

Five fuel-efficient used car picks under \$25,000

May 26 2021, by Reese Counts



This photo provided by Toyota shows a 2016 Toyota Prius, a hybrid hatchback car that's one of the most fuel-efficient vehicles on sale today. (Toyota Motor North America via AP).

The price of gasoline is up more than a dollar on average in the last 12

months, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration. Used car prices are also up nearly 25%, partly due to a lack of inventory on the used market. This combination might make you more inclined to seek out a fuel-efficient vehicle for your next purchase.

To streamline your search, Edmunds' experts have highlighted five used vehicles worth considering. We chose a mix of cars and SUVs with an EPA combined fuel economy estimate of at least 30 mpg as well as high expert and consumer reviews on Edmunds. For each vehicle we listed the newest model year you can get with an average price below \$25,000. The pricing data is from Edmunds' analysis of recent sales transaction data at franchised dealerships.

2019 TOYOTA PRIUS

The Toyota Prius is one of the most fuel-efficient cars on the road today. It combines a hybrid powertrain with a small but spacious hatchback body to create a car that's both practical and frugal at the gas pump.

The Prius features most of Toyota's latest in-car tech and advanced driver aids at a relatively affordable price. It is far from exciting to drive, but if fuel economy is a priority, it doesn't get much better than this.

Average transaction price: \$23,119

Fuel economy: EPA-estimated 50-56 mpg combined

2019 FORD FUSION HYBRID

The Fusion Hybrid was one of the first hybrid sedans to hit the market back in 2010. More recent years have featured a variety of improvements, but the core appeal is the same: This is pretty much a

regular Fusion that gives you higher fuel economy with little compromise.



This photo provided by Honda shows a 2017 Honda CR-V, a small crossover SUV that's practical, spacious and fuel-efficient. (Courtesy of American Honda Motor Co. via AP).

Highlights include comfortable seats, a smooth ride and a spacious trunk. The Fusion's lively handling gives the car a sporty feel when going around turns too. On the downside, the Fusion's sleek roofline results in cramped rear seating for taller adults and sizable rear blind spots for the driver.

Average transaction price: \$17,981

Fuel economy: EPA-estimated 42 mpg combined

2018 CHEVROLET VOLT

The Chevrolet Volt is a small plug-in hybrid hatchback. That means it has a bigger battery pack than the typical hybrid that you can recharge at home or at a public charging station. With a full battery, the Volt can go an EPA-estimated 53 miles—more than most other plug-in hybrids—without using any fuel.

You'll need to regularly recharge the Volt to take advantage of the plug-in system, but even after the battery runs out, the Volt functions like a regular hybrid vehicle. Other advantages include plenty of available technology features and quick acceleration. But it does come up short on space for rear passengers and cargo.



This photo provided by Volkswagen shows a 2017 Volkswagen Golf compact hatchback car. The Golf is one of the longest-running nameplates in automotive history and impresses with a refined feel and impressive fuel economy. Credit: Courtesy of Volkswagen Group of America via AP

Average transaction price: \$18,952

Fuel economy: EPA-estimated 53 miles on all electric power, then 42 mpg combined with normal hybrid operation

2018 HONDA CR-V

The current-generation Honda CR-V has been one of Edmunds' favorite SUVs since it debuted in 2017. Though Honda just started offering a

hybrid variant, the standard CR-V offers excellent fuel economy for a small SUV, even with the optional turbocharged engine. It offers more passenger and cargo space than the Prius, Fusion and quite a few other SUVs.

The interior is comfortable and has lots of places to store small items like smartphones and sunglasses. But we've been disappointed by some of Honda's in-car tech. The touchscreen can be slow to respond, and the lack of a tuning knob makes changing stations more difficult than it needs to be. Still, if you're looking for a small and [fuel](#)-efficient SUV, it doesn't get much better than this.

Average transaction price: \$23,343



This photo provided by Chevrolet shows a 2019 Chevrolet Volt plug-in hybrid. The second-generation Volt offers more electric range than nearly any other plug-in hybrid electric vehicle. Credit: Courtesy of General Motors via AP

Fuel economy: EPA-estimated 30 mpg combined (1.5-liter turbo engine)

2018 VOLKSWAGEN GOLF

Volkswagen's diesel engine emissions scandal in 2015 may have soured some people's love for the brand. But if you can look past that, then the VW Golf is a small car that easily satisfies. Its turbocharged engine is frugal with gas and also pleasingly punchy when you need to accelerate.

Another highlight is the comfortable interior that looks and feels a cut above the cabins of most rivals. The hatchback body style offers a lot of utility, and if you really need space, the rare Golf SportWagen offers even more interior room with just a small hit to [fuel economy](#). A lack of luxury-oriented and convenience features relative to other small cars is the main downside to the Golf.

Average transaction price: \$17,679

Fuel [economy](#): 28 mpg combined



This photo provided by Ford shows a Ford Fusion Hybrid, a hybrid midsize sedan that is essentially a regular Fusion but with higher fuel economy. Credit: Courtesy of Ford Motor Co. via AP

EDMUNDS SAYS:

Keep in mind that pricing and selection will vary based on your area, so you might have to consider prior model years or cast your net wider to find a good used car candidate.

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Citation: Five fuel-efficient used car picks under \$25,000 (2021, May 26) retrieved 23 April 2024 from <https://techxplore.com/news/2021-05-fuel-efficient-car.html>

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