

Road Trip Charging Starter

A first-longer-trip flow for new EV owners: plan with margins, finish charger accounts, rehearse a public session, prep tires/weather, use courteous charger habits, and fall back safely when a station fails.

Plan

Vehicle nav + live network status.

Pay

Apps, cards, receipts, support.

Buffer

Arrival SOC + weather margin.

Fallback

Backup chargers before panic.

Use the owner manual/app as the authority. Charge limits, preconditioning behavior, adapter support, Plug & Charge, and route planning vary by vehicle and network. This sheet is a planning aid, not roadside repair advice.

1 Route plan with boring margins

- ☐ Enter the real destination, return leg, and overnight stop in the vehicle nav first; let it precondition and size charging stops when supported.
- ☐ Cross-check each planned stop in a charger app for connector type, stall count, recent status, price, access hours, amenities, and parking rules.
- ☐ Target a relaxed first-trip buffer: avoid plans that arrive at chargers or lodging with single-digit state of charge. Add more margin for cold/heat, rain, headwind, elevation, traffic, kids, pets, or a new route.

3 Backup chargers and a test route

- ☐ For every critical fast-charge stop, save one backup charger within your remaining range plus a "turn-around" option behind you.
- ☐ Call or message lodging if overnight charging matters: ask if chargers work, whether they are reserved/valet/shared, and what to do if blocked.
- ☐ Before the big trip, run a 20–40 mile rehearsal: navigate to a fast charger, plug in, start/stop a short session, confirm cable reach, receipt, and support flow.

2 Apps, accounts, and payment before departure

- ☐ Install the vehicle app plus the two likely fast-charge network apps on your corridor; sign in while you are still at home on Wi-Fi.
- ☐ Add a payment method, enable membership/Plug & Charge only if your vehicle/network supports it, and confirm receipts or charge history are visible.
- ☐ Save roadside assistance, insurance, charger support numbers, hotel contact, and a backup payment card in the glovebox or phone wallet.

4 Car prep: tires, weather, and cabin load

- ☐ Check cold tire pressure against the driver-door placard or owner manual, not the tire sidewall maximum; pack a small inflator/gauge.
- ☐ Charge to the road-trip limit allowed by your manual/app, precondition cabin while plugged in, and leave with navigation running.
- ☐ Pack light but useful: microfiber towel for wet handles/screens, wipes, trash bag, water/snacks, weather item, mobile cable/adapters only if the route can use them.

AT EACH CHARGER

- ☐ Park once so the cable reaches without strain; do not block adjacent stalls.
- ☐ Start the session and verify charging power/SOC before walking away.
- ☐ Use the stop for restroom, trash, food, pets, and stretching; set a phone alert for departure SOC.
- ☐ Move when you have enough range plus buffer; fast charging usually slows as SOC gets high.

ETIQUETTE THAT PREVENTS CONFLICT

- ☐ Do not unplug another vehicle unless the network/site explicitly allows it and the session is complete.
- ☐ Do not idle after charging finishes; many networks can apply idle or parking fees.
- ☐ Report broken, blocked, or underperforming equipment in the app so the next driver sees fresher status.
- ☐ Keep accessible spaces, trailer pull-throughs, and hotel overnight chargers available for drivers who need them.

IF A CHARGER FAILS

- ☐ Try the simplest fix first: re-seat connector, follow screen/app order exactly, try another stall, then app/RFID/card tap if available.
- ☐ Call charger support with station ID and fault message while you still have range; ask them to remote-start or confirm outage status.
- ☐ Switch early to your saved backup instead of draining the buffer. Slow down, reduce HVAC load, and navigate directly if range gets tight.
- ☐ If no safe charger is reachable, stop somewhere safe and call roadside assistance before the battery is critically low.

Write-in route notes

- ☐ Arrival SOC target: pick a number that lets you handle a blocked stall, detour, or cold-soaked overnight parking. New owners should choose comfort over theoretical efficiency.
- ☐ Weather buffer: cold, heat, rain, wind, elevation, and roof/cargo loads can change energy use; re-plan when the forecast or speed changes.
- ☐ Connector check: confirm CCS/NACS/J3400/Tesla access, adapter support, and whether the network requires app, RFID, contactless card, or Plug & Charge.

Sources consulted

- DOE/AFDC Alternative Fuels Data Center: public station locating, AC/DC charging levels, connector/charging infrastructure terminology, home/public charging basics.
- FuelEconomy.gov: proper tire pressure is listed on the driver-door placard/owner manual; under-inflated tires reduce efficiency and safety margin.
- Electrify America mobile app guidance: check real-time charger availability, connector types, payment method, session progress/SOC where compatible, and charge history.
- ChargePoint driver support: app route planning, station photos/amenities, payment options, weather/use questions, SOC display where supported, and idle-fee awareness.
- Chevrolet mobile-app route-planning support and vehicle-owner manuals/apps: use in-vehicle or OEM route planning when available and follow model-specific charge-limit guidance.