

# FLEET CARS AND COMMERCIAL VANS: Choosing the right vehicles



Choosing the right vehicle for your fleet is an important decision to make – getting it wrong can have major cost, environmental and safety implications. Once you have made your choice it is important to review your decisions and to ensure that your objectives have been met.

In the guide below, we provide a few tips you should consider when choosing your next fleet car or commercial van.

## 1 Clearly define your needs

Choosing the right company vehicle for your fleet starts with defining what you need the vehicle for most regularly. Your first priority is that the vehicle is fit for purpose and safe. In the event of an unusual situation where the vehicle is not fit for purpose, such as a special project, a daily rental vehicle can always be acquired to fulfill that purpose.

For vans, make sure the payload is suitable for the goods or equipment you need to carry, and can accommodate its shape and size. Choosing the right doors is essential for easy access to the load and an important health and safety consideration.

If you have specialist equipment or specific demands for your van, we can help get converter involved at the beginning of the process to ensure the vehicle you choose meets your needs.

For Perk Cars, consider that you need to offer the appropriate levels of choice and flexibility for your business - you may choose to offer several vehicles in employee bandings, or only offer one fit-for-purpose vehicle. In all cases, vehicles should be safe, easy to use and appropriately equipped for the type of work done by those driving them.

Finally, consider your plans for the future. Will the vehicles you choose still be fit for purpose 2 or 3 years into their contract? Consider how that will affect the demands on your fleet.

## 2 Define vehicle usage

Defining the vehicle usage will determine which fuel type is most relevant for you.

Consider:

- What type of roads you will be driving on
- The length of journeys (mileage)
- How often the journeys will be made

Diesels are most economic compared to Petrols and Hybrids when being used on regular long journeys on motorways and A-roads. For commercial vehicles, it's our preferred choice of fuel.

Petrol vehicles can have an economic benefit when using them for regular short journeys, and hybrid vehicles and electric vehicles are ideal for stop/start urban journeys. However the immature charging network and long charging times make them inefficient for regular journeys or long motorway journeys..

By considering these 3 points, the correct engine size and specification can be derived.



### 3 Vehicle Efficiency

Company cars are considered a benefit and are subsequently subject to taxation, based on the CO2 and list price of the vehicle – the more polluting a car is, the more tax the driver will need to pay.

Furthermore, whether it's a car or van, fuel can be as much as 1/3 of the running cost of the vehicle, so it is therefore in your best interest to choose as fuel-efficient and green a vehicle as is practical.

### 4 Feedback

All of the above can be used to define your vehicle requirements and source the right vehicle for you. However, it's best to include your drivers in the decision making process and get their feedback.

You want them to want to look after the vehicles and be happy with the vehicle they drive.

Obtaining manufacturer demonstrator vehicles can be used to facilitate this as they'd allow you and the driver to test the vehicle and get practical feedback as to whether they are suitable or not.

### 5 How many vehicles are required and when?

Now you've got your vehicle requirement and earned feedback from drivers and practical experience, the next decision is therefore how many are required, and when.

Often, vehicles will be ordered to replace vehicles that are coming to the end of their contract, providing an organic method of deciding how many to order, and we recommend ordering vehicles as they are required.

It's wise also to consider the future plans of the business. Expansion, new projects and acquisition may see an increased demand for vehicles, or changing needs for the fleet. Consider that some vehicles need ordering many months in advance to ensure they are delivered in time.

### 6 How much will it cost?

It is ill-advised to consider a vehicle based on the purchase price or lease rental alone. Instead, determine the whole life cost of the vehicle – a calculation that looks at the cost of the vehicle over its lifetime, including fuel, tax, and maintenance. There are savings to be made by choosing the right vehicle based on its whole life cost and value-added service fleet companies provide, in terms of support, administration and maintenance.

## About Pendragon Vehicle Management

With over 30 years' experience in fleet leasing and fleet management, Pendragon Vehicle Management is part of the automotive group behind Evans Halshaw and Stratstone, and can assist with whole-life costs, vehicle selection, policy and duty of care. Through a holistic fleet review, our experienced team can help drive efficiencies, streamline processes and identify areas of cost reduction.

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