

Tesla Premium Connectivity Vs. Hotspot

Tesla's premium connectivity offers a dedicated internet connection for features like streaming music, sensory mode, live traffic visualization, and software updates. Using your hotspot provides more flexibility and can save you money if you already have a suitable data plan. You must consider your usage patterns and preferences to make the best choice.

If you choose to use your mobile hotspot, there are a few things you should keep in mind. First, your data usage may increase significantly, leading to higher mobile bills. Second, you may experience bandwidth issues in areas with poor cellular reception. Finally, you will not have access to all the features available with Premium Connectivity, such as live traffic updates, satellite maps, and over-the-air software updates.

Here is a list of features that are included with Premium Connectivity:

- Live traffic updates
- Satellite maps
- Over-the-air software updates
- Enhanced streaming music and video
- Seamless navigation
- Tesla Theater
- Wi-Fi hotspot for up to 10 devices

If you are considering saving money by using your mobile hotspot, it is important to weigh the pros and cons carefully. You may be able to save money in the short term, but you may experience some inconveniences and miss out on some features.

Ultimately, the best way to decide which option is right for you is to consider your needs and budget. Premium Connectivity is the best option if you are a heavy user of internet-connected features. Using your mobile hotspot may be a better option if you are on a tight budget or don't use internet-connected features often.

You will find answers to these and more in the rest of this article, as we place both options side-by-side to see which connectivity is worth it.

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The Difference Between Tesla Premium Connectivity and Hotspot

[Tesla Premium Connectivity](#) and using a personal hotspot on your mobile device are two options for accessing internet connectivity in a Tesla vehicle.

According to Tesla, those who pay for the premium connectivity package can gain access to [certain services and internet capabilities](#) without fiddling manually with internet control. Here is the sharp difference:

	Premium	Hotspot/WiFi
Navigation	Yes	Yes
Live Traffic visualization	Yes	No
Sentry Mode - View Live Camera	Yes	No

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Satellite-View Maps	Yes	No
Video Streaming	Yes	Yes
Karaoke	Yes	Yes
Music Streaming	Yes	Yes
Internet browser	Yes	Yes

The Comparison

Cost

[Tesla Premium Connectivity is a paid service that requires a subscription from the Tesla app](#) while using a personal hotspot on your mobile device typically utilizes your existing cellular data plan.

The cost of premium connectivity varies depending on the region and vehicle model. It is currently available as a monthly subscription of \$10 (plus tax), or you can pay \$99 for an annual subscription.

Coverage

Tesla Premium Connectivity offers a dedicated cellular connection provided by Tesla's partner carriers. So with this connectivity package, you can get reliable connections in most areas.

However, the coverage of your hotspot depends on your mobile carrier's network coverage, and that's where the downside is. You won't enjoy your vehicle's internet connectivity when there's a service interruption in your wifi or phone's mobile network.

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Data Limitations

Services like in-car streaming, satellite maps, and over-the-air software updates become possible when on the Premium connectivity plan.

On the other hand, with your hotspots, you have limitations on your cellular data plan. You may experience throttling after exceeding certain thresholds.

Dedicated Connection

When using a personal hotspot, your mobile device may need to split its internet connection between the vehicle and other devices, such as your laptop or smartwatch.

However, Premium Connectivity offers a dedicated connection specifically for your Tesla vehicle. So with the paid network, there are zero chances of interference.

Vehicle Integration

One of the significant reasons many Tesla owners would prefer to use Premium Connectivity is how it seamlessly integrates with Tesla's infotainment system. You'll experience nothing short of optimized performance for features such as streaming music and video and accessing Tesla-specific services.

The hotspot from your mobile or personal wifi relies on standard internet connectivity, which may not offer the same level of integration or performance.

Ease of Use

You don't need additional setup once you subscribe and activate the premium service; since it's built into the vehicle, you don't need to manually connect to it as you would when using a personal hotspot.

Without premium connectivity, you'll often fiddle with your phone's hotspot for connection. Remember, Tesla automatically [turns off WiFi](#) when the car is in reverse and driving because

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it senses it is about to drive away from its connected hotspot. This is to prevent glitches with mapping, real-time traffic, and streaming.

So if you're using a personal hotspot, you'll often have to reconnect several times. It's not the most convenient option.

Battery Life

Utilizing a personal hotspot on your mobile device [drains its battery](#) faster since it's both a hotspot and your primary device.

With Tesla Premium Connectivity, the vehicle's dedicated connectivity doesn't impact your mobile device's battery life.

Is Tesla's premium connectivity worth it?

The comparison above shows that the [Tesla Premium's connectivity](#) beats personal hotspots on most factors. I enjoy the premium internet capabilities for seamless mapping and real-time traffic with hands-free voice commands on a giant touch screen.

It's better than the experience you have on a tiny phone screen. Also, those moments when you idle for charging can be entertaining since the paid connectivity gives you access to Netflix, Hulu, YouTube, and Twitch.

Although some Tesla owners would still prefer personal hotspots, that's okay, especially considering the flexibility it offers. With your Tesla car connected to the personal hotspot, you can choose a data plan, switch providers, and ultimately avoid the subscription fees tied to the premium.

But are you saving money?

You may avoid the premium connectivity fees by using a hotspot, but remember that streaming video consumes [a lot](#) of bandwidth.

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Now, Tesla provides an unlimited bandwidth hotspot for \$10 per month. In addition, you get to see real-time traffic, open spots at supercharger stations at a glance, browse the Internet, and stream music services—all on a larger screen instead of a tiny cell phone—a pretty good deal for \$10 per month.

Final thoughts

Despite the glaring advantages of Tesla Premium Connectivity over personal hotspot usage, your internet connectivity preference is the best choice among these options.

Suppose you don't use the data-intensive features frequently, and your cellular coverage and signal strength in your area are solid. In that case, the Tesla Premium Connectivity may not be worth the price, which is understandable.

[Many Tesla owners](#) who have tried both options prefer premium connectivity over using their hotspots. Still, you may have a somewhat different take if you don't mind relying on your phone's or device's availability, battery level, or cellular network quality.

Overall, the best choice for you ultimately lies in how much you value convenience and reliability over cost savings.