



Gas & Charging Apps — Finding the Cheapest Fill-Up

An Extended Guide · No. 1938

————— An Extended Guide · No. 1938 —————

Tech Made Simple. Service Made Personal.

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START HERE

3. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech

1. The 60-Second Version If you only read one page, read this one. Gas prices can vary quite a bit from one station to the next, even across the same intersection, and your phone can point you straight to the cheaper one. A few free apps show you nearby prices, give you a little cash back, or help you plan where to charge an electric car. You do not need all of them — pick one or two that fit how you drive. If you run a gas car, GasBuddy or your map app will show you prices, and a warehouse-club or grocery program can save you more. If you drive electric, PlugShare finds the chargers and the network apps let you pay. Whichever you drive, a couple of minutes with the right app keeps a little more money in your pocket. For gas prices nearby, open GasBuddy or check Google Maps or Waze. Upside gives you a bit of cash back after you fill up. Warehouse clubs like Costco and grocery points like Kroger save more. For electric cars, PlugShare finds chargers and shows reviews. Keep the charging network's own app so you can start and pay. WATCH OUT Set up and check these apps before you drive, not at the wheel. Pick your station or charger while parked, then go. THE BASICS 2. Why Prices Differ So Much A few dollars hiding in plain sight. It can seem strange that two gas stations a block apart charge different prices for the very same gasoline, but it happens all the time. Stations set their own prices based on their costs, their competition, and even the day of the week. The difference might be a dime or more a gallon, which on a full tank adds up to a couple of dollars each time, and many fill-ups a year. The same goes for electric charging, where the price per charge varies by network and location. None of this is a scam; it is just how fuel is sold. The handy part is that your phone can see all these prices at once and simply tell you which nearby station or charger is the cheapest, so you never have to guess.

GOOD TO KNOW

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A dime a gallon may not sound like much, but over a year of fill-ups it adds up. The apps do the comparing for you, so the savings cost you nothing but a glance. GAS APPS 3. GasBuddy, the Gas-Price Finder The best-known one, and free. GasBuddy is the app most folks reach for to find cheap gas. It is free, and it shows a map of the stations around you with each one's current price, so you can spot the lowest at a glance. The prices come from drivers and stations reporting them, and they are usually quite current. You can sort by price or by distance, so you can weigh a slightly cheaper station a bit farther away against a closer one. There is also a pay feature that can save you a few more cents a gallon when you use it, though it is optional. For most people, simply opening GasBuddy before a fill-up to see where the deal is makes it well worth the space on your phone.

- 1 Download GasBuddy from your phone's app store (it is free).
- 2 Open it and allow it to see your location so it can find nearby stations.
- 3 Look at the map or list of stations with their prices.
- 4 Sort by price to spot the cheapest, weighing how far it is.
- 5 Drive to your pick and fill up. GOOD TO KNOW Check GasBuddy while parked before you set out, not once you are already low and driving around. A quick look at home or in the driveway does the job.

GAS APPS

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4. Upside, for Cash Back A little money back after you fill. Upside is a different kind of app: instead of finding the lowest sticker price, it gives you a bit of cash back after you buy. You open the app before you fill up, pick the station you are at and 'claim' the offer, then pay as usual and snap a photo of your receipt (or link a card so it is automatic). A few cents per gallon come back to you, which you can cash out to your bank or a gift card. It works at many ordinary stations and stacks on top of whatever price you pay. It takes a touch more effort than just reading a price, but for folks who fill up often, those bits of cash back add up over the year into a nice little sum. Upside gives cash back rather than finding the lowest price. Claim the offer in the app before you pump, then pay as usual. Snap your receipt or link a card to get the cash back. The money can go to your bank or a gift card. GAS APPS

5. Google Maps and Waze Show Prices Too You may already have these. You do not necessarily need a special gas app at all, because the map apps you likely already use can show gas prices right along your route. In Google Maps, when you search for gas stations or look at ones nearby, it displays their prices on the map, so you can pick a cheap one that is on your way. Waze, another popular map app owned by the same company, does the same and will even suggest the best-priced station along your drive. This is wonderfully convenient, because it folds the price check into the navigating you are already doing. If you would rather not add another app, your map may be all the gas-price helper you need. Google Maps shows gas prices when you search for stations. Waze shows prices and suggests cheap stations on your route. Both fold the price check into the map you already use. No extra app needed if you are happy with these.

