The ABCs of driving a first-generation Tesla Y or 3

If you've been thinking about buying a Tesla Y or 3 or just bought one, you'll have come across a variety of myths about Teslas, what this short overview is attempting to do is to take you through some of the myths and actual problems that confront a new owner. It took me many hours of research and many trips to figure all of what is written up below—and it is offered as friendly advice and suggestions. It is NOT an official document from Tesla, and I am not claiming to be a true expert on the Tesla systems.

But having read a number of confused stories at otherwise quite good newspapers and also several confused reviews of the Teslas on normally reliable auto websites, I thought that writing up the following would be useful for many.

The cars experience as most of the websites report is fabulous, with enormous power, silent engines, and on decent roads a comfortable ride. Nonetheless, all the below may look a bit overwhelming, but most is unnecessary for getting around town. The car reviews often make it sound as if "the screen" is impossible to master, but it's actually easier to master than all the sub-screens and buttons in contemporary gasoline powered vehicles. Most of it will be new, but most of it is also easy to master. This ABC guide provides more than you need to drive around town, but much will be useful in the first few weeks as you get to know the car better.

(1) On your first test drive, you'll have noticed that the Tesla engineers have attempted to reinvent the automobile. Of course, they kept the basics: Teslas have four wheels, a steering wheel, a pedal for braking and one for acceleration. They also kept the controls for the location and tilt of the seats as buttons in the usual locations on the seats. **But much of the rest of the interface between the driver and the vehicle has changed**. This takes some getting used to, but it's really not as complicated as many folks make it sound (including *Consumer Reports*). And, most of it makes perfect sense after you think about it for a while—even though I could rarely guess how it would work when I first sat behind the wheel.

(2) **Be prepared to take more time getting the hang of the basic controls than on a "normal" car.** This can seem a bit intimidating, but it doesn't take that long for most to become second nature.

(3) The new "interface" that the Tesla engineers worked out is arguably easier than the ones with lots of buttons and knobs that you've grown up with, but you've learned that one

over many years of driving, rather than all at once sitting in a parking lot as you do with a new Tesla. It does not take long to be able to drive around the block, but it does take some time to understand how to do much of the rest.

This informal ABC guide should make the learning process easier and faster for most Tesla newbies. Tesla's longer and more detailed **official owners guide** is found under "Service," which is one of the sub menus provided by the Car Setting Menu.

(4) **Setting It Up. There are a variety of settings that you'll need to use the big center screen to establish**. Most are settings you set just once and never look at again. Many of the personal settings, mirrors, seat, steering wheel, can be saved for each driver as a "profile." Many of the settings have Tesla suggested defaults that are fine, and no tweaking is necessary—for example, the lights, windshield wipers, and heating system are normally all set for automatic. The regenerative braking is set for "hold," etc..

The steering wheel and mirrors are set through combinations of the screen and buttons on the steering wheel. None of these settings need to be adjusted while driving, and they really should not be unless you are an experienced Tesla driver.

(5) **To access the menu for most car settings just touch the icon of a car at the bottom left of the screen.** To retire that screen and most other, just "swipe down" from the top of the screen with a finger or two.

Most of the settings that you need are either on the car setting's home screen or on one of the sub menu icons along the top of that screen. Most are about as intuitive as a cell phone. Most of the personalized settings can be saved to a driver profile, which you set up by touching the small icon for "driver" along top right of the car settings menu.

To pair your phone, touch the small "blue tooth" symbol along the top of the car settings home screen, and follow the directions. **Hint;** you can also **make your cell phone a car key** at the same time using the **lock submenu** (on the main menu screen) by touching add key —which is what "everyone does." The car will then unlock when you approach the car and lock when you walk away (if your Tesla app is turned on).

To adjust the **side mirrors**, touch the mirrors option on the car settings home screen and use the left thumbwheels on the steering wheel to adjust.

To adjust the steering wheel, touch the steering option on the same screen and use the same thumbwheels to move it to where it seems most comfortable.

(The **Tesla app for your cell phone now includes helpful videos** on how to do some of the most useful settings like setting up your cell phone to be your key and setting up a driver profile. You do not need to know every submenu on this screen to get around safely, any more than you need to on other cars or on cell phones. Nor do you need to know everything on this guide to run the car…but much of the below will be useful in the first few months.)

