

archive.today

Saved from <https://www.wsj.com/business/autos/tesla-autopilot-crash-investigation>[search](#)

30 Aug 2024 18:36:37 UTC

webpage capture

All snapshots from host [www.wsj.com](http://www.wsj.com)[history](#)[prior](#)[next](#)[Webpage](#)[Screenshot](#)[share](#)[download .zip](#)[report bug or abuse](#)

0%

▼

[Subscribe](#)[Sign In](#)

English Edition ▾ Print Edition | Video | Audio | Latest Headlines | More ▾

Latest World **Business** U.S. Politics Economy Tech Markets & Finance Opinion Arts Lifestyle Real Estate Personal Finance Health Style Sports**BUSINESS | AUTOS**

# Inside the WSJ's Investigation of Tesla's Autopilot Crash Risks

Cars using Autopilot sometimes struggle to recognize obstacles or stay on the road

By [Paul Overberg](#) [Follow](#), [Emma Scott](#) [Follow](#) and [Frank Matt](#) [Follow](#)

July 31, 2024 5:30 am ET



VIDEO AND DATA GATHERED BY THE WALL STREET JOURNAL FROM OVER 200 TESLA AUTOPILOT CRASHES REVEALS THAT LONGSTANDING CONCERN ABOUT TESLA'S CAMERA-BASED TECHNOLOGY, WHICH DIFFERS FROM THE REST OF THE INDUSTRY, ARE SHOWING UP ON THE ROADS AND PUTTING THE PUBLIC AT RISK. PHOTO ILLUSTRATION: RYAN TREFES

To understand safety issues surrounding Tesla's Autopilot, The Wall Street Journal undertook a comprehensive analysis of crash data, uncovering previously obscured details by combining heavily redacted federal filings with local police records.

The Journal analyzed filings that manufacturers are required to submit to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration when cars [crash while using autonomous driving technology](#). However, the public versions of these reports are heavily redacted, obscuring key details like the crash narrative and even the exact date.

To gain a clearer picture, the Journal filed public records requests for police crash databases with agencies in more than a dozen states. Reporters spent months compiling these records into a unified database and matching them with corresponding NHTSA submissions. This

process allowed the Journal to learn details about more than 200 [Tesla Autopilot-involved crashes](#), revealing previously unknowable patterns by delving into the detailed narratives and diagrams in police reports.

Here are some of the key findings:

## AUTOPILOT STRUGGLES WITH OBSTACLES

While many crashes involved incidental collisions, a number occurred when Teslas on Autopilot struck clearly visible obstacles or ran off the road at T-intersections, suggesting challenges with the system's ability to navigate these scenarios. In several crashes, the obstacles included one or more police or fire vehicles with emergency lights flashing.

Autopilot relies mostly on software processing images from onboard cameras to detect obstacles, although some models use a radar backup. Other vehicle manufacturers use cameras but also radar and lasers to detect obstacles directly. Elon Musk, Tesla's chief executive, has said such sensors are unnecessary. Tesla says that drivers are instructed that while Autopilot is engaged, they must keep their hands on the steering wheel and remain ready to retake control at all times.

MOST POPULAR NEWS

## AUTOPILOT CRASHES ALSO INVOLVE VEERING

The Journal also found a number of crashes occurred when Autopilot was engaged and the vehicle lost traction, including cases on wet pavement, veering off the road. Tesla says that such cases may occur when "environmental factors contribute to the crash, such as with heavy rains and hydroplaning."

## NHTSA FINDINGS ECHO WSJ ANALYSIS

The Journal's findings align with a [recently released NHTSA analysis](#) that identified a trend of "avoidable crashes" involving Teslas striking visible obstacles or running off wet roads after losing traction. Tesla says it disagreed with NHTSA's analysis and pointed out that the agency didn't seek a recall. Instead, Tesla says it voluntarily issued a [software update](#) for up to two million vehicles last year that [would improve driver warnings](#) and attentiveness when Autopilot was in operation.

MOST POPULAR OPINION

## TESLA AND NHTSA WITHHOLD INFORMATION FROM THE PUBLIC

Despite NHTSA guidelines encouraging transparency, both Tesla and the agency itself withhold key information from the public about crashes. Tesla blocks the release of descriptive details about its reported crashes, saying those details amount to confidential business information. NHTSA, meanwhile, cites its obligation to protect personal privacy under federal law as a justification for withholding specific information such as the exact date, address, zip code and location of the crash.

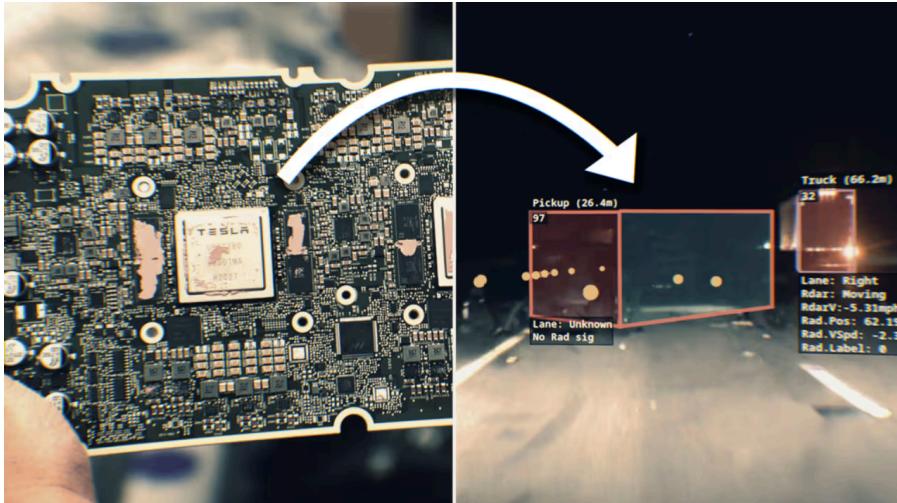
## TESLA HAS REPORTED OVER 1,200 AUTOPILOT-RELATED CRASHES TO NHTSA SINCE 2021