GAS APPS

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6. AAA and Other Helpers A trusted name with an app. If you are a AAA member, as many folks around here are for the roadside help, their app includes gas price information too, along with trip planning and, of course, that reassuring button to call for a tow or a jump on a cold Ohio morning. It is a nice one to have on the phone regardless, and the fuel prices are a bonus on top of the membership you may already pay for. There are a handful of other gas-finder apps as well, but you do not need to collect them. One good price-finder, plus perhaps a cash-back app, covers everything. The goal is to save money, not to fill your phone with apps, so pick the one or two that suit you and leave the rest. GOOD TO KNOW You do not need a drawer full of gas apps. One price-finder, maybe one cash-back app, and your map is plenty. More apps just means more clutter, not more savings.

SAVING MORE 7. Warehouse Clubs and Grocery Points Where the real savings often hide. Some of the biggest fuel savings do not come from an app at all, but from where you shop. Warehouse clubs like Costco and Sam's Club sell gasoline at their own stations, usually among the cheapest around, as a perk for members. If you already have a membership, filling up there can beat almost any app. Grocery stores play this game too: Kroger, for one, lets you earn fuel points on your regular shopping that knock money off a gallon at their fuel centers. These programs reward the shopping you already do. It is worth knowing what your membership and your grocery card already offer, because the savings there often dwarf the few cents an app finds. Costco and Sam's Club sell cheap gas to members at their own pumps. Kroger and other grocers give fuel points for your regular shopping. These reward spending you already do. Check what your memberships and store cards already offer. TIP If you shop at a warehouse club or a grocery with fuel points, that is often your cheapest gas without even opening an app. Combine it with points you have earned for the best price.

PAY SAFELY**7. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech**

8. Watch Out for Card Skimmers A quiet threat at the pump. While we are at the pump, a word about staying safe. Thieves sometimes hide a device called a skimmer inside or over a gas pump's card reader, which secretly copies your card when you swipe. You cannot always see one, but there are simple habits that protect you. Give the card reader a firm wiggle before you use it; a skimmer stuck on top will often feel loose or come off, while the real reader is solid. Look for any part that seems bulky, crooked, or a different color, and check that any security seal sticker is not broken. If anything feels off, pay inside instead. A few seconds of care at the pump can save you the headache of a stolen card number. Skimmers are hidden devices that copy your card at the pump. Wiggle the card reader — a loose or add-on piece may be a skimmer. Look for anything bulky, crooked, or a mismatched color. Check that security seal stickers are not broken. If anything feels wrong, pay inside instead. **PAY SAFELY**

9. Tap-to-Pay and Station Apps The safest ways to pay. The best way to sidestep skimmers entirely is to avoid putting your card into the reader at all. Many pumps now accept tap-to-pay, where you simply hold your card or your phone near the reader for a second — the little symbol that looks like curved sound waves. This is both quick and safer, because your actual card number is never exposed. Even better in some cases is the station's own app, like the ones from Shell, BP, or other chains, which let you pay from your phone and sometimes earn a small discount too. Using your phone's wallet or a station app means there is no card to skim. If a pump offers tap-to-pay, reach for that before you insert a card. Tap-to-pay lets you hold your card or phone near the reader, no insert. Your real card number stays hidden, so there is nothing to skim. Station apps let you pay from your phone, sometimes with a discount. Prefer tap or app over inserting your card whenever you can.

ELECTRIC**8. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech**

10. A Word for Electric-Car Drivers Charging is its own world. If you drive an electric car, 'filling up' means charging, and it works a little differently from pumping gas, so it has its own set of apps. Instead of pulling into any station, you find a charger — at a store, along a highway, or at a dedicated charging site — plug in, and wait while it fills the battery. There are different charging networks, rather like different gas-station brands, and each often has its own app to start a charge and pay. The next few chapters walk through the apps that find chargers, plan a trip around them, and handle the paying. If you are new to electric driving, do not let any of it worry you — it becomes routine quickly, and the apps do the hard thinking. **GOOD TO KNOW** Charging an electric car takes longer than pumping gas, so the apps focus on finding a working charger and planning stops, not just on price. A little planning goes a long way. **ELECTRIC** 11. PlugShare, the Charger Map Find a charger and read the reviews. PlugShare is the go-to app for finding a place to charge. It shows a map of chargers all around you and across the country, from the fast ones along highways to the slower ones at stores and hotels. What makes it especially useful is the reviews: other electric-car drivers leave notes about whether a charger is working, how fast it is, and whether it was easy to use, so you are not driving to a broken one. You can filter to show only the chargers your car can use and only the fast ones if you are in a hurry. For an electric-car driver, PlugShare is the first app to put on the phone — it answers the big question of where to plug in.