(6) **When driving, the screen has all the really important info along the top lefthand edge of the screen, and a fine map on the righthand side**. (Remember to swipe down to get rid of screens that occupy that righthand side of the screen when adjusting settings, setting heating and cooling settings, or choosing music.)

(7) To access **heating and cooling settings**, press on the temperature (the numbers along the bottom of the screen). The "climate" screen is a bit overwhelming at first, so do this the first few times while parked. You typically need only a small subset of the options. **To adjust the temperature**, you do not need to use that screen. Just press on **invisible** minus and plus signs to the left and right of the temperature numbers.
You can set the heating and cooling system to automatic after you've chosen a temperature setting and let the software take care of fan speeds etc. or adjust it manually on the big climate screen. A temperature can be set for each side of the car. To direct the airflow up, down, or sideways, touch temperature and then touch and drag the image of the air on the climate screen. Drag it in the direction you want the air to flow.
Hint: You can also turn on the heat and AC from the Tesla cell phone app, which is useful if you want to warm up or cool down the car before you get in. 10 minutes is usually sufficient time to do so. You turn on the defroster, heated seats, and steering wheel heater on the temperature screen.

(8) **Driving is also just a bit different** than on most cars. The car comes to life for driving when you put your foot on the brake—**the brake pedal is the "on" switch**. The shift lever is the lefthand "stalk". (On new model 3's, it's on the screen as are the turn signals.) Lift it up to go into reverse. Push the lefthand stalk down to go into drive. Push the button on the end of the stalk to park it. (The "gear" that you are in is displayed on the screen on the upper lefthand side, along with most of the most important information about the car, including speed, charge status, time, outside temperature, cruise control settings, and whether your lights are on or not.) (If you forget to put the car in park

when you stop, no worries, the car will do that for you when you stop and open the door.)

(9) **Going.** The two motor versions have incredible power, so be very gentle when pushing on the accelerator until you get the hang of it, which does not take long.

Stopping. When you let your foot off of the accelerator, the car will decelerate as the car recaptures some of the energy that you've added to bring it up to speed. In some cases, letting your foot only part of the way off the pedal is required to smoothly slow down and stop. Release it gradually until you come to a stop. In other cases, you'll need to hit the brake pedal to completely stop. (**The need to use the brake pedal varies** with the charge state of the battery—the more fully the car is charged, the more likely it is that you'll need to use the brake. Also, the faster you need to stop, the more likely it is that you'll want to use the brake pedal.) This takes a bit of practice to get the hang of, but not very much. (This feature can be turned off, if you want the car to behave like most other cars, but you won't recapture as much energy.)

Turn signals. The turn signals are on the righthand stalk as usual. (Except on the new model 3 and cyber truck, where they are on the lefthand top of the screen.) That stalk works more or less as on other cars, except that there are two levels of blinking, one that flashes a few times and then stops (activated by lifting or pushing down the stalk about an inch) and the other that flashes until a turn has been completed, which requires lifting or pushing down the stalk farther (about two inches).

The button at the end of the turn signal stalk controls the **windshield wipers**. Touch it to have the wipers sweep across the windshield once or twice. Hold it down to activate the windshield cleaning process. (The window washer fluid is topped up in the Frunk.) Touching the end of the lefthand stalk also activates a small screen on the bottom left with wiper settings that you can control.

Switching to high or low beam manually is done by pulling that stalk towards the driver rather than up or down, as is also the case for many other cars. (I leave the lights on automatic most of the time myself, so that they turn on and off without going to the light menu, which can be accessed by pulling on the stalk as if you want to switch between high and low beams. Accessed in this way, the light menu shows up in a small easy to access setting box at the lower left of the screen.)

(10) Cruise Control /Autopilot. Many of the controls on the steering wheel do "double or triple duty." In one choice setting, they do one thing and in another they do something else. **Once you are in motion, the stalk on the right runs the cruise control**. It no longer shifts "gears" to determine the direction of travel (drive or reverse).

