

## **Six Funny Car Owner Stereotypes**

You know it's true: what you drive proclaims to the outside world a lot about you personally, even if some of it – most of it – isn't too accurate. Perception is a funny thing, and we make snap judgments about others based on what they wear, what they eat and especially based on what they drive. It can be pretty funny, actually, when an old Buick pulls into the space next to you and someone's blue-haired grandma takes eight centuries to get out. Here are six funny stereotypes about the people who own some of the most popular and easily-recognized cars and automakers today.

### **1. The Hummer**

In the same vein as the Big American Truck owner, people – usually, we assume, men – who tool around in Hummers give off the vibe that they just do not give a damn about this environmental mumbo jumbo that's apparently going on. Since the Hummer gets the absolute worst gas mileage on the face of the planet, and they're expensive, huge and intimidating, people who drive Hummers are often characterized as arrogant, selfish and, shall we say, compensating for something. Common stereotypes stepping out of this vehicle include rather oily businessmen who are blasé about everything, like caring about Mother Earth, helping those less fortunate, having a beautiful wife and looking like they're trying too hard.

### **2. The Volkswagen**

Volkswagen stereotypes actually depend a lot on which car you're addressing. For instance, the VW Beetle could connote either a sweet, bubbly female college student zipping around town or a

middle-aged hippy who hasn't gotten his shaving together yet (depending on the year of the Bug). The Jetta seems to attract young women ("My dream car!" they exclaim freshman year at university), while the Passat goes to BMW owners-in-training. But let's just face it – new Volkswagen owners aren't accidental. Like Mercedes owners, they are buying into a specific brand, and that brand screams "I recycle!"; "Where's the nearest Starbucks?"; and "Let's listen to Coldplay!"

### **3. The Minivan**

No person in the world should strike more fear or terror into your heart than the stereotypical mom who steps out of a minivan full of screaming children. She has most likely been slapped during her kid's latest temper tantrum, had all of her favorite shirts ruined since she brought her first baby home from the hospital and thinks that a one-hour dinner alone with her husband at the Olive Garden is a big night out. Don't cross this woman, because she has to boil over at some point and you won't want to be the recipient of her ire. Switching genders, men who drive minivans tend to be characterized as loving fathers who teach their kids how to hit baseballs and give them piggyback rides. Life really isn't fair sometimes.

### **4. The Prius**

*South Park* summed it up best: most people perceive Prius (and other hybrid car) owners as, well, a bit on the self-congratulatory side. They're thought of as college-educated, upper-middle class, probably Democrats and followers of a strict vegan diet. They get the South Park reference but prefer documentaries about social injustice in third world countries. Well done, Prius owners, you are saving the world while living in the city, wearing thick-rimmed glasses, buying only

organic produce and using your Masters in philosophy to confound and ridicule Okcupid dates.

Does that scarf come in blue?

## **5. Porsche**

We tend to think of Porsche owners typically as men, middle-aged, probably very tan. They're either in a suit because they handle millions of other people's dollars every day or in expensive cargo shorts and a polo because they just got back from Ibiza. The self-made owners are trying to look unselfconscious (which has to be difficult, because Porsche!) and the ones who come from money don't care that people are giggling behind their hands because they just watched him come out of a salon for his weekly manicure. Hey, men can have poor nail beds, too. They probably aren't perceived as having the best marital track record (Henry VIII *wishes* he had a Porsche to console him) and attractive, single young women the world over are conflicted by this knowledge.

## **6. Dodge Trucks**

Four words: Larry the Cable Guy.