These incidents represent about 80% of all crashes reported to the regulator involving autonomous driving technology. The Journal matched 222 of these crashes to local police reports. Tesla attributes its crash count in NHTSA's data to the widespread use of its vehicles and Autopilot technology, as well as its superior crash detection and reporting systems. The company maintains that "Autopilot has been used by millions of drivers to safely drive billions of miles" and has prevented "innumerable" crashes.

## TESLA TIGHTLY CONTROLS ACCESS TO CRASH DATA

10%

Teslas store video and operating data that can be transmitted to the company's servers. Owners can review their own vehicle's video on its dashboard. And Tesla says that it lets owners download logs of operating data that include hundreds of readings and conditions that are time stamped to the millisecond. However, getting full details of what the cameras record and how they process those images to make Autopilot work requires expert access to the vehicle's computer. Tesla says it shares information when required by police or in lawsuits.



TESLA CLOSELY PROTECTS THE DATA OF EACH CAR'S AUTOPILOT SYSTEM. THE JOURNAL OBTAINED A SET OF THIS DATA AS A PART OF ITS INVESTIGATION INTO AUTOPILOT CRASHES. HERE'S HOW IT'S EXTRACTED FROM DEEP WITHIN THE CAR. PHOTO ILLUSTRATION: RYAN TREFFER

John West contributed to this article.

Write to Paul Overberg at [paul.overberg@wsj.com](mailto:paul.overberg@wsj.com), Emma Scott at [emma.scott@wsj.com](mailto:emma.scott@wsj.com) and Frank Matt at [francis.matt@wsj.com](mailto:francis.matt@wsj.com)

*Appeared in the August 1, 2024, print edition as 'WSJ Probe Uncovers Details Of Tesla's Autopilot Risks'.*

HIDE CONVERSATION (252)

## Conversation 252 Comments

Commenting on this article has ended

Sort by **Newest** ▾

DC D Coleman

2 August, 2024

sample size of 200. Not statistically significant.

## RECOMMENDED VIDEOS

1. WSJ Poll: Harris Takes Narrow Lead Against Trump in Neck-and-Neck Race



2. WSJ Opinion: The Kamala Harris Soap Bubble Campaign



3. Watch: Harris Defends Policy Shifts in CNN Interview, Her First as Nominee



4. What New F-16s Mean for Ukraine's Soviet-Style Air Force



5. 'Our Place Is Uninhabitable': Pokrovsk Is Evacuated Amid Russian Advance



"many"  
"a number"  
"a number"  
"a trend"  
"a certainty?" Hatchet job. and messing with ComStds...

(Edited)  
 1 • Share

---

**Mike Hosking**

2 August, 2024

Thanks for the hard work. Look forward to follow ups. It's disappointing Tesla and its regulator are not more transparent.

 1 • Share

---

**LC Luis Calderon**

1 August, 2024

Sensationalized news! WSJ trying to get clicks by giving an analyst's job to a journalist. It would be way more valuable to compare earlier crashes against newer crashes with updates to the data along with comparisons for human accidents per miles drive.

 2 • Share

---

**JT Jacob Tinsky**

1 August, 2024

When I first heard Trump was shot, I immediately turned to X/Twitter for live coverage of the event.

Perhaps, just maybe, the WSJ is reacting to the existential threat that Musk presents to their business model.

 2 • Share

---

**BC Bill Crowley**

1 August, 2024

The problem with AI driven autopilot for vehicles struggling with obstacles is far more complex than simply the means of acquiring a description of such obstacles.

To expect any AI supported autopilot system to respond to a rapidly unfolding and potentially dangerous driving situation in the same way as would most humans is a fool's errand.

This because, at its heart, AI is a "closed" system; meaning that its prowess stems from the scope and accuracy of only the data on which it's trained.

Most natural phenomena, especially biological types, are "open" systems, capable of intuition, spatial reasoning and insight; literally "thinking out of the box".

 2 • Share

---

**TA Timothy Aines**

1 August, 2024

I still have a hard time getting my head around the notion that anyone in their right mind ever wants to operate a car without their hands on the wheel, or thinks this is some sort of lofty goal. Automobiles on roads are never going to be the same thing as aircraft in the sky and the automakers have to stop selling this crazy notion.

Share

TE **Tim Edwards**

1 August, 2024

Yea and Amen. My X5 requires a hand on the wheel, but does a better job keeping the car in the lane than I do and yet one can "relax" and enjoy the scenery knowing the system is always vigilant. It is also great in stop and go traffic on a freeway.

