



## Issue of the day: Is your car assertive?

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### Body

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ARE you a chilled, average or **assertive** driver? And which one is your car? Elon Musk's **Tesla** electric car company has announced that it has restored the chill, average and **assertive** driving modes to its automated driver assist feature.

Which means what exactly?

That in some **Tesla** cars you may be able to choose **full self-driving** and set it at your preferred mode and the automated car will act accordingly.

So, for example, if you choose the **assertive** mode, rather than **chill** or **average** **Tesla** say it will mean that their cars will follow other cars more closely, change lanes more frequently and stay in the overtaking lane for longer. They may also perform **rolling stops**.

What's a rolling stop when it's at home? Or on the motorway for that matter?

It's when a car doesn't come to a complete stop. This matters because in the United States it is illegal in some places.

Ah, these options are only available in America?

At the moment, yes, that is the case. **Tesla**'s Y model electric sport utility vehicle (SUV) may be arriving in the UK in the near future, but these driving modes are only available in the US as part of a limited test.

When you say restored?

You noticed that. Yes, these driving modes were first introduced last October as part of **Tesla**'s **full self-driving** car software but were then withdrawn due to other bugs in the system such as intermittent safety warnings when there was no danger present.

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Talking about safety warnings, do we really need an **assertive** automatic car?

Well, the first thing to say is that, despite the term "full self-driving", this is a driver assistance feature. Also, drivers have to pass a safety test to even access the software.

I'm not convinced that's enough.

You're not alone. When the options were first introduced last year the head of the National Transportation Safety Board in the US, Jennifer Homendy argued that basic safety issues had still to be addressed.

Confidence can't have been helped when the company announced a recall of more than 475,000 cars in the US, including nearly 360,000 Model 3 vehicles due to potential rear-view camera issues. There have also been reports of crashes involving **Tesla** cars.

So, what you're telling me is that cars aren't going to start driving themselves in the near future?

I fear you'll have to wait a while before you can read The Herald while behind the wheel on the M8.

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