- 1** Download PlugShare (it is free) and open it.
- 2** Allow it to see your location to show nearby chargers.
- 3** Look at the map and tap a charger to see details.
- 4** Read the reviews to check it is working and easy to use.
- 5** Filter for your car's plug type and for fast chargers if needed.

TIP

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Always glance at a charger's recent reviews in PlugShare before you drive to it. A quick read tells you whether it is working and saves a wasted trip. **ELECTRIC 12. Planning a Trip With A Better Route Planner** Let it map your charging stops. For a longer drive in an electric car, an app called A Better Route Planner — often shortened to ABRP — is a wonderful helper. You tell it your car and where you are going, and it plans the whole trip for you, including exactly where to stop and charge and for how long, so you never run low. It takes into account your car's range, the weather, and even hills, which all affect how far you can go. This takes the worry out of a road trip, which is the one thing that makes new electric-car drivers nervous. Instead of fretting about range, you follow the plan, stop where it says, grab a coffee while the car charges, and carry on. It turns a daunting trip into a simple, mapped-out drive. A Better Route Planner, or ABRP, plans long trips for electric cars. Tell it your car and destination and it maps the charging stops. It accounts for range, weather, and terrain. It takes the range worry out of a road trip. **ELECTRIC 13. The Charging Network Apps** You may need a few of these. Just as gas comes from different brands, electric charging comes from different networks, and you often need each network's own app to start a charge and pay for it. The main names are ChargePoint, Electrify America, EVgo, and Tesla's Supercharger network. You download the app for a network, set up an account with a payment method, and then at the charger you use the app to begin the session and pay. It can feel like a lot of apps at first, but you will quickly learn which networks are near you and on your usual routes, and those are the only ones you truly need. Set up the two or three that matter for where you drive, and the rest you can add only if a trip takes you to them. **Network What to know** ChargePoint Common at stores and workplaces

ELECTRIC

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Electrify America Fast chargers, often along highways EVgo Fast charging in many cities Tesla Superchargers; some open to other cars now 14. Setting a Home Charger Your cheapest, easiest charger of all. For most electric-car drivers, the cheapest and most convenient place to charge is right at home, overnight, in the garage or driveway. If you have a home charger, you plug in when you get home and wake up to a full battery, much like charging a phone on the nightstand. It costs the price of your home electricity, which is usually far cheaper than a public charger, and you rarely need a public charge at all for everyday driving. Many cars and home chargers let you set it to charge during the overnight hours when electricity can be cheapest. If you are thinking about going electric, a home charger is the thing that makes it truly easy, and setting it up to charge overnight is the habit that saves the most. Home charging overnight is usually the cheapest option by far. You wake to a full battery, like a phone off the nightstand. Set it to charge in the cheap overnight hours if your plan offers them. For daily driving, you may rarely need a public charger at all. CHOOSING 15. Membership or Pay-As-You-Go? Which makes sense for you. Both gas and charging sometimes ask whether you want a membership or would rather just pay as you go, and the right answer depends on how much you drive. A membership — whether a warehouse club for gas or a monthly plan on a charging network — usually charges a fee but gives you a lower price per fill-up, so it pays off only if you fill up or charge often enough. Pay-as-you-go means no fee but a slightly higher price each time, which suits folks who drive less or rarely use that particular station or network. There is no single right answer; it comes down to your mileage. If you are not sure, start with pay-as-you-go, and switch to a membership only once you find yourself using it often enough to come out ahead.

CHOOSING

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A membership costs a fee but lowers the price per fill-up or charge.

Pay-as-you-go has no fee but a slightly higher price each time. Memberships pay off only if you use them often. Unsure? Start pay-as-you-go and upgrade once it clearly pays. 16.

Setting Up Price Alerts Let the app tell you when it's cheap. Some of these apps can nudge you when the price is good, so you do not have to keep checking. GasBuddy, for instance, can alert you to price changes in your area, and some station apps let you know about deals. The idea is to let the app watch the prices for you and speak up when it is a good time to fill up, rather than you opening it every day. You set this up once in the app's settings or notifications, choosing the stations or area you care about. It is a small convenience, but a pleasant one — the savings come find you. If you would rather not get buzzed by your phone, you can skip alerts entirely and simply check when you are already low. **TIP** If you like the idea of savings finding you, turn on price alerts in your gas app. If you would rather not be buzzed, just check the app when the tank is getting low. **SIMPLE PLAN 17. The No-Fuss Approach** If you just want the cheapest nearby fill-up. Let me boil all of this down for the person who does not want a project — who just wants to pull up, pay a fair price, and get on with the day. For a gas car: keep one price app like GasBuddy, or just use the map you already have, glance at it before you head out, drive to the cheap station on your way, and tap your card or phone to pay. If you belong to a warehouse club or earn grocery fuel points, use those — they are often the best deal of all. For an electric car: charge at home overnight if you can, keep PlugShare to find a charger when you are out, and set up the one or two network apps near you. That is the whole thing. Everything else in this guide is a bonus for when you want to squeeze out a little more. Gas: one price app or your map, then tap-to-pay at a cheap station.

