

AUTOMOTIVE

## Audi drives further with EV push thanks to new e-tron GT teaser

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*Audi engineers experimented with different sounds to find the perfect noise for the GT e-tron. Image credit: Audi*

By ELLEN KELLEHER

German automaker **Audi** is seeking to distinguish itself as a leader in the increasingly crowded electric vehicle space through a short that shows how the sound of the e-tron GT was crafted.

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The new ad reflects on the importance of sound, both in general and to the e-tron GT, as EVs have a reputation for lacking powerful-sound engines. The e-tron GT is part of Audi's drive to electrify one-third of its suite of new models by 2025.

"The GT is meant to be a high-performance halo vehicle for the rest of Audi's EV lineup," said David Undercoffler, editor in chief of **Autolist.com**, San Francisco. "By using the e-tron GT to show the breadth of Audi's EV achievements, the brand is hoping its lesser EVs and electrified vehicles will then be associated with what the e-tron GT can do."

### GT in focus

The e-tron GT is expected to hit markets with an expected price of \$100,000. The car was developed in partnership with Porsche and bears similarities to the Italian automaker's Taycan, with both sharing 800 volt architecture.

Titled "Some hear a car. We hear the future," the teaser kicks off with an Audi engineer in a factory alongside a black-and-white speckled e-tron GT. The lights shut down and the scene switches.

"The sensation of sound," a male narrator says as red sound waves dance across a pitch-black screen. "It could be the most overwhelming way of perception."

*The e-tron GT is expected to start at a price of \$100,000.*

Audi encourages customers to listen to the teaser with good headphones to capture the precision of the auditory experience its newest car offers.

The scene changes again and a torrent of water washes over the screen. The e-tron GT is driving in the rain.

"Sound can be mellow and fragile," the narrator says. "Sound can be deep and thrilling."

As the narrator speaks, the scene shifts again and a jungle landscape emerges, with birds cawing in the background. In another scene the car's driver glances up at a whirring helicopter.

"The design of a car sound is a long road and in the beginning there is always an inspiration," says the narrator. Helicopter models, airplane engines and pipes and fans all make an appearance as sources of inspiration for the sound of the e-tron GT.

"To make a sound work, in every different state, from accelerating to braking, you need the right tools, the right instruments just like in music," continues the narrator, as an engineer fiddles with equipment in the background.

"But unlike a song, the sound of a car is continuous," he adds.

More shots of the GT under development come into focus as the engineer analyzes the sound of its wheels. After two and a half minutes, the video draws to an end as the GT is quietly driven out of the factory and into light.

"This sound is worth a thousand words," the narrator concludes.



*Audio engineers captured the sounds of a toy helicopter. Image credit: Audi*

The sound of an engine can be a major draw for some drivers, particularly with a sports car such as a GT.

In interviews, test drivers of the GT prototype, which can hit 60 mph in less than four seconds, say its sound is unlike that of any other electric vehicle. Audi engineers experimented with a plastic pipe and a fan before developing the e-tron GT's synthesizer sounds, which echo elements of the future.

### Audi under a spotlight

Luxury automakers are trying to meet growing demand for eco-friendly cars, as well as capitalize on new government regulations offering breaks to electronic vehicles.

Thus far, Audi's first electric vehicle, the e-tron, has been the centerpiece of major marketing campaigns for the automaker. Going 204 miles on a full charge, it is a fully electric vehicle.

For two consecutive years, Audi's spot for the Super Bowl starred the e-tron.

The 2020 ad featured actress Maisie Williams choosing a different, more environmentally friendly path through a city with the help of a popular Disney tune. Infused with celebrity and a touch of surrealism, Audi's ad blends entertainment with an ecological message ([see story](#)).

Audi is also planning to have its fleet's carbon footprint reduced by 30 percent between 2015 and 2025. Named "Consistently Audi," the strategy aims to make Audi a sustainability leader in the upscale auto market ([see story](#)).

Electronic cars are being widely embraced for their environmental benefits and speed, but they do come with downsides.

Visually-impaired and blind people's failure to hear them approaching led the British carmaker Jaguar to develop a warning system to alert pedestrians about the arrival of its nearly-silent I-Pace.

Since July 2019, European legislation requires that all electric vehicles make at least 56 decibels while driven at speeds of 12 mph, or 20 kmh, and below. Jaguar's new system exceeds that standard ([see story](#)).