

# 2015 Toyota Prius Plug-In Hybrid is EVolutionary and a Little Bit Revolutionary

September 26, 2014

If the allure of an EV is outweighed by the need to drive longer trips without recharging, Toyota has the affordable answer with the Prius Plug-in Hybrid, the most advanced Prius yet. The numbers tell a convincing story: up to 11 miles of EV mode range, speeds up to 62 mph on battery alone; EPA-rated 95 MPGe and EPA 50 MPG combined fuel economy in hybrid mode. The final tempting number is an MSRP under \$30,000 before potential federal and state tax credits.

The quickest way to tell a Prius Plug-in from the standard model? Look for the battery-charging door on the right rear quarter panel. (The gas filler is on the left side, as on the standard Prius.) Looking a little more closely, you'll also find 10-spoke alloy wheels, judicious addition of exterior chrome trim on the door handles, grille, and unique hatch, unique badges, blue-accent headlamps and LED taillight clusters.

The Prius Plug-in Hybrid is ideal for drivers who use their cars for frequent short trips and local driving. In such situations, the gasoline engine will come on infrequently, and the car will essentially function as a dedicated EV. Once the battery charge goes down, the Prius Plug-in functions just like the standard Prius, banishing any thought of "range anxiety," as hybrid mode keeps you going.

Recharging using an external AC outlet takes approximately 2.5 to 3.0 hours using a standard household outlet or about 1.5 hours using a 240V EV charger (Toyota.leviton.com). But if you forget to recharge the Prius Plug-in or are in a hurry, no worries – just drive it like a standard Prius.

## Exclusive Trim Levels

Whatever the driving needs, the 2015 Prius Plug-in Hybrid handles them comfortably. A special trim level for this model, based on the Prius Three trim, includes all Prius standard features like the Smart Key System on three doors with push-button start and remote illuminated entry, and the Touch Tracer Display. This trim-level also includes innovative touch sensors on the steering wheel switches that activate duplicate images that display on the instrument panel. Since these are directly in front of the driver, they reduce driver eye movement, helping you keep your eyes on the road more often. Display Audio with Navigation and the Entune<sup>®</sup> App Suite is also standard.

The Prius Plug-in Hybrid features heated cloth front seats (unique to this model versus standard Prius) and Remote Climate Control, a feature that allows you to activate air conditioner remotely. The Prius Plug-in also adds an extra year of Roadside Assistance through ToyotaCare, for a total of three years. Exclusive to the Prius Plug-in Hybrid is the advanced trim level that makes a number of options standard, including:

- Premium HDD Navigation with Entune App Suite (including Plug-in Hybrid Applications that allow you to find your vehicle, remote control charging and climate, find charging stations and eco dashboard to track how efficient your driving is and compare with friends), and JBL GreenEdge<sup>®</sup> 8-speaker premium audio
- SofTex-trimmed heated front seats
- 8-way power-adjustable driver's seat with power lumbar support

- Head-Up Display
- Safety Connect telematics

You can activate the remote air conditioning system with the key fob (or smartphone app) to cool the interior. Once underway, a selectable ECO Mode operates to prioritize fuel economy when the air conditioning is running.

The Safety Connect telematics system, included on the Advanced model (with complimentary service for one year), and offers emergency response (SOS), automatic collision notification and a stolen vehicle locator feature.

The optional Technology Package equips the Prius Plug-in Hybrid Advanced with Dynamic Radar Cruise Control and a Pre-Collision System, which retracts seatbelts and applies the brakes in certain conditions when a frontal crash is determined to be unavoidable. The Technology Package also equips the Prius Plug-in with LED headlights with headlight cleaners and integrated fog lights.

### **It's an EV. It's a Hybrid. And It Even Shimmers.**

The Prius Plug-in Hybrid drives just like the regular Prius, except its first 11 miles can be driven in EV mode, and at speeds up to 62 mph. Both vehicles use the same Hybrid Synergy Drive powertrain, which combines the output of a 1.8-liter Atkinson-cycle, 4-cylinder engine with an electric motor.

The biggest difference is that the Prius Plug-in Hybrid uses a 4.4 kWh lithium-ion (Li-ion) battery pack in place of the standard Prius model's nickel metal hydride (NiMH) battery. The battery pack fits under the rear cargo floor and does not reduce trunk space. An easy-to-use external charging cable is included.

Thanks to the battery packaging, the Prius Plug-in Hybrid offers the same five-passenger seating and luggage space as the standard Prius model. It has the same EPA "midsize car classification" and 36 inches of rear seat legroom.

Hybrid Synergy Drive's combined 134 net system horsepower feels even stronger thanks to the unique way the system combines the torque of the gasoline engine and electric motor through a planetary-type continuously variable transmission. In Hybrid Mode, the Prius Plug-in can run on the gasoline engine alone, battery alone, or a combination of both.

Employing the same technologies as the standard model, the Prius Plug-in squeezes maximum efficiency out of every gallon of regular-grade gas. The electric water pump and electric power steering use no accessory drive belts, potentially reducing maintenance costs. In fact, for 2014, the Prius Plug-in Hybrid was named a Lowest Maintenance Costs Winner by IntelliChoice.