1 Share

TE **Tim Edwards**

1 August, 2024

In the fall of 2021 I ordered a Tesla X. In January 2022, since it was taking so long for the X to come, I bought a Y. While I liked many things about both cars, the Cruise Control/Assisted Driving/Self Driving function of both cars was terrible. Neither of my cars had radar and the system could not distinguish a shadow on the road from a solid object, leading to numerous, unexpected, sudden slowings of the car. Since I use those functions a lot, I now drive a X5. Its Assisted Driving mode is far superior

1 Share

DM **Diby Mukherjee**

1 August, 2024

I have driven both, a Tesla X and a BMW iX (full disclosure: I own an iX) and the "Driver Assist" on the BMW is way better than the Tesla "Autopilot". In general I found the Tesla X to be way overpriced for what it provides, but that's another discussion.

(Edited)

Share

GB **Greg Billings**

1 August, 2024

This story appeared on the bottom of page B6 and wasn't tagged in the page one left column. The WSJ buried their own story. I'd be really pissed if I was one of the writers. Why is the WSJ so in the bag for Musk? Because he endorsed the former president?

1 Share

CN **Charles N**

1 August, 2024

OK, it seems to me there are several key issues with "Full Self Driving". Let's start with:

#1. How can one produce a product with that name and still say (sometimes in fine print) that the driver needs to stay alert and ready to take over?  
#2. When the "FSD" fails and someone dies, why do you as product producer seek to, at all costs, prevent any information about said accident to be released to the public?  
#3 Why don't the regulators perform realistic tests with so called FSD, performing a suite of "atypical" events that WILL occur at some point for a human driver? Case in point, just this past week, a 3-4 year old child chasing a tennis ball (not so large) ran right in front of me from behind a fence. I had plenty of time to react (because I wasn't pushing my speed) and did (thankfully for all). Why can't NTSA develop these types of atypical scenarios as a test for the so called full self driving automation. Stop relying on, "we have so much data" sure you do, but not so much "atypical" data (like a truck blocking two lanes of a highway because it has rolled over.)  
#4 Tesla should not be using the word "Full".

#5 Regulators should establish a suite of standards that an autonomous vehicle should be able to achieve which include many, realistic, atypical scenarios.

These are just a few issues that concern me as one who has driven well over 2 million miles and also as one who wouldn't be typing any of this without lightning quick reflexes and attention to the road when driving.

(Edited)  
4 Share

---

ss Sergey Solyanik

1 August, 2024

Musk's jihad to do everything with cameras makes driving Tesla a miserable experience in many ways. For example, automatic headlights are terrible. Rain sensing wipers are terrible. Driving a Rivian is in many ways a breath of fresh air because all the normal parts of the car work normally.

4 Share

---

JL John L

31 July, 2024

Tesla's absence of LIDAR as a companion to cameras is a serious flaw bordering on negligence. Failure to use all available tech to make the safest "autopilot" function.

2 Share

---

ss Sergey Solyanik

1 August, 2024

Very agree!

Share

---

DR Daniel Racer

31 July, 2024

That's Exactly it. Machine Learning means that people die while the machine is learning. You Need Lidar to see the environment and detect objects. This was their error.

1 Share

---

ss Sergey Solyanik

1 August, 2024

Musk has this idiotic quip in one of the interview when he axed LIDAR - if cameras and LIDAR disagree, who do you believe? Well, it doesn't take a rocket surgeon to answer this - WHICHEVER SAYS THE OBSTACLE IS CLOSER!

Share

---

BB Bruce Brand

31 July, 2024

**This WSJ article missed the fundamental question: How many deaths per mile of driving are there in a Tesla FSD versus in a similar manually driven car?** I want to know if self-driving cars have the potential to reduce the heartbreaking 40,000 US auto-related fatalities per year. We know lives have been both lost and saved by this technology. Can a non-bias research organization please net it out for me?

8 Share

**EB El Bo**

31 July, 2024

We already have anti-collision sensors built into our skull. They are called eyes and ears.

They have been field tested for thousands of years and work pretty darn well. They are portable and usable with a variety of vehicles and animals. They generally require little calibration or repair and if properly maintained should provide trouble free service for the first 50 years. And they come free with body.

Share

**JL John L**

31 July, 2024

From my daily drive seems many of my fellow humans not using their sensors well.

3 Share

**EB El Bo**

31 July, 2024

John, I am afraid it is the grey matter CPU that is on the fritz in most cases, sometimes aggravated by beer and brownies. Now, when all of have a HAL 9000 implant, I may have to eat my hat.

Share

---

**Bob Sanderson**

31 July, 2024

In a Taxi the passenger won't be jumping to the front seat to grab the steering wheel or push the pedals to save themselves.

“I would encourage anyone to understand the system better to simply try it out, let the car drive you around,” he (Musk) said on an investors call earlier this month after reporting disappointing second quarter financial results.

“Once people use it, they tend to continue using it. So it’s vastly compelling.”...

...But there were problems when Truist’s Stein recently tried a special “demo mode” only available to Tesla employees during demonstration drives, he wrote in a note. He wrote it made a number of illegal maneuvers while in FSD mode, including switching lanes on a portion of highway with solid white lines indicating lane changes were prohibited.

In addition “the Model Y accelerated through an intersection as the car in front of us had only partly completed a right-turn. My quick intervention was absolutely required to avoid an otherwise certain accident,” he wrote. “Another intervention was required when a police officer used hand motions to signal to us to pull to the side of the road to allow a funeral procession to pass.”

The system is “no better, arguably worse, than last time” when he tested it in April, Stein wrote.