(11) To activate the more or less **ordinary adaptive cruise control (the base level autopilot)**, pull the righthand lever down once. As with a normal cruise control, it will hold the speed at which you were traveling when you do so. You can adjust the speed up or down using the righthand thumbwheel on the steering wheel, which is much nicer than the buttons on most cars. (In addition, you can also set up the cruise control on the "car settings menu" to adjust to the posted speed limit. You can tell it to drive the exact speed limit or to drive 5 mph over the speed limit, etc. And you can switch back and forth between the "ordinary" type of setting and the speed-limit mode by touching the "max speed" on the touch screen.) The "ordinary" cruise control will adapt to the speed of the car in front of you as most newer cruise control systems do. It will also slow down for some curves, which most cruise controls do not—which is a nice addition. To **deactivate it, just hit the brakes lightly, or move the righthand stalk up one time.**

(12) **"Self-Driving."** A basic self-driving (auto pilot) mode comes standard on Teslas. It is activated by pulling the righthand stalk down twice. The basic autopilot that comes with the car is basically a sophisticated lane-centering program, which together with the adaptive cruise control works like an "auto pilot" on highways. That both are active is indicated on the lefthand side of the screen with two blue lines along the edges of the lane that you are driving in.

I find the basic "auto pilot" system very useful when driving boring parts of a long-distance drive. In ordinary "routine" driving, it almost never makes a mistake. (I've driven thousands of miles in this mode without issues on open interstate highways and even on well-marked two-lane roads. I intervene, perhaps once a hundred or two hundred miles. My spouse prefers it to my driving.)

However, whenever you would ordinarily shift from giving your own driving about half of you mind to giving it absolutely full attention—e.g. when something **extra ordinary** is happening—as with active construction, emergency vehicles, strange cyclist behavior, animals on the road, etc.—it's your job to **be alert** or take back control. **The AI that is guiding the car does not always react properly to unusual situations.** It also very

occasionally gets a "**panic attack**" when driving on normal easy types of environments. For example, sometimes at the crest of a hill it will brake because it has not yet predicted where the road will go and doesn't know quite where to aim the car. It doesn't do this all of the time, but enough that you should be ready to override that mistake, often by just pressing on the accelerator a bit.

To deactivate autopilot, just twist the steering wheel a bit harder than required to keep the "auto pilot" going, hit the brakes, or lift the righthand stalk up.

(13) I've also used **the more sophisticated FSD system** that Tesla sells and rents as an upgrade. The same rules of thumb apply. It is just a bit smarter than the base system at this point. But again you'll need to be alert for the odd situation that the AI does not respond properly to. It will pass cars and navigate to off ramps en route to where every you are going—but be alert in tight situations. On the open road, you can relax while keeping an eye on things as if you were in the passenger seat with a driver that you mostly but do not entirely trust. Don't count on the car to "know" what to do in odd situations. (It's a little flakey on passing, once trying to pass a car while in an off ramp.) To keep the base "autopilot" engaged, you have to keep at least one hand on the wheel essentially all of the time and provide a bit of resistance. The screen will warn you if you are not doing it, and deactivate the system if you do not follow the rules for the remainder of your trip. You can take your hands off the steering wheel for a few seconds in "normal" circumstances, but "auto pilot" is not yet a hands-free system. (This type of tension on the steering wheel is not as necessary with FSD which uses your head's position to see whether you are watching the road or not.)

(14) Charging and Range. One thing that is completely new for most drivers is charging the car. Tesla has by far (at least from the dozens of published accounts that I've read) the most reliable and extensive charging network available in North America. This is a sufficient reason to give Tesla the nod if you find two battery powered cars that seem to be almost equally appealing.

However, even **the Tesla's network is not yet everywhere.** Along rural interstates, there is usually a group of Tesla chargers about every 40-50 miles. In most urban areas they are more frequent, but they are at most $1/20^{th}$ as frequent as gas stations. This requires some adaptation and planning on long trips. **Hint:** also the system **does not** tell you to charge up before arriving if you are going somewhere that lacks chargers.

(15) **The "charging port" is on the driver's side**, towards the back of the car, behind the side-light cover. After backing in and stopping at a Tesla super charger, walk towards the back along the driver's side, touch the side-marker-light cover, and it will open up revealing the "charging port" or "receptacle" that you'll plug into. (If you let the car sit unoccupied for more than a minute or two, you'll need to open the cover using the Tesla app on your phone or the touch screen. Just touch "open" next to the image of the car's back light.)

The Tesla charging cable (plug) fits right in, and a blue light will light up and begin flashing if you've done it right, followed by a green light when charging begins. The system is very easy to use, far easier than pumping your own gas.

As a registered Tesa user, Tesla will just bill your credit card for the kilowatts added to your battery. No need to swipe a card or stand by watching the car charge. It is locked to your car for everyone but you (and your cell phone).