OHIO LIFE

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Use your warehouse club or grocery fuel points — often the best deal.

Electric: charge at home overnight, keep PlugShare for when you are out. Set up the one or two charging apps near you, skip the rest. 18. Fuel on a Rural Ohio Drive A little planning for the back roads. Out here in Portage County and beyond, a drive can take you well away from the cluster of stations near town, and that is worth a thought before you set off low. On a long country drive, it is wise to fill up or charge before you leave the busier roads, because stations and especially chargers thin out once you are into the farmland and small towns. For a gas car this is rarely a worry, but for an electric car it pays to use PlugShare or ABRP to be sure there is a charger where you are headed. And in a hard Ohio winter, cold weather makes an electric car's range shorter, so leave yourself a little extra cushion. A moment's planning keeps a pleasant country drive from turning into a worry about the gauge. GOOD TO KNOW Cold Ohio winters shorten an electric car's range. On a cold-weather trip, charge up a bit more than you think you need and plan your stops with a little extra cushion. GAS APPS 19. Getting GasBuddy Set Up Right A few minutes for lasting savings. To get the most out of a gas-price app like GasBuddy, it is worth spending a few minutes setting it up properly the first time rather than just glancing at it now and then. When you install it, let it see your location so it can show the stations around you, and take a moment to sign up for a free account, which lets it remember your favorite stations and your settings. You can mark the stations near your home and along your regular routes as favorites, so their prices are easy to pull up at a glance. If the app offers to sort stations by price, set that as your default, so the cheapest always rises to the top. You do not need to use every feature it offers; the heart of it is simply seeing nearby prices. But a few minutes of setup turns it from a thing you occasionally remember into a handy tool that shows you the deal the moment you open it, which is exactly when you need it.

- 1 Install GasBuddy and allow it to see your location.

GAS APPS

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- 1 Create a free account so it remembers your settings.
 - 2 Mark stations near home and on your routes as favorites.
 - 3 Set it to sort stations by price so the cheapest shows first.
 - 4 Open it before a fill-up and pick the best nearby deal.
20. Are the Prices Always Right? Trust, but keep an eye out. The gas prices you see in an app are usually quite accurate, but it is worth understanding where they come from so you are not caught out. Much of the price information is reported by other drivers and by the stations themselves, and most of it is kept nicely up to date. Now and then, though, a price may be a little stale — a station changed its price an hour ago and the app has not caught up, or someone typed a number in wrong. This is not common, but it means you should treat the app's price as a very good guide rather than an ironclad promise. If you drive to a station expecting a certain price and the sign says otherwise, it is simply one of those occasional gaps, not a trick. For the most part the apps are reliable enough to steer you well, and over many fill-ups they will save you money even if the odd price is a few cents off. Use them with a little common sense and they serve you well. GOOD TO KNOW App gas prices are usually accurate but can occasionally lag behind a station's latest change. Treat the price as a very good guide, not a guarantee, and you will rarely be caught out.