CNN

Share

---

**GB G Benton**

31 July, 2024

I drive 2 Teslas, a 2015 Model S and a 2019 Model 3. Both have some “autopilot” facility. I tried it a few times, and it scared the living bleep outta me. I *never use it anymore*, though I do use the cruise control features which maintain distance between cars.

My experience with Tesla has, on the whole, been a great one. They are super cars, but whoever dreamed up autopilot got ahead of themselves. It ain't happening in my cars, and I doubt it will be in general usage anywhere, ever in any form remotely like the present tech.

I hear driverless cars (not Teslas) are ferrying people around San Francisco. I will decline the honor, for now.

 1 • Share

JF **Joshua Fox**

31 July, 2024

When did you try it? They've made a bunch of changes lately. It's been great for us.

 • Share

CT **Chris Taluc**

1 August, 2024

I recently gave FSD another try during their free month this spring. Unfortunately, I found myself needing to take control within a minute or two, except on the interstate, where it managed about 10 minutes before requiring intervention. The FSD experience was quite nerve-wracking, and I can't see myself paying for it. While I love driving my 2023 Model 3, I believe FSD is seriously flawed without radar and lidar.

*(Edited)*

 • Share

JF **Joshua Fox**

1 August, 2024

Fair enough. I completely agree on the last point.

 1 • Share

---

TF **Thomas Friedrich**

31 July, 2024

Aeye has an amazing lidar system. Musk should buy LIDR, use that system, and stop using cameras. And this has nothing to do with my severely underwater investment in LIDR. OK, maybe a little.

 2 • Share

---

GJ **Gerry Jameson**

31 July, 2024

It's why you need radar/lidar. Physical object detection, to remove doubt with respect to AI going "Gosh haven't seen this on my camera before... what should I do?". It's worth the cost and the data point is invaluable in critical situations.

 2 • Share

---

CR **Charlie Roast**

31 July, 2024

I will never trust the software and cameras in a car to drive without my hands on the wheel and eyes on the road.

 • Share

---

WK **Walter Koenig**

31 July, 2024

I am not even sure that most drivers would have been able to react better with this truck blocking the street with bad driving conditions.

but yes, we would hope that technology would be able to see and react better than a human.

 • Share

---

DM **David Mountain**

31 July, 2024

I think Tesla should put some money into creating a tiny doppler radar that could fit into the front grill of one of their EVs and scans the road directly in front of the car out to just beyond minimum safe breaking distance with a very small RF cone. If the frequency returned is the exact same or higher than what was transmitted, start braking and loudly alert the user. For those who are not familiar, an equal return frequency indicates a stationary object and a higher frequency indicates an object coming at you. A quick search found a small unit for about \$700. I bet a little R & D and economies of scale could get that down to less than \$100.

 • Share

**Kirth Gersen**

31 July, 2024

Many vehicles have already had such front radar systems since at least the mid-late 2010s. It's a conscious decision by Tesla to exclusively use cameras.

 2 • Share

---

GL **George Lai**

31 July, 2024

TSLA often cheap out on safety.  
Model 3s no rear cross traffic alert.  
Autopilot no LIDAR.

Using cameras only to do photogrammetry: you save money on the hardware, but the software will cost you big time. How the heck are you going to get accurate 3D info from uncalibrated camera pairs? Try threading a needle with one eye shut at arm distance -- can you do it? And those cameras go blind when you have fog, rain, snow.

 3 • Share

GL **George Lai**

31 July, 2024

Model Y doesn't have rear cross traffic alert. That was the model that I saw crashing into another car when backing up. Don't know if TSLA updated the software to do cross traffic alert. Anyway...cheap!

 • Share

---

AS **Andrew Sumereau**

31 July, 2024

Oops! I misread the headline and dived right in...  
I thought it said "Inside the WSJ's Investigation of Musk and Tesla and How We Can Run a Negative Article Every Day."  
My mistake.

 1 • Share

**Howard Huddleston**

31 July, 2024

It's getting to almost be laughable: the anti-Musk tsunami. The article may be valid but surrounded as it is by multiple other attacks one has to wonder what is going on. Is the WSJ saying the NHTSA and Tesla are in cahoots with the

administration to further EV development? If so, come right out and say it, because *that* would be news, going beyond conjecture. If not, does what we have here constitute data meddling or an outright hit piece?

 Share

**MT M Thomas**

31 July, 2024

We need to separate sales tactics from reality. The point is these systems are trained on historical data (reality) & as world evolves, they are bound to come across new realities they have never seen. It will be impossible for them to make good judgement on situations they have never seen. Now, humans too commit mistake when they come across unknown scenarios but our intuition helps us avoid most dangers. I tend to think these cars are good buy for the price just from economics perspective but hype is questionable. Having said that a \$22K Honda Civic provides 70-80% of partial autonomy benefits that a \$50k Tesla provides. One thing that I am appalled by is the use of statistics to tell the story. Would like Tesla to compare their safety record based on miles driven by humans when they are holding the steering & are attentive with their system. Also, people commit mistakes but it is their free will & they will own consequences. But, if a machine commits mistake, it has to be owned by the machine and people are right to blame the machine. That is how the real world works. TBH... I do think these cars provide significant utility in narrow context but assumption that we can sit in the back seat, read books or check social media while they take us through the forest on next adventure (or to office on rainy dark morning on an icy road or one with confusing construction markings) is flawed and needs to be called out. That is why I think Tesla is speculative stock.