If you do not get a blue light or get a red light, you should try plugging in again and if that doesn't work move to another super charger. Occasionally even super chargers do not work, but not often.

To release the plug, press the round "button" on the handle of the charging cable and the charge light will revert to blue and you can pull out the cable-plug.

Super chargers are installed in banks. There are always at least a half dozen to choose from at every location with those chargers. Although in some places they get busy and may be filled by other Teslas (or now some other brands with adapters).

This has not yet happened in most of the places that I've driven—although I've gotten the last free one a couple of times. Even in fairly busy places, there are usually two or three available chargers to choose from. In rural areas they are sometimes all empty (hence their infrequency).

So called "**destination chargers**" are much slower. They are more like a dryer outlet than a super charger.

(16) If you charge to 100% and temps are between 50 and 85 for Teslas with a 300+ EPA range, and the road is pretty flat, you'll get the full EPA range at speeds up to the low 70s. If the temps are below 20-25, you'll get a third less. (I've not driven the Y in temps below 0, but I expect the range to be even less in such very cold weather.)

Tesla recommends plugging in every night, but you do not have to do so if you have enough range (and a cushion) to drive the next day.

(If not plugged in, the Tesla will use less than 1 percent of a full charge overnight, with "everything" turned off—e.g. with no cooling or heating and no active security system on. So, be sure to have a significant charge if you plan to leave the car unplugged in a garage or at an **airport** for a few weeks. You can monitor the charge using your cell phone app, even from another country if you have subscribed to Tesla's data plan. Remember to **top up** before stopping at such parking places.)

(17) **For most Local Driving,** if you have a garage or driveway, you should install a charger of some kind, a 220-volt circuit is best. Installing a 30-amp **dryer circuit** in your garage works perfectly well with Tesla's mobile plug kit (you should check the available plugs rom Tesla before choosing the type of dryer outlet plug to get). A 20–30-amp 220 circuit works fine for charging overnight, even if the battery is nearly empty. One of Tesla's special home chargers works a bit faster, but they are a bit pricey, and it is rare that you need the extra speed at home.

For local driving (less than 150-mile round trips, in temperatures above 20) you just charge overnight to 80% (to extend battery life), drive to and fro, and then plug in the car when you return home. No real thought has to be given to range when such driving unless it's very cold or very hot, or unless you drive at very high speeds or in serious mountains. On short to medium trips, 80% will usually give you a nice 20+ percent cushion when you reach home, and its suppose to slow down the deterioration of your battery.

Hint. In the winter, leaving the car plugged in overnight lets you **preheat the car and warm up the battery on your house current** without taxing the battery, so you get a bit more range, which you need in the winter, since the system consumers quite a bit more electricity when its below freezing than when its above 60.)

(18) **For Long Distance Drives.** On long distance drives, Tesla's map program will give you advice about where to stop and recharge. The map program is fairly good at voice commands—push the righthand thumb wheel, release, and say something like "navigate to the xxxx super charger," and it usually will—or say navigate to XXX where XXX is your destination, and then the map program will recommend super chargers along the way if it's too far to drive on the charge that you currently have. (*It does not*

remind you to top up before arriving at a destination without a charger, which is often a good idea on longer trips.)

The Easy Case. If you are driving long distances in "nice" conditions (pretty flat roads, no head wind, temps between 55 and 85, and driving at close to the speed limit [say less than 5 mph over]) the map program's recommendations will work pretty well. And, if you are getting worse range than the program expects, it will automatically redirect you to another super charger (*if there is one*).

To use a **super charger**, just back into the super charger as close as you can without hitting something, then "unplug" the short charge cable (this requires a slight rocking motion to detach it from its holder) plug it in your car at its charging port, then go use the WC or pick out a drink at the nearby vender. Many super chargers are at gas stations (often behind or to the side of them in a neat row), although relatively few gas stations have them at this point (2024). The Tesla chargers have a **"red" theme**, other charging systems use different colors. To remove the super charger plug, press on the button on the handle and the charge light will turn blue after which you can remove the cable.

A super charger will charge your Tesla's battery from a 15-20% charge to about 75% in about 20 minutes, which is about how long it takes to plug in, saunter over to a facility to use a toilet, do a bit of snack shopping, and saunter back to the car. Such charging takes at most a few minutes longer than a normal pit stop with a gasoline powered vehicle and is actually easier.

It will take a quite bit longer to reach 90%, say an additional 10-15 minutes, because the charging rate slows up after about 70% to protect the battery..