SAVING MORE

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21. Fuel Points and How They Add Up Savings from the shopping you already do. The grocery fuel-points programs deserve a closer look, because they are one of the easiest ways to save on gas without changing anything about how you drive. At a store like Kroger, you earn points on the groceries you already buy — and often extra points on gift cards and certain items — and those points turn into money off each gallon at the store's fuel center. The savings can be surprisingly large if you do your regular shopping there, sometimes knocking a good chunk off a gallon on a big fill-up. The key is simply to use your store loyalty card every time you shop, so the points actually land in your account, and then to fill up at the store's own fuel station to cash them in before they expire. It takes no extra effort beyond scanning your card at the register, which you likely do anyway. For a household that buys its groceries in one place, this quiet stream of fuel savings can easily beat what any app finds. Grocery programs give fuel points for shopping you already do. Points turn into money off each gallon at the store's fuel center. Scan your loyalty card every time so the points land in your account. Fill up at the store's own station to cash them in before they expire. PAY SAFELY 22. Checking a Pump Before You Pay A ten-second safety habit. Beyond wiggling the card reader, there are a few more quick things you can do to keep your card safe at the pump, and together they take only about ten seconds. Choose a pump close to the building and in view of the cashier or a camera if you can, since thieves prefer the quiet pumps at the far edges where no one is watching. Look over the reader and the keypad: a skimmer and a hidden camera are sometimes added together, so a tiny pinhole or an odd little box near the keypad is worth a second glance. Check that any tamper-evident security sticker, if the station uses one, is intact and not peeled or showing a 'void' message. If anything about the pump looks or feels off, simply move to another pump or pay inside with the cashier. None of this needs to make you nervous at every fill-up; it is just a quick, sensible once-over that becomes second nature and keeps your card number out of the wrong hands. Choose a pump close to the building and in view of the cashier.

PAY SAFELY**15. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech**

Glance for a hidden pinhole camera near the keypad.

Check any security sticker is intact, not peeled or voided. If anything feels off, use another pump or pay inside. 23. Using Your Phone's Wallet at the Pump The card that cannot be skimmed. One of the safest ways to pay for gas is the one many folks already carry and do not think to use: the wallet built into your phone, Apple Pay on an iPhone or Google Wallet on an Android. You add your card to it once, and from then on you can pay by holding the phone near a tap-to-pay reader, including on the growing number of pumps that accept it. The beauty of this is that your real card number is never sent to the pump — the phone passes along a one-time code instead — so even a skimmer has nothing useful to steal. It is quick, too: a tap and you are pumping. Setting up the wallet takes only a few minutes and it works not just at the pump but at stores, restaurants, and almost anywhere that shows the tap-to-pay symbol. If you have never used it, it is well worth learning, and it is a simple thing to set up together so you feel confident reaching for your phone to pay.

- 1** Open the Wallet app on your phone (Apple Pay or Google Wallet).
- 2** Add your card by scanning it or typing the number, following the steps.
- 3** At a pump with tap-to-pay, choose to pay and hold the phone to the reader.
- 4** Your real card number stays hidden — nothing for a skimmer to grab.
- 5** The same tap works at stores and restaurants too.

ELECTRIC**16. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech**

24. Understanding Charging Speeds Why some stops are quick and some are long. One thing that puzzles new electric-car drivers is why charging sometimes takes twenty minutes and sometimes takes hours. The answer is that there are different speeds of charging. The slowest is a regular household outlet, which trickles in a little range overnight and is really only for a top-up. A home charger, the kind installed in a garage, is faster and fills most cars overnight comfortably. The fast chargers you find along highways and at dedicated sites are much quicker, adding a large amount of range in the time it takes to have a coffee, which is what makes road trips practical. Apps like PlugShare let you filter for the fast ones when you need speed. The simple takeaway is this: charge slowly and cheaply at home for everyday driving, and use the fast public chargers when you are traveling and need to get going quickly. Knowing which is which keeps you from waiting at a slow charger when you needed a fast one, or overpaying for fast charging you did not need.

Kind of charger What to expect Household outlet Very slow — a small overnight top-up Home charger Fills most cars overnight Public fast charger A big boost in a coffee-break's time

ELECTRIC 25. Setting Up a Charging Account Do it before you need it. The time to set up a charging network's app and account is at home, calmly, before you are standing at a charger with a low battery and a growing worry. For each network you expect to use — the one or two nearest you, plus any along routes you travel — download its app, create an account, and add a payment card so you are ready to pay. Many networks let you add funds or simply charge your card each time; either way, the setup is a one-time job. Some also offer a physical card or a tap-to-start option so you do not always need the phone. Doing this in advance means that when you pull up to a charger, you simply plug in, start the session in the app, and you are charging in under a minute, rather than fumbling with a new sign-up in a parking lot. A little preparation at the kitchen table makes every public charge afterward quick and stress-free.