(Edited)

 Share

**JK Jon Kirkegaard**

31 July, 2024

Have been writing about this since the first Waymo and first Autopilot claims that the permutations and combination of issues on the road impossible to automate without safety guard rails in the Civil Engineering infrastructure. So until Musk and those like him design, get approval and get built safety physical guard rails for certain FSD lanes it is a non starter and a fools errand !

Example you are in one of Musk's AutoLemming craft on a free way 360 on or exit ramp and completely loose power what does the car do as a default. Without safety guard rails all options are likely going to get you injured or worse in a rear end crash or sailing off the edge or both !

So don't be some lemming listing to IT Wonks who think "IT engineering" is real Engineering ! It is NOT

 Share

**GS grant smith**

31 July, 2024

And as we have seen in the last few months, centralized connected cars can, and will be hacked...It is not an "if", but "when". Imagine the entire Tesla fleet going to blue screen.

 2 Share

**R RedDog**

31 July, 2024

That would be so fun to watch if they are parked and not following some hacking program that put them on the roads. Then it'd be scary. Like that

movie "Leave the world behind", all those Teslas crashing...

*(Edited)*

 1 • Share

gs grant smith

31 July, 2024

And it would happen in places I have absolutely no sympathy for - like  
Portland, LA, SF, Boston, NYC

 1 • Share

### Nicholas Costantino

31 July, 2024

Cars, planes, rockets, farm equipment, manufacturing equipment, medicines, medical devices/procedures: lots and lots of things had developments that brought about/involved the deaths of many people ...

People dying has always been part of the development of new technology ...

What's new (at least, what's never before been done to such an extent) is condemning the developers for the deaths, treating the developers as greedy evil pigs who don't give a hoot about anyone but themselves. For this we can thank the Left--the miserable Left.

Elon Musk has changed/is changing the world for the better--for the super better, the incalculable better. Twenty years from now (maybe less, maybe much less) there's not going to be kids run over by drunks, the blind won't need someone to drive them, driver's licenses will be relics (so long and good riddance, DMV, wonderful example of ill-humored arrogant inefficient government bureaucracy), and deaths and injuries from road accidents will be almost non-existent.

Elon Musk and his doings will studied and praised and talked about and marveled over for hundreds of years to come--long after the authors of this hit-piece "investigation" are completely forgotten dust that's seeped into the sewer.

*(Edited)*

 • Share

EB El Bo

31 July, 2024

I hear Trump is gonna dump Vance in favor of Musk.

 • Share

WM william mcclain

31 July, 2024

Of course its sad that people have died. Its sad that fentanyl overdose deaths are more than traffic deaths for the first time in history. What I don't understand is why people would have their Tesla on autopilot in these dangerous scenarios. If I am in a congested traffic area I take the truck off cruise control. I certainly would not trust the autopilot as I approached a wreck or police activity.

 • Share

R RedDog

31 July, 2024

Did you read the part that there are better autopilot technologies out there but your saint Musk dismisses them?

 • Share

**Nicholas Costantino**

31 July, 2024

Lefties treating their opinions as Objective Fact/Revealed Truth: the ill our time.

Yes, Musk is a saint--a secular saint: tons and tons and tons of crap not in the air thanks to Musk, thanks to the technology he helped develop and finance, thanks to his indefatigable and brilliant creating of the commercial EV industry, taking on--and beating--Detroit to do so.

I'll bet you don't even recycle. (Sixty years on and have never--NEVER-- met a sincere "liberal"--a person who does any of the things they demand that everyone be compelled to do to make the world "a better place.")

Like all Lefties, you hate Musk because he's an "American": smart/creative, self-reliant, super hardworking, refuses to be/consider himself a victim-- and he laughs at the Left. Laughs in your faces. (Makes you want to murder him, right?)

Now go enjoy your favorite pastimes: topple a statute of Jefferson, burn a flag, recite the Soviet pledge, and (saved the BEST for last) have an abortion at eight months (make sure they don't leave the brain behind, Patricia)--and, of course, do like your hero, Woman Sotomayor, and cry, cry, cry, cry, cry. (Bizarre, women's expecting to be taken seriously.)

*(Edited)*

 Share

**VF Victor Forys**

31 July, 2024

When people start driving they are not able to drive as well as someone who has been driving for years. They have to be taught to drive. When my kids were learning to drive I was supervising them.

They started driving independently after passing a driving test. The same is true for usinf FSD it takes time to learn to drive with it because it is not autonamous. I have been using FSD since 2020 and I find it very helpful.

That does not mean that a person can get a car turn it on and use it without first learning how to drive with it. Just like you need to learn to drive in general. Tesla does not teach you how to drive with FSD they would be well served if they did.

It clearly warns the user that it is not autonamous and literally says it will do the worst thing at the worst posiible time and you have to sign that you read and understand that.

If you are impaired in any way, drunk, high, distracted, texting or just sleepy you should not drive. It would be ideal if nobody ever drove while being less than 100% but that is not real life.

Bottom line it's great but not perfect. IMO it is safe and effective.

 Share

**BW Bruce Walker**

31 July, 2024

Tesla is as bad as the program to deliberately infect all those people in the Tuskegee Study. Only difference is that Musk prefers using people dumb enough to believe his claims about fully autonomous autopilot as test victims.

 1 • Share

---

EP **Earlthe Pearl**

31 July, 2024

data be damned...we're going to write Musk is bad articles

Tesla autopilot = 1 accident/7 million miles  
Human drivers = 1 accident/less than 1 million miles

 2 • Share

---

MN **Matthew Van Nostrand**

31 July, 2024

There should be an 'inside WSJ's obsession with Elon Musk and his companies, and insistence on running multiple front page articles on them on an almost daily basis'

 3 • Share

---

BN **Brian Norkett**

31 July, 2024

Amen.