(On long drives, in decent weather, I normally plan to stop about once every 200 miles which requires charging to about 90% at each stop. I aim for a 20% cushion on arrival because I am risk averse and the map programs are not always accurate, as discussed below, and I want to be able to reach a super charger even if the map program is off by 10-15%, which it often is). This distance is about what I used to drive on most long trips with my former gasoline vehicles. For those who like to drive longer times and distances between stops, you'll have to add a stop or two more than you used to take. This will also be necessary if conditions are less than ideal.)

Range issues are not really much of a worry in good weather when driving along interstates with super chargers ever 40 or 50 miles at speeds around the posted limits or a bit over them.

The Hard Cases. However, there are cases when super chargers are very scarce and sometimes the Tesla map-program says you need a 60% charge to reach your destination, when you really need 75%. In areas where super chargers are scarce, you'd be left on the road with a dead Tesla if you took the map program's advice, because there is no closer super charger to bail out to. (The system has improved during the past year, but I still add a cushion if I am driving over mountains or in the countryside where chargers are sometimes 80-100 miles apart.)

During my first year (2023), I found that the Tesla program was often wrong by 15% on its recommended charge even in fairly good weather, and nearly always in cold or very hot weather or in hilly terrain. You could, in principle, find a 110 outlet, run an extension cord, and use the mobile charger kit to charge up, but that will take a lot of time (many hours) just to add 50 more miles to the battery.

So, to avoid such cases—you **need to do your homework on longish trips or trips to the countryside**. You need to see where the chargers are and adjust to the fact of scarcity if you find it to be a problem. *There are still some rural destinations that are outside the Tesla domain*, although far fewer than in the past.

Similar range problems occur in cold weather or very hot weather, or on mountainous roads, or into a stiff headwind, or when driving 10 mph or so above speed limits. The EPA range numbers are valid only for very nice conditions. Scarcity is relative to the range of the car in the circumstances you'll be driving in. (**The same issues also apply to other EVs—they all use the same type of batteries and EPA tests to estimate range. And their charging networks are far less developed, and their software is evidently far less helpful**.)

Hint. The Tesla system lets you track your charge state in percent charge or miles. Miles are a phony measure that seem to be based on EPA's estimated range in good weather on flat roads—so you cannot trust those estimates except in "nice" conditions. I always display percent of battery rather than miles and do a bit of mental arithmetic to figure out range. For example, in good weather a hundred percent charge goes about 300 miles, so it will take about a 50% charge to drive 150 miles. If the

weather is outside the sweet zone or is hilly or speed limits are pretty high, then I plan on a half charge lasting just 125 miles, which tends to be a better estimate than what the Tesla map program usually guesses. **Hint: Another useful index of usage** is the "available charge" at destination number in the box at the bottom of the screen when you navigate to a specific destination. If that number falls quite a bit while driving, look for a charger well before the one the Tesla map program has been suggesting. If it increases, you can sometimes choose a later charger than the one recommended.

(19) **Music, Books, Etc.** Tesla's have very fine stereo systems, with terrific sound quality and a lot of options. Like other menu items, when accessing the music menu the first time or three, do it while sitting in a parking lot or in your garage. Tap on the icon along the bottom edge of the screen that indicates a music source, normally this is a blue ray, a streaming service, or a usb flash drive symbol towards the middle of the bottom part of the screen. Pressing on it will take you directly to the source chosen.

If that is not the source that you wanted, touch the same symbol (now at the top of the screen) which will produce a menu of options that will include streaming services that you've subscribed to, blue tooth (usually to your phone), usb flash source of music if you plugged on in, radio stations, etc.,. Touching the source of interest takes you to that source and a list your music choices.

The next time you want to access music, a symbol for the most recently used source will show at the bottom of the screen, and also in a small menu box at the lower lefthand side of the screen (in a mini menu, of which there are several very useful ones, a few of which have already been mentioned.)

The **usb flash drive** plug is in the glove compartment on its upper lefthand side. The glove box can be opened in two ways, first by pressing the "talk button" (the righthand scroll wheel on the steering wheel) and saying, "open glove box," or second, by pressing the car button on the lower lefthand corner of the screen, and tapping the open glove box button (towards the middle on the right-hand side of the car setting screen)—both are a bit of a nuisance. Fortunately, you don't need to do this very often.