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- 1** At home, download the app for each charging network you will use.
 - 2** Create an account and add a payment card in each.
 - 3** Add any funds or confirm it will charge your card per session.
 - 4** Order a physical tap card if the network offers one.
 - 5** At the charger later, just plug in and start the session in seconds.
26. Finding Free and Cheaper Charging It is not all the same price. Just as gas prices vary, so does the cost of charging, and a little knowledge can save you a good deal. Some chargers are genuinely free — you will find them at certain stores, hotels, libraries, and parks, offered to draw in visitors — and PlugShare marks these, so it is worth checking for a free charger near where you are headed anyway. Among paid chargers, prices vary by network and location, and charging during off-peak hours is sometimes cheaper. At home, your overnight electricity is almost always the cheapest charge of all, which is why home charging is the heart of affordable electric driving. The fast highway chargers are the most expensive, which is fair enough since you are paying for speed and convenience on a trip. The thrifty approach is to lean on cheap home charging for daily driving, grab a free charge when one is conveniently on your path, and reserve the pricier fast chargers for when you truly need the speed. Some chargers are free — at stores, hotels, libraries, and parks. PlugShare marks free chargers; check for one where you are headed. Home overnight charging is almost always the cheapest of all. Fast highway chargers cost the most — use them when you need speed.

ELECTRIC**18. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech**

27. When a Charger Won't Cooperate A calm plan for a stubborn charger. Every now and then you will arrive at a public charger and it simply will not start, which is unsettling but rarely a real problem if you know what to do. First, do not panic; have a backup charger in mind, which is exactly why checking PlugShare for a nearby alternative before you set out is such a good habit. If the charger will not start, try unplugging and replugging the connector firmly, since a loose connection is a common culprit. Make sure you started the session the right way — through the network's app, a tap card, or the screen on the charger — as each network has its own method. If it still refuses, the charger may be out of order, in which case the network's app usually has a way to report it or a phone number to call for help, and you move on to your backup. Keeping a little cushion of range and a backup charger in mind means a stubborn charger is a minor hiccup, not a crisis. This is simply part of electric driving, and it gets routine quickly. Keep a backup charger in mind — check PlugShare before you set out. Try unplugging and firmly replugging the connector. Make sure you started the session the right way for that network. If it is broken, report it in the app and move to your backup.

CHOOSING 28. One Card, Many Stations Making paying simple. As you gather gas and charging apps, paying can start to feel scattered — a different app or card at every turn. There are a couple of ways to keep it simple. For gas, your phone's wallet with tap-to-pay works at most pumps and stores, so one setup covers a great deal. For electric charging, some drivers like that certain apps and roaming cards let you start charges across several different networks with one account, saving you from juggling a handful of them. The honest truth, though, is that you will mostly use the same one or two stations or chargers near home over and over, so paying becomes a familiar routine with whatever you set up for those. Do not let the variety overwhelm you. Set up the handful you actually use, lean on your phone's wallet where you can, and the paying side settles into an easy habit. If it feels tangled, sorting out a simple paying setup is a fine thing to do together. Your phone's wallet covers most gas pumps and stores with one setup.

OHIO LIFE

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Some charging apps or roaming cards work across several networks.

You will mostly use the same one or two spots near home anyway. Set up the handful you use and let the rest go. 29. Cold Weather at the Pump and Plug Winter changes the math. An Ohio winter touches both kinds of fueling, and a little awareness keeps you comfortable. At the gas pump, cold hands and icy card readers are mostly a nuisance, but tap-to-pay with your phone or card shines here, letting you pay with gloves on and without fumbling a card into a frozen slot. For electric cars, cold weather matters more: a battery delivers less range when it is very cold, sometimes noticeably so, and charging can be a touch slower too. This is not a flaw, just physics, and the fix is simply to plan for it — charge a bit more than you think you need on cold days, and leave a larger cushion before you would otherwise look for a charger. Many electric cars also let you warm the battery and the cabin while still plugged in at home, so you set off warm with full range rather than spending the battery's energy heating up. A little planning turns winter fueling from a worry into a routine. **WATCH OUT** On very cold Ohio days an electric car's range drops, sometimes a lot. Charge up more than usual, keep a bigger cushion, and warm the car while it is still plugged in at home.

GAS APPS

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30. Loyalty and Station Apps The pump's own app sometimes wins. Alongside the price-finders and cash-back apps, the gas stations themselves often have their own apps and loyalty programs, and these can quietly be the best deal of all at a station you visit regularly. A chain like Shell, BP, Marathon, Speedway, or others may offer an app that gives you a few cents off every gallon, lets you pay from your phone, and piles up points or rewards toward free coffee or a future discount. If you find yourself filling up at the same brand again and again — because it is on your route or near home — its app is worth the few minutes to set up, since the savings stack on top of whatever the pump price is. You do not want an app for every brand under the sun, but one for your regular station is sensible. The trick, as with everything here, is to match the tool to your habits: pick the app for the station you actually use, and let the rest go. For a creature of routine who fills up at the same place, the station's own app often beats hunting around for a few cents elsewhere. Many gas chains have their own app with a per-gallon discount. They often let you pay from the phone and earn rewards. Worth it for a brand you fill up at regularly. Pick the app for your usual station and skip the rest.

