

Your Tesla could drive like a jerk



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Tesla's latest assisted-driving software lets car owners decide how aggressively they want their car to behave in traffic — even to the point of bending rules.

What's happening: The latest release of **Tesla's "Full Self-Driving"** (FSD) beta software lets owners choose among three driving profiles — Chill, Average or **Assertive** — that dictate how the car will behave in different scenarios, The Verge reports[1].

Why it matters: **Assertive** Teslas are programmed to allow rolling stops, follow other cars more closely and swap lanes more frequently — behaviors that tend to be more dangerous no matter who's driving. The vehicle will also "not exit passing lanes" — meaning it'll just cruise in the left lane even though that's prohibited on most highways. Critics say it's another example of **Tesla's** "irresponsible" approach[2] to automated driving. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration is investigating[3] a series of crashes involving **Tesla's** Autopilot feature. In December, **Tesla** agreed to modify its cars' software to prevent drivers from playing video games on the dashboard screen while the vehicle is in motion, after a New York Times report[4] prompted a federal safety investigation. **Tesla** did not respond to a request for comment. The big picture: Drivers have different personalities, and automated driving systems do too. All self-driving technology companies are wrestling with how to make their cars blend into local traffic patterns, without being overly cautious or aggressive. Argo AI, for instance, aims to perfect what it calls "naturalistic driving"[5] — the combination of safe, defensive and "socially appropriate driving." **Tesla's** range of driver profiles appears to offer a choice of what's socially appropriate. The bottom line: Despite its name, **Tesla's** FSD system is not fully autonomous, and Teslas cannot drive themselves. Drivers need to keep their hands on the wheel and eyes on the road — whether they're feeling chill or **assertive**.

[1]: <https://www.theverge.com/2022/1/9/22875382/tesla-full-self-driving-beta-assertive-profile> [2]:
<https://twitter.com/samabuelsamid/status/1480341926356398086> [3]:
<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/01/business/tesla-autopilot-investigation.html> [4]:
<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/23/business/tesla-video-games.html> [5]: <https://groundtruthautonomy.com/self-driving/the-science-of-driving-naturally-how-self-driving-vehicles-learn-to-get-along-with-city-traffic/>

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