakdowns every year – it offers a wide range of market-leading products across insurance, legal services, vehicle inspections and service, maintenance and repair. The RAC is also at the forefront in helping drivers make the switch to electric vehicles and leads in the development of new solutions for businesses and OEMs, partnering with the best in the motoring and mobility space.

Visit the [RAC website](#).

Contacts



RAC Press Office

Press Contact

press.office@rac.co.uk

Emails monitored during normal office hours. For breakdown queries, call 0330 159 0740

ISDN number on request