SIMPLE PLAN

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31. One App Is Usually Enough Resist collecting them all. If there is one piece of advice to carry away from all these apps, it is this: you almost certainly need fewer of them than you think. It is tempting, once you start, to load up the phone with every gas-finder, cash-back, and station app going, but that way lies a cluttered phone and a lot of forgotten passwords. The savings do not come from owning the most apps; they come from reliably using one or two that fit how you actually drive. For most folks who drive a gas car, a single price-finder or just the map you already use, paid with tap-to-pay, plus whatever your warehouse club or grocery already offers, covers everything worth covering. For an electric car, PlugShare to find chargers and the one or two network apps near you is plenty. Everything beyond that is a bonus for the rare occasion, not a daily need. So be choosy. Pick the tool that matches your routine, learn it well, and let the rest go. A phone with two apps you use beats a phone with ten you ignore every single time. You need far fewer apps than it is tempting to install. Savings come from reliably using one or two, not owning many. Gas car: a price-finder or your map, tap-to-pay, and club or grocery deals. Electric car: PlugShare plus the one or two networks near you. GET HELP 32. When to Call Bill Let's set up the right apps for you. If you would like a hand getting any of this set up — downloading GasBuddy, setting up Upside for cash back, getting PlugShare and the charging apps going on an electric car, or just learning to tap-to-pay safely at the pump — that is exactly the sort of thing I am happy to help with. A short visit sorts it out: I will put the right one or two apps on your phone, set up your accounts and any payment, show you how to use them, and make sure you can spot a skimmer and pay safely. I have been doing this kind of work for more than thirty years, I serve folks right here in Portage County, and I come to you. If it is not right to your satisfaction, we make it right. That is my friendly guarantee. Call me at (330) 200-8042. I will set up the right gas or charging apps for how you drive. I will get your accounts and payment going so they just work. I will show you tap-to-pay and how to spot a card skimmer.

TIP

22. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech

Friendly guarantee: if it is not right, we make it right.

New to an electric car? Have me set up PlugShare, your charging network apps, and your home charging routine all in one visit, and you will drive off confident. CHEAT SHEET
Everyday Cheat Sheet Keep this page handy. It points you straight to what to do for each task. I want to... Do this I want to... Do this Find cheap gas nearby Open GasBuddy or check Google Maps or Waze Get cash back on gas Use the Upside app before you fill up Save at the warehouse club Fill up at Costco or Sam's; use Kroger points Avoid card skimmers Prefer tap-to-pay; wiggle the card reader first Find an EV charger Open PlugShare and read the reviews Plan an EV road trip Use A Better Route Planner Start a charge Have the network's app, like ChargePoint or EVgo Get help Call Bill: (330) 200-8042

HOW I CAN HELP

23. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech

Your Visit — and My Promise In-home visit — \$99 flat for your first visit. No contracts and no surprise charges, and a 30-day follow-up is included. Remote Support — \$49 for a screen-share session. I only connect with your permission, you watch the whole time, and you can end anytime. If I can't fix it over the screen-share, I refund the \$49 — and if it turns out you need me in person, that \$49 goes toward your visit. It's included free for Support Plan members (\$39/mo). GOOD TO KNOW My promise — If you're not 100% satisfied with your visit, I'll come back at no charge, or refund the full \$99. No questions, no awkwardness. That's how I'd want to be treated. Call or text (330) 200-8042 · Book a visit: billshometech.com/book · bill@billshometech.com This free guide is for general information only — not professional advice, and no substitute for your device's own manual. Any prices or outside products mentioned can change; please confirm current details before you buy. Please use your own good judgment and follow it at your own risk — for anything involving electricity, gas, water, or heights, stop and call a licensed professional. Bill's Home Tech and Bill Davis can't be responsible for any damage, data loss, or injury that results. © 2026 Bill's Home Tech, LLC.

AT A GLANCE

A Picture to Follow Along

Cheapest fill-up

Three taps and you are saving.

