

AUTOMOTIVE

## Bentley touts environmental pedigree with Bentayga Hybrid

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*The Bentayga Hybrid is part of Bentley's plan to offer only hybrid or electric vehicles by 2026. Image credit: Bentley*

By ELLEN KELLEHER

British automaker **Bentley** finds itself in pole position in the electric vehicle race with the launch of the updated Bentayga Hybrid, its electrified luxury SUV.

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The hybrid car joins the Bentayga V8 and Bentayga Speed as the third model in Bentley's luxury SUV collection for 2021. Its introduction is part of the Beyond 100 strategy, Bentley's plan to offer only plug-in hybrid or battery electric vehicles by 2026.

"If you have the budget and you wish to have the best of the best, Bentayga is certainly a consideration," said Lauren Fix, automotive expert at **The Car Coach**, Lancaster, NY. "It really is a statement piece and a good balance of performance and luxury at its pinnacle."

### Competitive landscape

2020 brought news from Boris Johnson that the U.K. will be the first G7 country to ban the sale of petrol and diesel cars by 2030. That announcement, which followed a move by California Governor Gavin Newsom to bar the sale of new gas-powered cars in the state by 2035, has catapulted the electric car movement to the front burner in 2021 ([see story](#)).

Bentley faces challenging headwinds as it looks to compete in the electric vehicle space against sister company Audi as well as Land Rover, Rolls Royce, Lamborghini, Mercedes-Benz and BMW.

Known for its "smooth and silent" progress, the Bentayga Hybrid uses up to 31 miles of electric-only range (NEDC) before jetting ahead with a combined range of 536 miles. The automaker began teasing the plug-in hybrid electric vehicle this summer as part of its Beyond100 strategy ([see story](#)).

Bentley's research shows that nearly 100 percent of its customers strictly use EV mode, with half of them consistently undertaking journeys of less than 30 miles.

In a one-minute teaser, Bentley showcases the "tranquility" of the car, which is now available to order in the U.S., Canada, Puerto Rico and China.

### *Bentley bills the car as smooth and quick*

In the vignette, a glamorous woman opens the footage by checking the shiny tan hybrid's battery life on her phone before embarking from the driveway of her house on a tour of the city in the car.

Connected, calm, escape and hybrid are words that pop up in block letters in the advertisement as if to send subliminal signals about the car's accessibility and smoothness. The camera zooms into each word as it appears, changing the setting and highlighting different aspects of the hybrid.

According to Bentley, 78 percent zero emissions journeys have regularly been achieved in the car over stretches of 500 miles. The longer the distance, the more environmentally challenged the car becomes.



*The Bentayga Hybrid is the first of two plug-in hybrid electric vehicles Bentley will launch this year. Image credit: Bentley*

The car boasts a series of advancements such as an infotainment system that is integrated into the Bentley wing' dashboard design and features a nearly 11 inch display screen. Wireless Apple CarPlay is standard as is a touchscreen remote control tablet for travelers in the rear seat.

"We spent a long time examining how to improve the proportions and character of the car," said J.P. Gregory, head of exterior design at Bentley, in a statement. "The new Bentayga is still instantly recognizable as a Bentley but now has a much greater road presence and is a more self-confident looking SUV from whatever angle you look at the car."

#### Bentley's environmental action

For decades, Bentley has focused on its environmental pedigree, particularly at its headquarters, and the unveiling of the Bentley Hybrid marks a step forward in this regard.

As part of the Beyond 100 strategy, the marque will introduce its first fully electric model in 2025, described as a "cradle to grave fully carbon neutral car." Bentley vehicles will be fully electric by 2030 ([see story](#)).

Bentley Motors recently became the first luxury auto company to run its in-house logistics on 100 percent renewable fuel.

Ensuring that environmental factors are at the center of current and future supply chain design is core to the company's vision of sustainability ([see story](#)).

"Bentley is transitioning to mild hybrid and plug-in technology in order to compete with the competition and also to show their environmental concerns," Ms. Fix said. "There is a massive push by many governments and states to go electric."