 • Share

---

RJ **Ray Jansen**

31 July, 2024

The comment about Autopilot driving off the road in wet conditions is the same issue you have with Cruise Control. If your car slows down and tries to speed up and that causes the tires to spin, you get in a feedback loop where it keeps trying to speed up because you are not at the expected speed but the tires keep spinning. How many accidents are caused by cruise control in the same instance? WSJ presents good information but without other statistics to compare it to, we don't know if Tesla is worse or better than other vehicles. This has to be put in perspective.

 • Share

---

TR **Travis R**

31 July, 2024

There's a big difference between Tesla's autopilot and full self drive (FSD). Autopilot is like an enhanced version of cruise control and shouldn't be viewed as an autonomous driving feature.

 • Share

---

**Clark Magnuson**

31 July, 2024

The future is self driving vehicles. They could be blamed by manufacturers having higher liability than human drivers.

 • Share

SH **Scott Hammet**

31 July, 2024

That this article exists tells a striking story about Musk's fall from MSM grace.

thumb up Share

---

RF **Robert Flatt**

31 July, 2024

Fine but this piece is backward looking, it tells us nothing about now.

The latest "FSD Supervised" version (12) is remarkable. Being a supervisor rather than a driver takes some getting used to but is well worth it. Think of it as a **very** smart cruise control.

thumb up Share

---

DT **David Thornton**

31 July, 2024

I am decidedly not a Musk fanboy, but the writers should not have said that Tesla represented 80% of the reported autonomous car crashes without saying what percentage of autonomous cars on the road were Tesla. They also should have compared crashes of non-autonomous cars with Tesla autonomous cars adjusted for total cars on the road of each type. Miles driven would be better, but probably impossible.

thumb up 3 Share

KE **Kent Evans**

31 July, 2024

Correct. But, this would have not fit with the writer's narrative.

thumb up 2 Share

---

KE **Kent Evans**

31 July, 2024

Recently purchased a Tesla w/ Full Self Driving (FSD). They are VERY clear that the self driving MUST be monitored at ALL times. They are very strict about violations and have a 3-strikes policy for not paying attention to the road. They will literally disable the FSD.

thumb up 1 Share

---

RP **Robert Peacock**

31 July, 2024

Love all these comments defending the Tesla system...as better than humans who will lead to more than 40,000 fatalities on the road this year....but we all know everyone of them would be calling their lawyer the moment their little Johnny is driven into the back of a parked police car while on autonomous mode.

This is why Tesla has to quite pretending that they just have to be better than flawed humans...and don't need back up lidar or radar along with visual cameras for their system. People will not tolerate the idea a software or design failure led to a death even if thousands of distracted drivers are causing collisions.

thumb up 1 Share

---

DH **Dave Harmon**

31 July, 2024

What is missing from the WSJ analysis is the number of lives saved by autopilot. People die driving cars everyday-40K per year in the US and that is a tragedy for

families and society. Self-driving has the potential to reduce this dramatically and it absolutely needs more improvement. But I think the question is, how does autopilot fatality rate compare to non-autopilot fatality rate. WSJ should include these statistics to provide the proper perspective.

1 like · Share

---

RH **R Scott Hughes**

31 July, 2024

I wonder how much Musk pays his troll army to dash to the comments section and whine about 'hit jobs' anytime an article doesn't shower Musk with fawning adulation.

1 like · Share

VF **Victor Forys**

31 July, 2024

Nothing, he is to cheap.

1 like · Share

---

TC **Todd C**

31 July, 2024

Fairly straight-forward solution: add LIDAR or other sensors and stop relying solely on cameras. Yes, Tesla eats a bit of crow and has to change its story a bit, but that is million times better than what those crash videos from the in-car cameras show. It is very clear that drivers can not trust Tesla auto-pilot.

1 like · Share

---

**Bob Sanderson**

31 July, 2024

The secrecy Tesla demonstrates in withholding vital information from the grieving families seeking answers is a great indictment of the firm.

Thank you WSJ for continuing your tradition of investigative journalism!

3 like · Share

---

TL **Todd Lee**

31 July, 2024

This is just another in a growing list of attacks against Musk by the WSJ. As soon as he said he supported Trump, he became a target worthy of headline attacks.

As far as autopilot technology goes, anyone who thinks you can get in a car and delegate 100% of the responsibility for driving to any technology is a fool.

1 like · Share

---

NJ **Nate Jutras**

31 July, 2024

WSJ began this investigation over a year ago. And NewsCorp/FOX/WSJ is indisputably in the Trump corner.

1 like · Share

---

NC **Nathaniel Crockett**

31 July, 2024

More silly anti Musk propaganda from the WSJ. If I didn't know better I would think WSJ is getting its marching orders from the Democratic Party.

2 like · Share

**KC** **KS Cheng**

31 July, 2024

I own two Teslas. The AutoPilot performs very well most of the time. However, it does make mistakes. Drivers have to approach this technology with some common sense. You can rely on it for normal driving on highways almost 100%. On city streets with people and dogs walking around with unexpected obstacles, you must be an idiot to rely on AutoPilot. The AutoPilot name is exactly what it meant for an airplane. It assists the pilot when it's expected to be a smooth sail. However, it's not meant for takeoff and landing when it takes skills and caution. So use common sense and you will be alright.