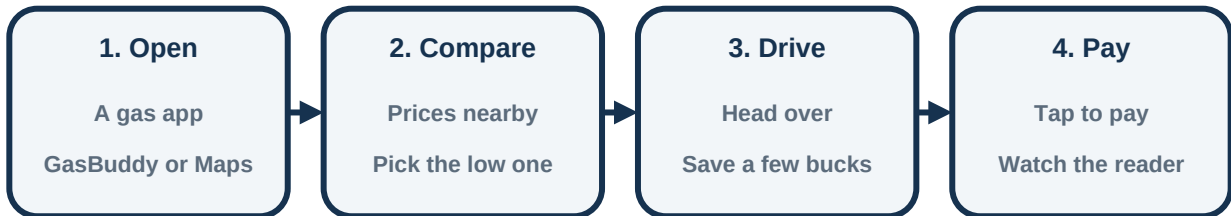


Illustration — a schematic. The order is a suggestion; do one box at a time.

A schematic of the plan — company steps vary; the order does not have to.

AT A GLANCE

A Second Look

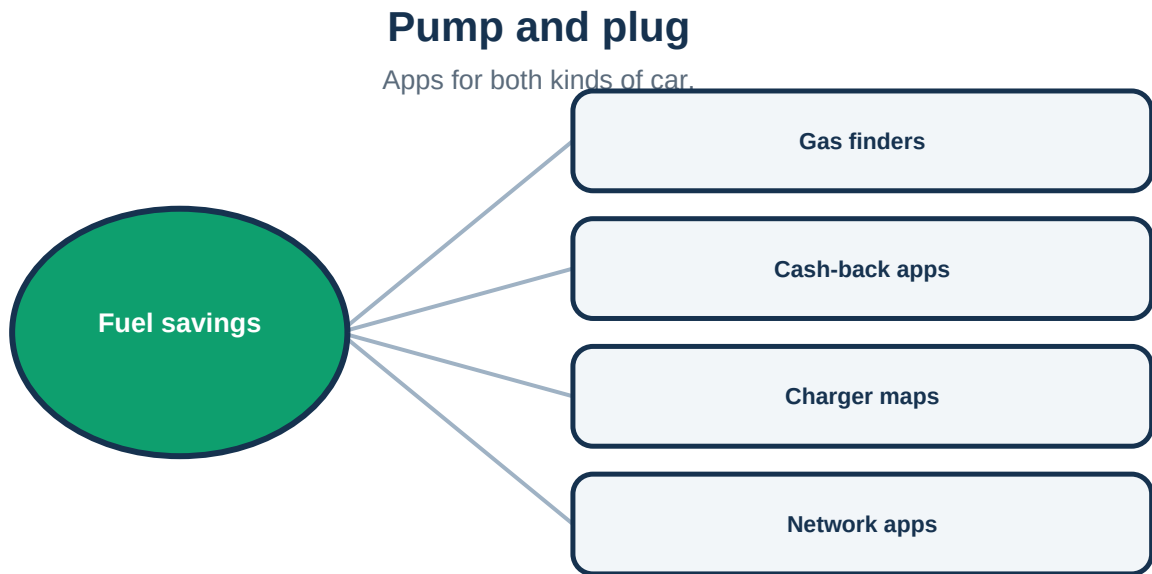


Illustration — a schematic. Set-up screens differ; each takes only a few minutes.

BEFORE YOU GO

A Note From Bill

A quick note from Bill. I write these guides to make home tech a little less frustrating, and I do my best to keep every step accurate and up to date. Still, every home, device, and setup is a bit different, so I can't promise a guide will match yours exactly or fix your particular problem. These guides are for general information only — they're not professional, legal, or financial advice, and they don't replace your device's own manual or the manufacturer's instructions. Please go slow, use your own good judgment, and use everything here at your own risk. If a step involves electrical wiring, a gas appliance, a water heater, plumbing, or climbing a ladder — or if anything just doesn't feel safe — please stop and call a licensed professional (or give me a call at 330-200-8042). Bill's Home Tech and Bill Davis can't be responsible for any damage, data loss, or injury that results.



HOW I CAN HELP

Your Visit — and My Promise

In-home visit — \$99 flat for your first visit. No contracts and no surprise charges, and a 30-day follow-up is included.

Remote Support — \$49 for a screen-share session. I only connect with your permission, you watch the whole time, and you can end anytime. If I can't fix it over the screen-share, I refund the \$49 — and if it turns out you need me in person, that \$49 goes toward your visit. It's included free for Support Plan members (\$39/mo).

GOOD TO KNOW

My promise — If you're not 100% satisfied with your visit, I'll come back at no charge, or refund the full \$99. No questions, no awkwardness. That's how I'd want to be treated.

Call or text **(330) 200-8042** · Book a visit: billshometech.com/book · bill@billshometech.com

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