Regenerative braking helps to recapture electrical energy under deceleration, sending it to the battery, which helps to reduce fuel consumption. An exhaust heat recirculation system reduces heat waste by warming engine coolant during cold startup, reducing emissions while heating the cabin more quickly.

### **The Efficiency is Automatic**

The driver doesn't need to do anything special to operate the Prius Plug-in Hybrid at its most efficient. Even when not running in the driver-selectable EV mode, the car will automatically rely more on its electric-only capability in situations where it is more efficient than running the gasoline engine, especially in urban and suburban driving and during shorter trips.

You can, however, adapt your driving habits to become a more efficient driver. It helps to glance at the EV

Drive Ratio display, which records the ratio of driving distance covered by EV power. The Hybrid System Indicator shows possible EV driving range when in EV mode. With the Eco Savings Record screen, you can enter a comparison vehicle and then measure the Prius Plug-in's gains over it.

### **Leviton Level 2 (240V) Home Charging Stations**

Leviton, an approved provider of Level 2 (240V) home charging stations, has developed a residential program exclusively tailored for Prius Plug-in customers. The program includes a one-stop solution for home charging stations, installation services for 120V and 240V applications, and dedicated support for Toyota customers. (Details are available at a dedicated web portal, [leviton.com/Toyota](http://leviton.com/Toyota).)

### **Light on Its Wheels, Easy on the Environment**

Even with the addition of the new onboard battery charging system and larger Li-ion battery pack, the Prius Plug-in Hybrid weighs just 154 lbs. more than the standard Prius Liftback, thanks to weight-savings techniques applied elsewhere. As a result, driving performance for the Prius Plug-in Hybrid is similar to the standard Prius.

As on the standard Prius model, weight was saved through use of aluminum in the hood, rear hatch, front stabilizer bar and brake calipers and by using super high-tensile strength steel in the inner rocker panel, center pillar and roof reinforcement.

Even the way Toyota builds the Prius eases pressure on the environment. Plant-derived, carbon-neutral plastics are used in the seat cushion foam, cowl side trim, inner and outer scuff plates and deck trim cover. Ecological plastic emits less CO<sub>2</sub> than conventional plastic during the production process and it also helps reduce petroleum use.

### **Entune Multimedia: Yep, There's an App for That (Several, In Fact)**

The Prius Plug-in comes ready to rock and get you to your destination. It shares the Display Audio with Navigation and Entune App Suite with the standard Prius Three trim level. The long list of features and functions includes:

- a 6.1-inch touch screen
- GPS navigation
- AM/FM CD player unit with MP3/WMA playback capability and six speakers
- a USB port for iPod<sup>®</sup> connectivity; Bluetooth<sup>®</sup> hands-free phone capability and audio streaming
- auxiliary input jack.

The display also provides vehicle information and allows the driver to customize vehicle settings.

This system also integrates a backup camera display, SiriusXM Satellite Radio capability, HD Radio<sup>™</sup> with iTunes<sup>®</sup> Tagging, and advanced voice recognition.

And yes, there's an app for that. The Toyota Entune App Suite is a collection of popular mobile applications and subscription-free data services. Once a compatible smartphone is paired to the vehicle using Bluetooth or a USB cable, Entune apps are operated using the vehicle's controls or, for some services, by voice recognition. Entune offers apps for Bing<sup>™</sup>, iHeartRadio, MovieTickets.com, OpenTable<sup>®</sup>, and Pandora<sup>®</sup>. Entune data services include a fuel price guide, sports scores, stocks, traffic and weather.

The Prius Plug-In Advanced model augments that capability with the musical power of a JBL Premium Sound system featuring an 8-channel JBL GreenEdge<sup>™</sup> amplifier and eight JBL GreenEdge speakers. GreenEdge technology reduces electric draw on the vehicle, which can help enhance fuel economy.

### **Safety Star**

The Prius Plug-in comes with seven airbags and, like all Toyota models, the Star Safety System™ is standard, with Enhanced Vehicle Stability Control (VSC), Traction Control (TRAC), Anti-lock Braking System (ABS), Electronic Brake-force Distribution (EBD), Brake Assist, and the Smart Stop Technology brake-override system.

**Limited Warranty and ToyotaCare**

Toyota's 36-month/36,000 mile basic new-vehicle warranty applies to all components other than normal wear and maintenance items. Additional 60-month warranties cover the powertrain for 60,000 miles and against corrosion with no mileage limitation. The hybrid-related components, including the battery control module, hybrid control module, inverter with converter, and the charge control computer, are covered for eight years/100,000 miles (15 years/150,000 miles for CA emission states).

The cable/connector is covered for three years/ 36,000 miles. The HV battery is covered for eight years/ 100,000 miles (10 years/150,000 miles for CA emission states).

The 2015 Prius Plug-in Hybrid also comes standard with Toyota Care, a complimentary plan covering normal factory-scheduled maintenance for two years or 25,000 miles, whichever comes first. Additionally, 24-hour roadside assistance is provided for three years to all Prius Plug-in Hybrid drivers.

###