2 Share

**AA** **Aidan Angland**

31 July, 2024

Well put. I own a Tesla as well and feel the same way.

Paul

Share

**Bob Sanderson**

31 July, 2024

Your assessment sounds realistic.

Contact Musk to have him clarify what the AutoPilot actually can do safely. He says it drives him around the city all the time (maybe he is an idiot?).

1 Share

---

**Gary Blakely**

31 July, 2024

What, if any, is the difference between "autopilot" and Full Service Driving (FSD) now at level 12.5?

Those youtube videos on FSD 12.5 make it look like magic while the WSJ paints a very different picture. What I don't get, from either source, is a feeling for how FSD compares to Humans at the task of driving a vehicle. Certainly neither is perfect but which is better?

Share

**gs** **grant smith**

31 July, 2024

Just more Elon Musk lies and hype - this technology is dead - it may be safe for an airline, but not a car.

Share

---

**OM** **Ole Mortensen**

31 July, 2024

It's interesting to look back at the WSJ article from 2017 "Tesla's Push to Build a Self-Driving Car Sparked Dissent Among Its Engineers". Concerns were already then raised about naming the feature "autopilot" and claims about being able to drive without human interaction.

Also I like to draw attention to the old 2017 article because quite a few commentators are claiming it's only after Elon associated himself with Trump, that WSJ started writing about Tesla safety issues! However, you could for example Google "tesla crash site:wsj.com" or other subjects about Tesla or autonomous driving and see it's more like an ongoing investigation, reaching years back, and now followed up with driving data.

It's real. People are getting killed. When I look at the videos I feel these are not at all difficult driving situations and should be handled. Worth for WSJ to investigate and write about.

(<https://www.wsj.com/articles/teslas-push-to-build-a-self-driving-car-sparks-dissent-among-its-engineers-1503593742>)



Tesla's Push to Build a Self-Driving Car Sparked Dissent Among Its Engineers - WSJ

wsj.com

1 Share

FM Franklin Moore

31 July, 2024

This is excellent journalism--kudos WSJ. Journalism is vital in challenging all power centers, economic and political monoliths, and threats to freedom. Too bad some of this front-page healthy curiosity isn't directed at the federal government and its growing corruption and incompetence.

1 Share

IS I Stephens

31 July, 2024

Please define what you call "autopilot". Tesla uses that term for what others call Adaptive Cruise Control, ie the car is not being steered by computer. For full computer steering, Tesla calls the function "Full Self Driving".

And what revisions of the software were in use at the time? Were they recent updates or years old versions?

Which are you writing about, WSJ?

(Edited)

1 Share

GS grant smith

31 July, 2024

That is because Elon Musk has made billions of dollars lying about this, and nobody ever calls him out on it

1 Share

TT Tom Trankle

31 July, 2024

"nobody ever calls him out on it"

That is hardly true. I have seen many news articles questioning the safety of the Tesla Full Safe Driving algorithm.

1 Share

GS grant smith

31 July, 2024

There are puff piece articles, but NHTSA NEVER does anything about it

1 Share

KG Kevin Grimes

31 July, 2024

30%

WSJ seems on a "mission" to sully Elon Musk and his contributions to our society. Last year, in the US, over 30,000 people lost their lives in "driver cars" and fewer than 10 lost their lives in driverless EV's. We'd have to factor in miles driven to get a fair comparison - data which I don't have. But WSJ seems to favor continuing with the 30k dead per year out of fear of Elon Musk getting credit for helping out humanity with his ideas (again!!!)

(Edited)

 2 • Share

gs grant smith

31 July, 2024

Tell that to the person in SF that was drug under a car for half a block by a self driving car trying to get out of the way of an ambulance.

 • Share

 2 replies

---

JM James Mills

31 July, 2024

I don't think information around a crash on public roads, such as date and location, should be kept confidential—not to protect individual privacy nor business interests. Almost any type of vehicle crash has the potential to involve other innocent people if it were to reoccur.

 1 • Share

---

MM Michael Moore

31 July, 2024

I own a Tesla, think it is an excellent car on a technological level well above other cars, but have never turned on Autopilot. I think the issue posed well by the WSJ article is whether we can allow "self-driving" technology in cars which, even with warnings, still depends on the common sense of drivers to avoid serious accidents. The tragic cases cited in the article could all have been avoided had the drivers been alert to the conditions on the road and not relied exclusively on Autopilot. However, that is not an answer to the issue at hand. If experience shows that drivers yield to temptation and fall into dangerous habits despite the warnings, we may have to mandate controls on such technology until it is further developed to the point where it is safe for all drivers.

 1 • Share

---

John Pound

31 July, 2024

The relevant factor is autopilot crashes per X miles driven vs manual crashes per X miles driven.

I've yet to see that comparison....

 9 • Share

---

sk Stephen Keith

31 July, 2024

The only error I see on Tesla's part is the manner with which it sold autopilot features in the past. GM is doing the same even now with ads showing drivers letting go of the wheel. Whatever these aids to driving are, they aren't able to safely operate a vehicle without operator oversight. That fact should be a required disclaimer to any ad touting their benefits.

Keep your hands on the wheel and your eyes on the road. Then you've a much better chance to not crash via driving assist technology error.