When playing music, the lefthand scroll-wheel on the steering wheel handles volume, pushing it sideways allows you can skip songs etc. By pushing it in, you can pause or mute the system. Very nifty.

Tesla has recently added "audible" to the list of apps that its interface supports so you can access your book library through that system without using your cell phone. Apple Music and Amazon Music were also added during the past year. Other books and music can be listened to via Bluetooth from your phone. **Play around with the music system in the parking lot first**, and once you see how it works, you'll be able to do this while driving in easy circumstances or on autopilot on open road. It only requires a half second or so to see and touch the source that you want to use once you understand the system.

(20) **Learning period.** At this point you should be able to do most everything you need to do to drive in a "normal way."

As I said, much of the above should be done in a parking lot first to see how it all works, because although the menus and interface become intuitive fairly quickly, few are completely obvious at first. The interface is very different than the one that you probably learned to drive on. These ABCs should shorten the learning period over what I experienced.

I found that it took a couple of weeks to get comfortable with most the new methods of getting the car to do what I wanted, but I rather enjoyed the challenge of getting the hang of the car (a Tesla Y) and thinking through trips—at last most of the time.

The real basics should take just a trip or two to digest if you've read through the above or watched a few videos. Learning how to trigger all the useful sub menu and dealing with auto pilot foibles takes longer.

(21) **Other Useful Hints**:

(a) The Tesla interface includes a lot of clever ways to access small menus on the lower lefthand side of the screen where they are easy to reach and see quickly. For example, touch the window washer button the left stalk and the window wiper menu shows up there. Pull the lefthand stalk back to flash one's lights or change from low to high beam and the lighting menu shows up there (which I normally just set to auto, but occasionally override). When music is playing, that space usually shows what song is playing and the source. Slide that box to the left or right and some trip data and tire pressure shows up in a box in the same location. Those boxes are simple enough to be easily read and interact with while driving.

(b) The automatic wiper system uses visual AI, just as the road centering and parking assist systems do, but it is not yet as reliable as the old-fashioned water sensor, so sometimes a bit of rain will fall and not trigger the wiper. Just touch the wiper button on the lefthand stalk. If you do it a couple of times, the AI will usually figure out that it is raining. But if it not, you can turn them on manually with in the lower lefthand wiper menu that shows up for a few seconds after you've pressed the wiper button.

(c) The wireless charging holders below the screen are great and allow one to see the phone pretty well in case you are using Bluetooth or double-checking directions. The usb-c chargers in the storage area below them seem to be pretty slow. (I've only used them a time or two.)

(d) Tesla's map program is good, but it is not quite as good at Google's program at this point. So, sometimes it's useful to have Google map running on one's phone to have proper directions given at all intersections. For example, Tesla's program will sometimes fail to give you directions about a turn. An alternative is to look at the excellent map on the screen when you are approaching a complicated intersection. Real time traffic and a very high-definition map requires a subscription at about 10$/month that includes a better map, access to music streaming, and internet browsing (while parked). Those services seem well worth $10/month to me.

(e) Tesla upgrades its software about once a month, so it's useful to connect to an internet service, which you can do with your home service while the car is parked in your garage. (It does not seem to download upgrades through its data plan as far as I can tell.)

(f) It's very useful to keep the **Tesla key card** in your wallet in case your cell phone runs out of battery, in which case the "digital key" fails. Just remember that the card works only on the pillar on the driver's side and requires placing in the proper spot just in front of the armrest after you enter the car.

(g) The suspension is very good on some kinds of roads (those with few bumps more than an inch) but it's very noisy and a bit rough when there are lots of bumps, as on a dirt road, a heavily patched road, and on some concrete roads at seams—the loudness is partly because the car is so quiet on relatively smooth roads. The engines are essentially silent—which is part of the fun of an EV.

(h) Some news accounts and blogs say that Tesla's are using an old design. This may be true of the "skin", but Tesla is constantly upgrading and improving everything under the skin, from frame construction, to engine design, welding, suspension, software, tires, etc. This is the exact opposite as the philosophy of mainstream car manufactures, who routinely put new skin over old mechanicals. Oddly enough, Tesla does not often tout their innovations and provides only the barest information about them on their websites.

(i) Because of the latter, new bells and whistles are constantly being added to the interface, mostly incremental—as with being able to somewhat increase the size of the fonts used to display the information on the screen. So, be alert for new options, some are quite useful—even if they are just icing on the cake.

(j) Safe travels.