[Like 3](#) • Share**Mitchell Ross**

31 July, 2024

A camera can't accurately range-find especially in the dark. Different tech is appropriate for different needs. For example, airplanes use GPS (which does do altitude), but then a radar altimeter for the final descent to absolutely know just how far above ground the craft is when landing. Having a simple radar based obstacle detection for the front of the car would prevent a lot of the incidents in the article - if something is blocking - veer or brake. But Musk is against adding anything because he is "right" and knows best. Hubris of the worst kind.

[Like 3](#) • Share**ss****S Sharma**

31 July, 2024

This reminds me of dateline NBC exploding cars with incendiary charges in 1990's to show they catch fire.

It's obvious there is an agenda against Elon and every week there are multiple negative stories about Tesla.

I have been using Auto Pilot and FSD. It's not perfect but it's very functional and if you don't fall asleep on the wheel it helps you drive much more safely than you COULD do yourself.

It can see better than a human would, it can estimate the movements of other drivers on road 100x better than any human could.

The nonsensical talk about "training" is laughable -- even Lidar has to be trained and sadly it's training will be "invisible" to human experience.

The Duke professor should get into another line of business -- analysis is not her strength.

[Like 6](#) • Share**gs grant smith**

31 July, 2024

Fine - it is a safety feature. But don't call it self/automated driving

[Like](#) • Share[1 reply](#)**wg****William Guenthner**

31 July, 2024

Until the technology is more reliable, autopilot should not be available at night.

[Like 1](#) • Share**MQ Michael Quinlan**

31 July, 2024

It's already much safer and more reliable. How much more? I'm not an investigative journalist, but could be worth looking into.

[Like](#) • Share[2 replies](#)**ss****Stephen Small**

31 July, 2024

I think that I could not draw any conclusions about Tesla autopilots. Do they fail more often than others? How many were operator errors (asleep at the wheel, etc)? Where Teslas involved in crashes more often than say, Chevrolet ICS vehicles (Does a bad autopilot still outperform the average human?) Sorry, the article did nothing to improve my level of understanding.

5 • Share

gs **grant smith**

31 July, 2024

That is because the real issue is, do we let the computer take the place of a human? The answer is no, we don't, and the accidents/dangerous situations would compound if you had 1/4 of the auto fleet in self driving mode

• Share

TB **Tom Brown**

31 July, 2024

A great article and study by Paul, Emma and Frank. As a Tesla owner and driver, I was a bit confused in the article by the use of the term "Autopilot" (advanced cruise control) when some of the videos were actually showing the use of subscription "FSD" (Full Self-driving). Was this study about autopilot or FSD or both?

2 • Share

RS **Raphael Savastano**

31 July, 2024

Do they understand the difference?

• Share

ss **S Sharma**

31 July, 2024

Neither -- it's about Elon and how to take him down!

3 • Share

R **RedGlasses**

31 July, 2024

I doubt the average AP driver would have a clue as to what the crash data reports, nor would the PI bar. File suite, motion for it and hire an expert to interpret it. Then decide if you have a case.

Don't know how many AP Tesla's are out there but 1200 AP related crashes seems like a small number to fret over.

Nothing in the article about how many folks in AP related crashes had drivers not paying attention. If I was on a jury I'd demand to know whether or not driver was distracted or otherwise not paying attention, e.g. watching a video, blending a latte or downing that Big Mac.

4 • Share

DS **D Sapel**

31 July, 2024

The number of lawsuits and \$\$\$ payout won't ever be known.

• Share

[Show More Comments](#)

---

[BACK TO TOP ^](#)

**THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.**  
a Dow Jones company

[English Edition ▾](#)[Subscribe Now](#)   [Sign In](#)**WSJ Membership**

- [The Journal Collection](#)
- [Subscription Options](#)

**Customer Service**

- [Customer Center](#)
- [Contact Us](#)

**Tools & Features**

- [Newsletters & Alerts](#)
- [Guides](#)

**Advertise**

- [Commercial Real Estate Ads](#)
- [Place a Classified Ad](#)

**More**

- [About Us](#)
- [Content Partnerships](#)

[Why Subscribe?](#)[Cancel My Subscription](#)[Corporate Subscriptions](#)[WSJ Higher Education Program](#)[WSJ High School Program](#)[Public Library Program](#)[WSJ Live](#)[Commercial Partnerships](#)[Topics](#)[My News](#)[RSS Feeds](#)[Video Center](#)[Watchlist](#)[Podcasts](#)[Visual Stories](#)[Sell Your Business](#)[Sell Your Home](#)[Recruitment & Career Ads](#)[Digital Self Service](#)[Corrections](#)[Jobs at WSJ](#)[News Archive](#)[Register for Free](#)[Reprints & Licensing](#)[Buy Issues](#)[WSJ Shop](#)[Dow Jones Press Room](#)[Dow Jones Smart Money](#)**Dow Jones Products**[Barron's](#) | [BigCharts](#) | [Dow Jones Newswires](#) | [Factiva](#) | [Financial News](#) | [Mansion Global](#) | [MarketWatch](#) | [Risk & Compliance](#)[Buy Side from WSJ](#) | [WSJ Pro](#) | [WSJ Video](#) | [WSJ Wine](#) | [The Times](#)[Privacy Notice](#) | [Cookie Notice](#) | [Copyright Policy](#) | [Data Policy](#) | [Terms of Use](#) | [Your Ad Choices](#) | [Accessibility](#)

Copyright ©2024 Dow Jones &amp; Company, Inc. All Rights Reserved.